



## **Trailblazer Apprenticeship**

### **End Point Assessment Quality Assurance Procedures**

#### **1) Assessor Recruitment and Training**

All assessors recruited by RWPN to carry out the End Point Assessment (EPA) will be subject to a formal recruitment process. Applicants will be required to complete an application form specific to the EPA. To ensure that assessors are occupationally competent, familiar with assessment procedure and adhere to good practice procedures, all applicants will be required to demonstrate the following:

- That they are professionally competent: hold a recognised qualification in Vision Rehabilitation (level 5 and above) and have at least five years recent practice experience
- That they belong to a recognised professional body
- That they are committed to training in the requirements of this apprenticeship standard and the end point assessment, and where appropriate, assist in developing assessment materials
- That they have an understanding, and where possible, experience, of assessment processes, and marking to grading guidelines or are committed to training to acquire this
- That they declare any conflicts of interest
- That they hold a current DBS certificate and will adhere to RWPN's safeguarding policy in respect of the Trailblazer Apprenticeship programme
- That they are committed to personal on-going professional development, including (if not already achieved) a level 3 award or certificate in assessing vocational achievement

#### **2) Conflict of Interest**

RWPN has a conflict of interest policy which relates solely to delivery of the EPA in relation to apprenticeship standard ST0431 - Rehabilitation Worker

(Visual Impairment). A conflict of interest declaration form runs in tandem with this policy.

### **3) Ensuring the EPA meets the requirements of the Standard**

Rehabilitation Work (Visual Impairment) is a brand new apprenticeship standard. Practice papers for the case studies and the content of the practical assessment have yet been written. RWPN will recruit an experienced qualified Vision Rehabilitation specialist to write the assessment materials in accordance with the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviour required by the Standard. The manner in which the EPA meets the assessment requirements of the Standard and appropriateness of the assessment materials themselves will be subject to oversight from the External Quality Assurance body.

### **4) Monitoring assessor practice and decisions**

RWPN will recruit a core of assessors. Those responsible for writing the assessment material will direct the assessors on how the marking scheme will operate and how practice decisions are made and recorded.

The practical assessment component requires two assessors. One of these will be designated by RWPN as the lead examiner and the lead examiner's decisions will be final on the day of assessment.

Monitoring of assessment decisions will be undertaken by a moderator. The moderator will be part of the team that agrees the content, marking scheme and decision-making process, but the moderator will not be an assessor for any given cohort of apprentices. RWPN will randomly select a sample range of assessments which have been undertaken by each assessor; these will then be sent to the moderator to check consistency of marking.

Any shortfalls in assessing standards will be addressed through support and retraining. Decisions made by the moderator will be final.

### **5) Appeals to EPA assessment**

RWPN aims to make the assessment decisions fair and consistent and is guided, in relation to assessment decisions of a professional practice nature, by the 'Good Practice Framework for Handling Complaints and Academic Appeals' published by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA). OIA state that questioning academic judgement is not a grounds for appeal. Academic judgement is defined as "a judgement that is made about a matter where only the opinion of an academic expert is sufficient". Rehabilitation Work (Visual

Impairment) is a vocational profession where assessment is, necessarily, undertaken by professionally qualified assessors, and hence, only their opinion is sufficient.

However, there may be reasons, other than those of the application of expert judgement, where an appeal may be made against the assessment decision. In the event that either an apprentice or an employer of the apprentice wishes to appeal the assessment, this appeal must be made directly to RWPN and within 10 working days of the assessment outcome being issued to the apprentice. When making an appeal the apprentice must present evidence to support their claim (e.g. Doctor's certification, employer letter of evidence.) Once submitted a decision will be made upon this evidence, no further evidence will be considered.

The process

A formal appeal should be put in writing to [info@rwpn.org.uk](mailto:info@rwpn.org.uk). Upon receipt of a formal appeal against an assessment decision, RWPN will assign the appeal to the moderator. The moderator will undertake a formal investigation, including: a review of the assessment materials and assessment documentation; a discussion with assessors and with the apprentice. The moderator will present their findings and decision in writing within 10 working days of the appeal being received.

The moderator's decision is final and will be one of the following:

- 1) Appeal upheld – the apprentice will be offered one final opportunity to retake the assessment. This assessment may be video recorded.
- 2) Appeal is rejected – the assessment outcome will stand. No further assessment opportunities will be available to the apprentice.

## **6) Concerns and Complaints Procedure**

An apprentice or an employer can raise a concern or complaint regarding aspects of the way the EPA is carried out. RWPN will deal with all complaints and concerns within 10 working days. Where possible, RNIB will carry out thorough and fair investigations where needed to make sure we are able to make decisions based on the facts of each case.

A concern or complaint may (but not always) relate to the following:

- The quality of the assessment
- The quality of the facilities or assessment materials provided for the assessment
- The manner in which reasonable adjustments have been implemented
- The way an apprentice has been treated by an assessor
- Inappropriate behaviour by an assessor
- Failure to follow an appropriate administrative process

Note: Not being satisfied with the decision of an assessment does not constitute a complaint. Dissatisfaction with a decision is covered through the appeals procedure (see section 5 above).

A complaint cannot be submitted by a third party on behalf of a complainant without written permission from the complainant that they are acting on their behalf.

### **The process**

In the first instance a concern should be raised. This should be done as soon as the concern arises or within 10 working days of the event occurring. It may be possible to resolve the concern informally immediately or with minimal disruption. Every attempt to resolve the issue in this way will be investigated.

If the concern cannot be resolved it can be submitted as a complaint, which we will deal with formally. The complaint must be submitted by email to [info@rwpn.org.uk](mailto:info@rwpn.org.uk). A complaint should be submitted no later than 10 working days after the date of the original concern.

The complainant will receive a reply by email that confirms receipt of the complaint within 3 working days. The complaint will be passed to the chair of RWPN who will undertake to investigate the complaint within 20 working days from receipt of the email. Where this timeframe needs to be extended (and only where there is good reason for this) we will notify the complainant and provide a new timescale. If the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint RWPN will seek agreement with the complainant for mediation. Mediation can be a helpful mechanism for settling issues confidentially and can help RWPN understand the reason behind a complaint. Mediation, would be provided by professional independent of RWPN or the contracted assessors.

## 7) Fair Access Arrangements

**Fair Access Definition.** Fair access arrangements are agreed before an assessment (see evidence of need below). Fair access arrangements allow candidates with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment and show what they know and can do without changing the demands of the assessment. The intention behind a fair access arrangement is to meet the particular needs of an individual candidate without affecting the integrity of the assessment. Fair access arrangements will enable RWPN to comply with the duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make 'reasonable adjustments'.

The Equality Act 2010 requires an assessing body to make reasonable adjustments where a candidate, who is disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010, would be at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to someone who is not disabled. We will take reasonable steps to overcome that disadvantage. Whether an adjustment will be considered reasonable will depend on a number of factors which will include, but are not limited to: the needs of the disabled candidate; the effectiveness of the adjustment; the cost of the adjustment; and the likely impact of the adjustment upon the candidate and other candidates.

An adjustment will not be approved if it: involves unreasonable costs to RWPN; involves unreasonable timeframes; or affects the security and integrity of the assessment. It will not be reasonable for adjustments to be made to assessment objectives within the EPA. This is because the adjustment is not reasonable and to do so would likely undermine the effectiveness of the qualification in providing a reliable indication of the knowledge, skills and understanding of the apprentice in Rehabilitation Work (Visual Impairment) and, in consequence, may place blind or partially sighted clients of apprentice at risk when they are in practice.

**Evidence of Need.** The evidence of need will vary depending on the disability and the access arrangement(s) being applied for. Evidence of need will be collected by RWPN at two stages in the EPA process: the point at which the employer engages with RWPN to undertake the EPA and the apprentice's personal circumstances are provided; the Gateway process in discussion with the on-programme training provider.

The specific reasonable adjustment(s) to the EPA will be agreed at the Gateway point through a **disability support summary** (see appendix one). The student and RWPN will agree the disability support summary which will state the nature of the disability and set out any agreed adjustments to the EPA. RWPN will forward the disability support summary only to those assessors for whom it is relevant.

**Reasonable adjustments.** Any reasonable adjustment must reflect the normal learning or working practice of the apprentice in the workplace. The following adaptations are examples of what may be considered for the purposes of facilitating access, as long as they do not impact on any competence standards being tested: adapting assessment materials; adaptation to equipment; assessment material in an alternative format from standard-sized print; extra time; providing assistance during assessment; reader; scribe; use of assistive software; low vision aids; The learner may not need, nor be allowed the same adjustment for both components of the EPA. Through the disability summary support, apprentices are fully involved in any decisions about adjustments/adaptations.

## **8) Improving the Quality of Assessment Practice**

We recognise that maintaining consistency and high quality assessment practice is essential for the credibility of the Standard, the EPA and RWPN. Failure to maintain and improve standards puts the public at risk. We propose to hold an annual assessment practice review meeting for our assessors. We propose that this takes place each year, shortly after the EPA have taken place and at a point when the provisional numbers for the subsequent on-programme training are known. This meeting will be a chance for assessors to discuss issues that have arisen in the EPA, to identify any inconsistencies in approach and discuss what should be learned from any appeals or complaints that have been received. We feel that an employer input into this process would be important. We propose that the External Quality Assurance body be involved in this process: the body may wish to nominate a member to attend or facilitate the meeting.

Date of Policy: May 2018

Review date: September 2019

## Appendix One



### **Apprenticeship Standard STO431 Rehabilitation Worker Visual Impairment End Point Assessment - Disability Support Summary**

This student's disability-related support requirements have been assessed in accordance with the Equality Act (2010). The information below is a summary of the reasonable adjustments that have been agreed.

The information contained within this document is of a sensitive and personal nature. However, unless otherwise specified, the student has given their consent for this summary to be forwarded to RWPN EPA assessors, moderators and staff on a "need to know" basis to ensure that their support needs are met.

**Name of Student:**

**Date of Birth:**

**Nature of Disability or disabilities** Please also outline the ways in which the disability or disabilities may impact on the assessment.

## **Summary of Recommended Adjustments**

**[until the precise nature of EPA materials has been decided it is not possible to provide definitive examples. However, the following are representative areas of adjustment]**

- **Alternative format of case study materials**
- **Rest breaks**
- **Additional time**
- **Use of scribe/transcriber/reader**
- **Use of adaptive technology**
- **Alternative seating**



**May 2018**