



Apprenticeship Services for Training Providers

End Point Assessment and so much
more



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Introduction

This brochure is designed to provide you with an overview of the DSW EPA proposition and additional complementary Apprenticeship services.

Working in true collaboration for mutual benefit, we deliver high quality support to help you and your Employers in ensuring that apprentices enjoy the best possible chance of achieving first time success.

“When services are perceived to be similar, it is the people and the way of working that makes all the difference”.



Thanks for considering DSW - we're poised and ready to help

Thank you for taking the time to read through this introduction to DSW Apprenticeships.

We build truly collaborative, supportive relationships with Training Providers to deliver an EPA experience that affords apprentices the best chance of achieving first time success. This involves listening to understand your specific needs and providing you with an exemplary suite of business tools to ensure everyone involved is fully informed and fully prepared for the EPA activities of each Standard.

As Head of Apprenticeships, I am responsible for overseeing the quality and delivery of our EPA services, developing robust assessment instruments and engaging with Employers and Providers to help them overcome EPA challenges.

We also provide resources to support the ad-hoc design, delivery, quality assurance and coaching of apprenticeship Standards through our talent of c850 L&D professionals.

We believe that our approach is very different from the norm; our team are authentic, ethical, pragmatic, supportive, collaborative and easy to work with.

As a passionate advocate of Apprenticeships and the benefits they bring to the UK, I champion the concerns of Employers and Providers through my work with stakeholder groups such as the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP), Institute for Apprenticeships, Ofqual and the ESFA.

Please read on to find out more about our unique approach and how working in partnership with DSW could benefit you, your Employers and Apprentices alike.

So, if you're looking for an ethical partner that is committed to your success, please get in contact - we're poised and ready to help!



Jake Tween
Head of Apprenticeships



**I look forward to supporting
Employers, Training Providers
and Apprentices to create
life-changing experiences.**



About DSW

DSW Apprenticeships is part of the DSW business family which was formed in 1999 and has established itself as the fastest growing EPAO in the UK, having formal Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) approval to currently assess 30+ Apprenticeship Standards, with further Standards in development.

We are an Ofqual regulated Awarding Organisation and ISO9001 accredited, both of which bear testimony to the total quality management of our approach.

We are a well-established SME and a highly respected management and training consultancy within the educational sector, currently working with 50+ Training Providers and 500+ Employers for the delivery of End Point Assessment services.

We have built excellent relationships with The ESFA and Institute for Apprentices and Technical Education (IfATE) and are active

members of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP).

We enjoy an envied position of financial strength, validated by our Dun & Bradstreet rating of 2A and our Verify Credit Rating of A.

We have established relationships with many blue-chip organisations and academic institutions and our Ofqual status enables us to create formal professional qualifications and accredited learning.

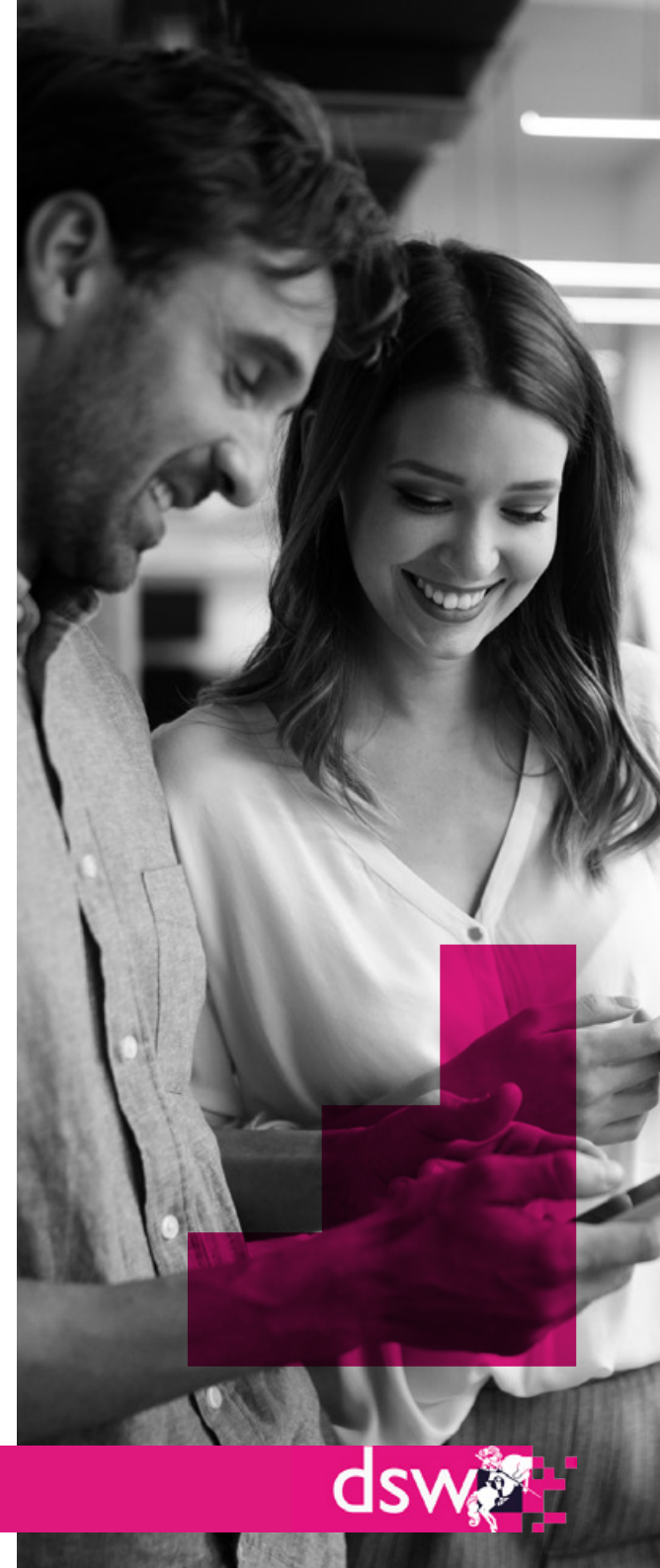
We possess intimate knowledge of the regulatory framework and guidelines covering all aspects of the Apprenticeships regime and our involvement in consultation groups assures you of being kept up to date on all emerging considerations involved.

To find out more about DSW, please visit our website www.dswconsulting.co.uk



Training Provider relationships

We are currently supporting 50+ Training Providers with End Point Assessment and wider support services; some of whom include the following:



Employer relationships

We are currently supporting 500+ Employers with End Point Assessment and wider support services; some of whom include the following:



Our portfolio of Standards

We are approved by The ESFA to undertake EPA activities for the Standards advised below; further Standards are being developed in response to specific requests from our Training Provider partners.

Leadership and Management

L3 Team Leader / Supervisor
L4 Associate Project Manager
L4 Junior Management Consultant
L5 Operations or Departmental Manager

Business Administration

L3 Business Administrator

Financial Services

L2 Financial Services Customer Adviser
L3 Financial Services Administrator
L3 Mortgage Adviser
L3 Senior Financial Services Customer Adviser
L3 Workplace Pensions Administrator
L4 Financial Adviser
L4 Paraplanner
L6 Financial Services Professional
L6 Relationship Manager - Banking

Accounting

L4 Professional Accounting / Taxation Technician

Insurance

L3 Insurance Practitioner
L4 Insurance Professional
L6 Senior Insurance Professional

Investment

L2 Investment Operations Administrator
L3 Investment Operations Technician
L4 Investment Operations Specialist
L7 Senior Investment / Commercial Banking Professional

Compliance and Risk

L3 Compliance or Risk Officer
L6 Senior Compliance or Risk Specialist

Credit Controller / Debt Specialist

L3 Advanced Credit Controller / Debt Collection Specialist

HR

L3 HR Support
L3 Payroll Administrator
L5 HR Consultant / Partner

Public Sector

L3 Public Service Operational Delivery Officer
L3 Public Sector Compliance Investigator / Officer

Retail

L2 Retailer
L3 Retail Team Leader
L4 Retail Manager

Standards in development

L2 Credit Controller / Collector
L2 Customer Service Practitioner
L4 Sales Executive
L6 Chartered Manager Degree

Quality Assurance

DSW is an Ofqual regulated Awarding Organisation, ISO9001 certified and formally approved by The ESFA to act as an EPAO for a growing portfolio of Apprenticeship Standards; all of which assures our partners of independent verification of our approach to total quality management.

Our holistic approach to quality assurance includes oversight and monitoring of all policies and procedures that underpin our End Point Assessment services and wider consultancy and training activities too.

We embrace innovation which we describe as “continually seeking and implementing ways to enhance the client experience” and our regular review of all policies ensures they remain fit for purpose, keeping pace with the emerging technologies and digital practices that are transforming the world of learning.

Our expert team possess intimate knowledge of the regulatory framework and guidelines covering all aspects of the Apprenticeships regime, which, together with our involvement in leading consultation and Trailblazer groups, assures you of being kept up to date on all of the latest considerations involved.

We have robust Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) and External Quality Assurance (EQA) processes which mirror industry benchmarks across all of the Standards we assess. We are, of course, subject to regular audit and inspection from the professional bodies involved and welcome this approach as it represents opportunities to both endorse the quality of our existing approach and highlight where we can improve further.



Quality Assurance

There are a number of processes which specifically relate to driving quality in the design and delivery of our End Point Assessment services, including, but not limited to the following:

Assessor and IQA recruitment – ensuring competency and relevant experience of all personnel involved

Induction training – to embed the unique DSW way of working to ensure consistency of delivery excellence

Standard specific training – to ensure complete familiarity and adherence to the individual assessment plans involved

Monitoring – to oversee assessment activities, ensuring all processes are rigorously applied

Standardisation and moderation activities – to ensure that consistent decisions are made against evidence presented and the appropriate grade awarded

Feedback – from Employers, Apprentices and our Training Providers to ensure services are delivered in line with all contractual and regulatory requirements

Account management meetings – to transparently share information covering all aspects of the service and identify opportunities to improve for mutual benefit.



Capacity and scale

Our Apprenticeships services fulfilment model comprises of our in-house team of experts, complemented by carefully selected strategic partners and a quality assured, nationwide talent pool of 250+ Assessors and c850 learning and development professionals.

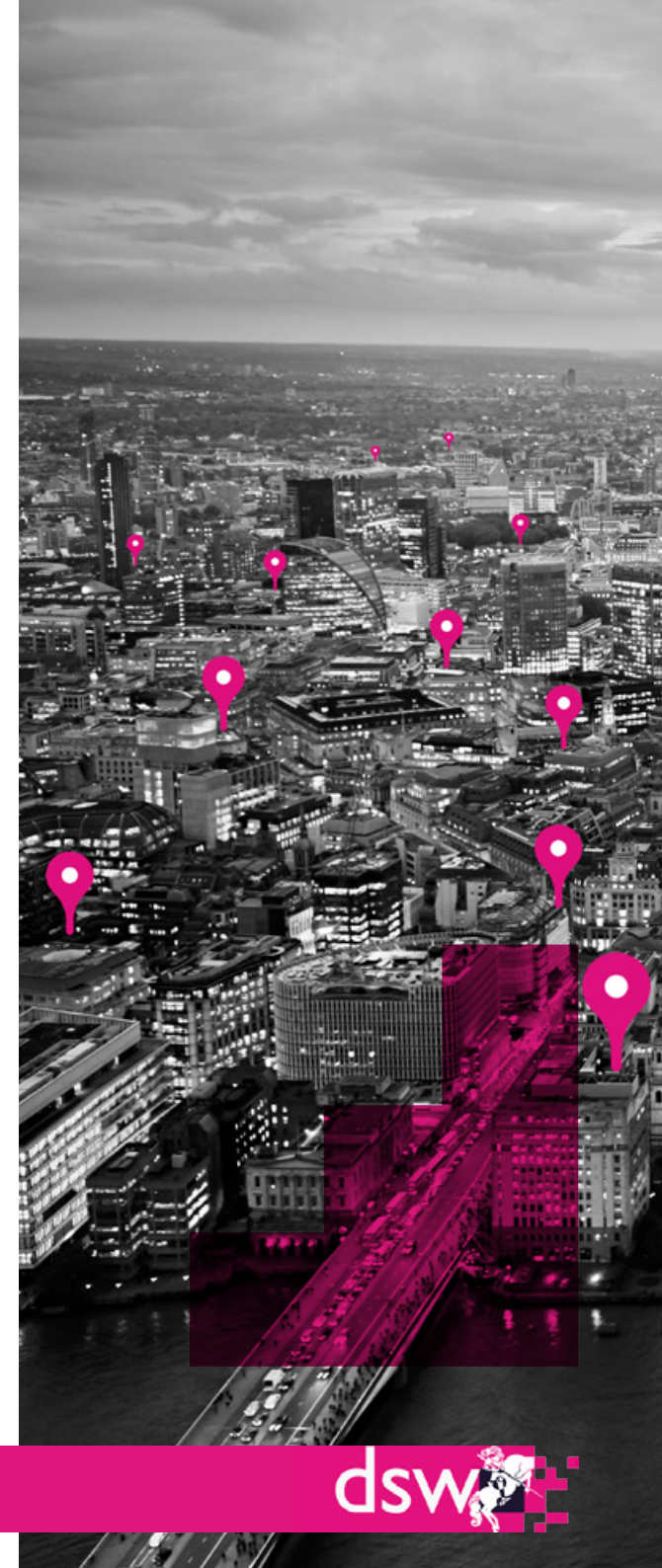
This flexible model of operating has served our clients exceptionally well during our 20+ years of trading and assures our Training Providers and Employers of the capacity and scale to handle cohorts of any size, in any location. A recent example being our management of one of the largest training programmes in the UK which deployed c140 DSW personnel at its peak.

We enjoy the privilege of working with 50+ Training Providers and c500 Employers providing services to meet their unique needs; whether these be “one off” assessments or the complex scheduling and delivery of assessments to cover hundreds of learners located throughout the UK.

Our bespoke software package includes the scheduling of a named Assessor at the point of registering each Apprentice; providing you with the certainty of this dedicated resource at Gateway and thus avoiding frustrating delays in this period.

We strongly believe that long term planning and scheduling is a key success factor in the efficient delivery of End Point Assessment, particularly for those high-volume Standards which will have peak demand times.

Our delivery model encourages early and consistent engagement between Employer, Training Provider and DSW to ensure that the level of demand is understood and planned for from an early stage. Our approach ensures that you benefit from our support early on into the programme and to encourage early engagement, DSW does not charge any registration fees, preferring to raise invoices at Gateway. Please see page 15 for further details of our approach to fees.



EPA overview of the 6 stages involved

The schematic below describes what activities are typically involved in each of the 6 key stages of the EPA journey.



Total support from registration to certification

Through working closely with you from the outset, you can rely upon DSW to ensure your full understanding and “no surprises” at every stage of the EPA activities involved.

The combination of our dedicated, friendly account team, together with our market-leading software package, make the administration of the assessment process very straightforward.

We will guide you from Apprentice registration to assessment booking and scheduling to results and certification, providing access to the people you need to speak to and the suite of materials that support the process.

The following list provides a flavour of what support is available:

- Assessment Toolkits for the Apprentice and Training Provider
- Apprentice Guides for each Standard

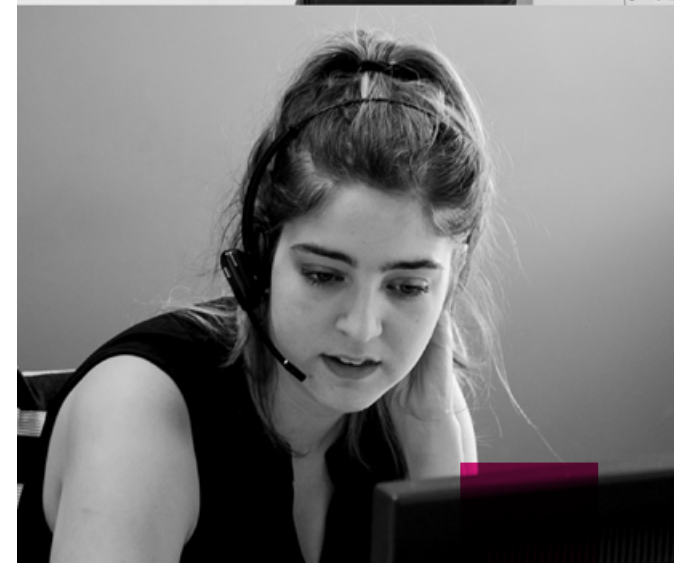
- Pre-assessment feedback via an Interim Review of Portfolio evidence
- Access to Mock Test materials
- Dedicated Account Manager and friendly guidance from our Support Team
- Feedback on each assessment component
- Regular progress reviews, backed by detailed MI and bespoke reports
- Access to our software package (EPA Pro) to administer the end-to-end EPA activities
- Templates for common EPA requirements e.g. referencing guide, witness statement, reflective statement, observation at work
- Standard specific training and support for your delivery team
- Access to our series of “hot topic” webinars

dsww EPA Pro Platform User guide

EPA Pro is the platform DSW uses to register, schedule, track, record and report on End Point Assessments.

As an ATP you'll need to register your apprentices on EPA Pro before they reach Gateway. The sooner you do this, the sooner we can start planning your apprentices' assessments.

From this page you access a user guide as well as a number of tutorials and also login to the platform.



Other services

Our hand-picked talent pool of c850 quality assured L&D professionals provides you with access to expertise as and when you need it.

These resources are made available via our Consultancy & Training Division i.e. separate to the resources involved in the delivery of our EPA services, so no conflicts of interest exist.

We deliver 10,000+ days of ad-hoc L&D support every year to help our partners create, deliver and project manage a vast array of learning programmes and training interventions.

For example, we provided all of the people resources to design and deliver one of the largest change management programmes in the UK, which deployed c140 of our talent pool at its peak.

We will listen carefully to fully understand what skills, experience and expertise you need and match these to the talent at our disposal (all of

whom have been subject to our rigorous due diligence and quality assurance on-boarding approach).

In broad terms, we support Employers and Training Providers in the following categories:

Skills Coaches, Trainers, Project Managers & Internal Quality Assessors

When you need highly experienced interim support to deliver, quality assure or manage elements of your training programmes, you're assured of having access to the right people, with the right skills at the right time, who will "hit the ground running."



Other services

Instructional Designers (Programme & Material Design)

Our experts are available to help you in designing efficient on-programme schemes to underpin the specific Standards involved. Starting with the End Point Assessment in mind, we help in creating engaging, bespoke content which maps the curriculum to the learning and assessment outcomes involved.

Blended & Digital Learning Solutions

For over two decades we have worked with some of the UK's best-known brands to create programmes of learning which are engaging and effective.

When delivering a new Standard or digitally transforming traditional / existing Apprenticeship materials, our "digital savvy" practitioners are available to help you develop a range of digital learning solutions in line with your preferred Blended Learning strategy.

The demand for digital learning solutions continues to grow; including, but not limited to: E-Learning, Video production, App development, Gaming, Digital Workbook design, Virtual Classroom and Virtual Reality simulations etc.

Just let us know what you have in mind, and we'll provide you with access to some of the UK's most innovative individual talent and partner firms who can help transform your learning collateral, whilst enhancing efficiency and delivering bottom line gains against existing delivery costs.



Fees – fair, flexible and competitive

We deliver a unique, customer centric EPA service and our fees are modelled by taking into account the complexity and academic level of the Standard being assessed.

Rather than simply charging the recommended EPA fee advised within the funding band for each Standard, our average fee represents c12% across the entire range of Standards within our portfolio.

Our approach is equitable and flexible, providing you with a high quality value proposition, with further discounts afforded when volumes warrant accordingly.

We are pragmatic, so will also apply a discounted tariff for the provision of ad-hoc resources should you need support in addition to our EPA services.

Our approach to fees, together with our high-touch personalised service have contributed to us becoming the fastest growing EPAO in the UK, with a summary of how we charge advised below:

- No fee to register Apprentices and secure Assessor resource
- Fee includes provision of all support materials
- 100% invoiced at Gateway confirmation
- Discounts available linked to overall volume of EPA's conducted per annum
- Resit fees are charged at the reduced rate of 75% of the initial assessment and applied only to the component element(s) failed.



Benefits of working with DSW

We'd like to work with you and are highly motivated by the opportunity to do so.

There are many reasons why you may find our approach resonates strongly, with the following list providing some, but not all, of the benefits, of working together in genuine partnership:

Ethos and the human touch – ethical family business where relationships are truly valued

Expertise – in the Apprenticeships sector, being familiar with all regulations and guidelines

Certainty – allocation of Assessor at registration, to ensure certainty of a timely EPA

Capacity and scale – 250+ qualified Assessors throughout the UK, providing national coverage

Additional services – available via our wider talent pool of c850 L&D professionals

Way of working – in genuine collaboration to meet your unique requirements

Quality assurance – Ofqual regulated, ISO 9001 accredited, and ESFA approved

Unique service – e.g. sample of portfolio evidence is reviewed ahead of assessment

Digital by default – tech that suits all parties; for increased flexibility and cost efficiencies

Service levels – pro-actively schedule EPA activities to deliver quickest possible turnaround

Market leading support – suite of business tools, dedicated account team, webinars etc.

Administration – 24/7 access to view progress of learners, access MI and materials

Fees – highly competitive, averaging 12% with further discounts for volumes



Contact details

We hope you have enjoyed reading this introductory brochure. We would be delighted to hear from you to discuss how DSW can support your team and Apprentices for the best chance of EPA success. Please get in-touch with one of our friendly members of the business development team below.



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