

Level 3 Keeper and Aquarist Apprenticeship Standard

Training Provider and Employer Specification

Reference: ST0789



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1. Introduction

This specification serves as a resource for employers and training providers overseeing apprentices enrolled in the ST0789 Level 3 Keeper and Aquarist Apprenticeship Standard, specifically focusing on Assessment Plan Version 1.0. It outlines the procedures for engaging with iPET Network as both an End-Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) and Independent End-Point Assessor (IEPA) for your apprentices.

The journey of your apprentice through the End-Point Assessment (EPA) process will be coordinated through the EPA platform ACE360. For additional information about iPET Network, please refer to our website: <https://www.ipetnetwork.co.uk>

This guide corresponds to Assessment Plan version ST0789/AP01. Before registering your apprentice for EPA, kindly verify that this is the correct version of the Assessment Plan applicable to your apprentice. Comprehensive details about this Assessment Plan can be located on the IfATE website.

EPA will comprehensively evaluate the apprentice's proficiency in line with the knowledge, skills, and behaviours mandated by the Apprenticeship Standard. Grading decisions will adhere to the assessment criteria delineated in the Assessment Plan.

The EPA window for this assessment plan spans 6 months following the completion of the gateway phase.

1.1 Support for Training Providers and Employers

This manual is designed to assist training providers and employers throughout the End-Point Assessment (EPA) process. Furthermore, for any inquiries, feel free to reach out to the EPA Team via email at epao@ipetnetwork.co.uk, and we will gladly provide the necessary support.

2. End Point Assessment Fees

Apprenticeship Standard	Keeper and Aquarist
Level	3
iPET Network EPA Fee	£1300
Typical Duration	24 months
Resit/Retake Fees	Multiple Choice Test: £135 Observation: £900 Professional Discussion underpinned by a Portfolio: £129

Where the EPA components are not completed within the three-month window of the gateway being approved, the EPA process must be started again, and this will incur additional EPA fees.

All fees must be paid before the assessment. Providers and employers are advised to carefully review the payment terms and conditions outlined in the invoicing documentation. The EPA invoice will be generated at the point of Gateway submission.

3. Apprenticeship Standard Occupational Summary

The Apprentice will be employed in zoos, wildlife parks, aquariums, private animal collections, animal reserves, and farms with a zoo licence. The role of a Zoo Keeper or Aquarist will include:

- Interpreting diet Sheets, preparing and delivering Animal feeds
- Servicing, cleaning and managing Animal environments
- Providing Species specific habitats and routines for animals in line with their natural history

- Observing and understanding Animal behaviour, Animal Health and Welfare, recording and reporting findings
- Checking enclosure and other work areas for potential or existing hazards
- Engaging with visitors and stakeholders, tailoring information to the audience

Keepers and aquarists assist and adhere to the zoological collections and industry best practice, law, protocols and procedures in relation to animal husbandry, welfare, transportation and work health and safety. They will learn about and understand the role of key stakeholders in their area of work.

An employee in this occupation will be responsible for the everyday care and husbandry of the animals within the collection. They will understand species specific behaviour and needs and the basics of animal training. The Apprentice will use tools on the job which are needed for cleaning enclosures, enclosure maintenance and design and food preparation. They will be expected to complete day to day tasks using their initiative, within a specific time period. This will vary with the size of collection, in smaller organisations they will have complete autonomy on a day-to-day basis and in larger organisations they may work within a team. It is likely it may involve unsociable hours and working outside in all weather conditions.

3.1 Knowledge Skills and Behaviours

Throughout the apprenticeship programme, the apprentice will focus on acquiring the necessary knowledge, skills, and behaviours outlined in the Apprenticeship End Point Assessment Plan. This preparation aims to ready the apprentice for the EPA. The occupational competence required for successful completion of the apprenticeship involves ensuring progression to a level where the apprentice demonstrates proficiency in each KSB, with each having a designated method of assessment.

The apprentice will demonstrate proficiency in the following Core KSBs prior to the gateway:

The KSBs are mapped against the assessment methods to test and confirm the apprentice knowledge, skills and behaviours inline with the End Point Assessment Plan:

KSB	Knowledge	Assessment Method
A Zoo Keeper will require a comprehensive understanding of:		
1.	Current legislation, including health and safety and animal welfare act, zoo licensing act, EU Zoos directive	MCT
2.	Work place policies and procedures, such as working safely with higher risk animals and higher risk environments, working at height, working with chemicals, working with tools, manual handling, risk assessment, fire safety, relevant PPE, managing health and wellbeing	O
3.	<p>The 5 welfare needs of an animal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. its need for a suitable environment b. its need for a suitable diet (and water) c. its need to exhibit normal behaviour patterns d. any need to be housed with, or apart from, other animals in appropriate social groupings e. its need to be protected from fear, pain, suffering, injury and disease 	MCT
4.	Key stakeholders for their area of work, including their organisation structure, organisation mission, regional,	PD

	national and international associations as appropriate, e.g. BIAZA, EAZA, WAZA, AZA, ZAA	
5.	Information needs of internal/external audiences, including what information is appropriate and the factors that need to be taken into consideration, such as communicating animal births/deaths to a range of audiences and methods of communication and the appropriate communication methods for specific audiences, i.e. internal/external, such as presentations, demonstrations, scientific publications, media releases, social media posts, staff meetings, reports	PD
6.	The principles of basic zoology including the classification of taxa, anatomy, physiology, genetics, adaptations, evolution, ecology, behavioural ecology	MCT
7.	The increasingly significant role zoos play globally in conserving species and their habitats, including the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) one plan conservation approach	PD
8.	The changing roles of zoos in relation to conservation, research, education, visitor experience, promotion of positive behaviour change in the public, welfare management and enclosure design	PD
9.	Common ethical concerns of the public and the corresponding ethical position taken by their organisation including their organisations protocols	O

10.	The assessment of conservation status of species and habitats including IUCN red listing, IUCN green listing, and others such as the Alliance for Zero Extinction, ZSL's Edge programme, Biodiversity Action Plan (BAPS)	MCT
11.	The natural history of the animals in their care and how they are best managed and exhibited to suit their species-specific needs. This is to include their environmental parameters (e.g. temperature, humidity, pH and UV), behavioural needs including habitat type and feeding behaviour, their social needs (e.g. group dynamic) and psychological needs (e.g. quiet environments)	O
12.	The principles of animal movement and transportation legislation, including handling, restraint, capture and monitoring of animals and the challenges around these such as safety concerns for higher risk and wild species	MCT
13.	Population management and its effectiveness including; determination of a range of wild species, same sex groups, breed and cull, and contraception, introduction, the importance of genetic diversity and the consequences of hybridisation and inbreeding e.g. seahorse breed and cull, new fish introduction into a tank	PD
14.	Means of identifying individual animals through transponders, photos, ear tags, leg bands, individual markings, sex determination etc e, g, elasmobranchs for sex determination, individual markings on some fish	MCT

15.	Nutritional requirements of a range of wild species across all life stages and how diets are safely stored, formulated, prepared, and delivered including weight management, supplementation and food hygiene e.g. artemia to fry (brine shrimp/mysis) to adult seahorses	O
16.	Welfare assessment using appropriate welfare assessment tools such as signs of ill health and injury, behaviour monitoring, body condition scoring, specimen collection, faecal scoring, food intake e.g. gill/skin scrapes from fish and the preparation/storage of the slides	PD
17.	Basic veterinary procedures, such as the storage and administration of veterinary medicine, wound management, minor procedures as appropriate	MCT
18.	The principles of animal training, such as classical versus operant conditioning, cuing, bridging, reinforcing	MCT
19.	How and why to record and retrieve information and write reports using a range of systems relevant to zoo keeping within their organisation, such as diaries, ZIMS, Tracks, PMX, Excel, following instruction to retrieve data or update information and following procedures designed to keep data secure	PD
20.	The principles of enclosure/tank design including the needs of each stakeholder group (e.g. visitor needs: viewing windows, accessible paths, etc.), the needs of the animals (e.g. places to hide) (bio)hazards connected to the enclosure	O

	design, enclosure components and furnishings e.g. aquariums and keeper/aquarist access to the LSS	
21.	The key risk factors associated with zoonosis and common zoonotic diseases and their management e.g. fish TB	MCT
22.	Factors affecting zoo bio security for wild species under their care and appropriate control measures to maintain bio security e.g. net dips	O
23.	Organisational protocols for dealing with emergencies (e.g. animal escape, unintentional human-animal contact, fire, human medical emergency) and understand their role within this	PD
24.	The principles of housekeeping including cleaning, enclosure/tank management, Life Support Systems maintenance, products used and their associated hazards, frequency of cleaning based on situation, species and individual considering factors such as scent marking or removal of body fluids e.g. fish safe cleaning products	O
25.	Basic horticultural principles in relation to wild animal collections and species, e.g. care of enclosure plants, knowledge of edible browse species, knowledge of toxic plants and their management e.g. using aquaponic systems to help filter the water	PD
26.	Strategies for compliant and sustainable waste management and recycling	O

27.	The importance of zoo or aquarium research and the types of research undertaken in zoos/aquariums (e.g. behavioural observation, genetic, nutritional, records based)	PD
28.	The principles of research design and data analysis in a zoo setting including hypothesis creation, ethical approval processes within their organisation, common behavioural observation sampling techniques and how to present findings appropriately e.g. from descriptive statistics, listing methods of dissemination of results etc.	MCT
Skills (core): A Zoo Keeper will be able to:		Assessment Method
1.	Work effectively in a safe and healthy working environment following current/relevant health and safety legislation and work place policies such as working safely with wild/higher risk animals and higher risk environments, working at height, working with chemicals, working with tools, manual handling, risk assessment, fire safety, relevant PPE	O
2.	Demonstrate how the 5 welfare needs of an animal can be used as a basis to provide the animal with opportunities to display positive welfare, including providing a suitable environment and diet (including water), housing the animal in appropriate social groupings and protecting it from fear, pain, suffering, injury and disease and providing an environment where normal behaviour can be displayed	O
3.	Prioritise more critical and less critical activities and tasks using scheduling techniques that enable them to meet deadlines and allow for unexpected tasks, such as an animal	PD

	medical emergency, daily animal husbandry, visitor safety and staff absence	
4.	Communicate information clearly and within a timely manner with internal audiences such as colleagues, vets, managers and contractors concisely, accurately and in ways that promote understanding – verbally as well as in writing (e.g. daily reports, diaries) adjusting and prioritising information and being mindful of the impact	PD
5.	Communicate effectively with external audiences such as the scientific community, general public/ visitors and media in a range of contexts including presentations, public speaking, visitor engagement, conservation education activities, customer service and delivering keeper experiences in order to educate about animal life histories and conservation issues, promoting awareness of the role of zoos/aquariums in conservation and encouraging sustainable behaviour change	PD
6.	Actively listen, process and prioritise information, confirm understanding and react according to level of risk e.g. lost child procedure, animal escape, instruction from senior staff	PD
7.	Devise and deliver a talk/presentation using a range of appropriate resources such as audio/visual equipment, PowerPoint slides, physical props	PD
8.	Deal appropriately with difficult issues (e.g. visitor/internal conflicts and complaints) following workplace policies and procedures	PD

9.	<p>Accurately record, retrieve and monitor information and write reports using a range of systems relevant to zoo/aquarium keeping within your organisation, such as diaries, ZIMS,</p> <p>Tracks, Excel following instruction to retrieve data or update information and follow workplace procedures designed to keep data secure</p>	PD
10.	<p>Use information from reliable sources using scientific nomenclature of taxa for a variety of purposes such as gathering information to share with the public and/or science community, researching information to underpin enclosure/tank design and husbandry plans including use of recognised assessment tools to identify species or habitat conservation status</p>	PD
11.	<p>Observe, describe and interpret animal behaviour (innate, learned, abnormal), including species specific behaviours for species in their care, taking response action where appropriate including reporting to the supervisor or recording in animal records system</p>	O
12.	<p>Develop, implement and evaluate (including safety evaluation) appropriate sensory and cognitive enrichment in accordance with enclosure/tank design and species-specific needs</p> <p>e.g. simulating hunting behaviours in big cats, stingrays and sharks</p>	O

13.	Identify individual animals through transponders, photos, ear tags, leg bands, individual markings, sex determination	O
14.	Create a plan using the principles of population management in line with the organisation collection plan, such as the introductory meeting of a species, taking into consideration individual suitability (e.g. health status, age, social hierarchy, reproductive status), practical set up, potential issues and solutions e.g. introducing a males and females for breeding or forming single sex groups/mixed species	PD
15.	Interpret diet sheets and safely store, prepare and present diets in a manner which promotes species-specific natural behaviours, also considering individual needs (e.g. geriatric, disabled, etc.)	O
16.	Evaluate diets and propose modifications e.g. to minimise the amount of uneaten food and contingent wastage, promote physical and psychological health and welfare meeting nutritional needs	O
17.	Correctly follow procedures for waste management and disposal including hazardous materials, biosecurity risks, legally regulated materials	O
18.	Identify which equipment, methods of approach, capture, handling, restraint and loading are best for specific situations and species, create plans for and make informed decisions to facilitate this e.g. fish species that are net sensitive or elasmobranchs that are trained to go in to a stretcher.	PD

19.	Show confidence in assisting with the capture and restraint of wild and high-risk species	PD
20.	Identify the most appropriate methods of successfully transporting animals, considering species, level of risk, duration, animal welfare considerations, health and safety, legislation e.g. maintaining the temperature of the water for an overnight transport	PD
21.	Train animals using positive reinforcement-based techniques in various situations (e.g. target training with a single animal) and apply these techniques in the animal's routine, monitoring and recording the results and giving feedback to the responsible supervisor	O
22.	Identify, assess severity of and report potential health issues in animals in a timely manner. Monitor changes in health of animals and report their findings to a supervisor or veterinarian e.g. signs of ill health or injury, behaviour monitoring, body condition scoring, faecal scoring, food intake	PD
23.	Correctly collect, document and store suitable samples as part of veterinary health monitoring e.g. hair, faecal, urine, gill	PD
24.	Administer treatment following instruction from a veterinarian/competent staff member (e.g. administration of medication to an individual/group, parasite treatments, nail/hoof trimming) e.g. salt treatment, Aquatet etc.	PD

25.	Assess the strengths and weaknesses of different enclosure/tank designs from the point of view of each stakeholder group (e.g. animals, keepers, vet team, visitors, educators, researchers) and propose improvements, if required	O
26.	Select optimal enclosure substrates and furnishings and maintain them within the enclosure/tank e.g. clean appropriately, monitor condition and replace as appropriate e.g. coral chip and a siphon schedule	O
27.	Identify potential and existing physical and bio hazards within an enclosure and associated areas, responding and participating in alterations/solutions where possible, reporting more complex issues to the relevant staff, all within a timely manner	O
28.	Use, maintain and store a range of tools and equipment correctly, including electrical tools, appropriate to the workplace	O
29.	Monitor and take responsibility of the health and safety of the visitors and welfare of the animals in enhanced animal contact situations, especially with higher risk and wild species, such as visitor encounter, keeper for a day experiences, walkthrough enclosures, animal handling sessions, taking action when required to minimise risks and stress	O
30.	Comply with and support other staff in complying with emergency protocols e.g. animal escape drills, fire etc.	PD

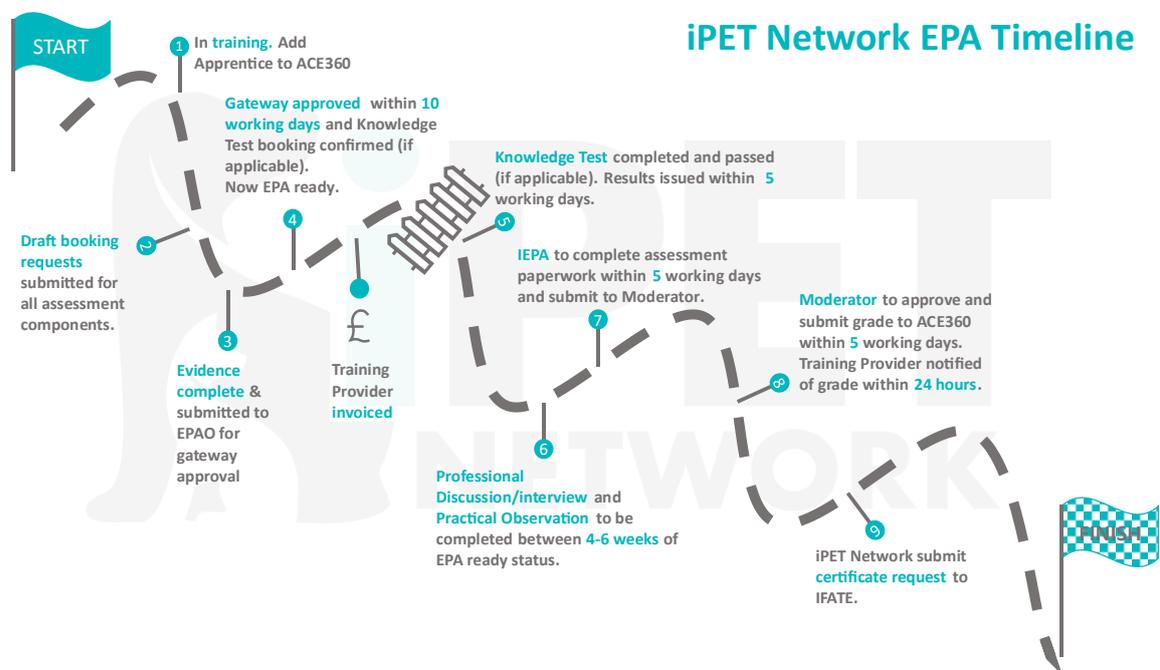
31.	Carry out safe housekeeping regimes including the safe use and disposal of products used, cleaning of enclosures/tanks, public areas, Life Support Systems maintenance, and their associated hazards, frequency of cleaning based on situation, species and individual considering factors such as sent marking or removal of body fluids to required standard, according to species specific standard	O
32.	Design and implement research projects; including a small number of variables or indicators, using tried and tested research methods e.g. single animal case studies of behaviour challenges	PD
33.	Analyse results and summarise findings using reporting tools including descriptive statistics, listing methods of dissemination of results including where relevant research might be published and considering the implications of findings for practices within their organisation	PD
Behaviours:		Assessment Method
Safe Working		
1.	Be safety conscious and maintain safe working practices, which must be adhered to at all times with constant situational awareness and adaptability to ensure safety of the animal(s), themselves and others, including proactively assessing risks and mitigating these immediately.	O
Work Ethic		

2.	Have a strong work ethic and a willingness to learn. Be respectful, punctual, reliable, trustworthy and diligent and prepared to work irregular hours, in all weathers. Take a pride in their work, showing commitment and loyalty, whilst conducting themselves in a professional manner, both in terms of their presentation and conduct. Have a responsible attitude towards themselves, others and the animal(s) in their care, showing respect, empathy, patience and tolerance in all situations, including working with methods that reduce any risk of physical injury and emotional stress to animal(s), themselves or others.	PD
Professionalism		
3.	Professional and ethical responsibilities and the values of their work place.	PD
4.	An awareness of the limits of their own authority, expertise, training, competence and experience.	PD
5.	Respect and empathy for animals.	O
6.	Being aware of how to use social media responsibly	MCT
7.	Be respectful of the legal duty of care under animal health and welfare legislation and codes of practice and other relevant legislation affecting the keeping of animals	O
Teamwork		
8.	Have a positive approach to working within a team and have the ability to work both individually and as part of a team as required, understanding their role and changing priorities	PD

	when the situation dictates to meet organisational objectives. Be, be willing to develop productive working relationships with colleagues and stakeholders.	
Demonstrate integrity, by:		
9.	respecting the values of the work place	O
Demonstrate self-awareness, by:		
10.	being open to new ideas, willing to develop skills and new ways of working and being committed to ongoing professional development	PD
11.	knowing when to ask for advice or guidance when unsure and learning from these experiences. Self-reflection in taking responsibility for own actions and mistakes, reporting them immediately, and identifying lessons learnt	PD
Demonstrate a positive attitude, by:		
12.	using initiative and maximising productivity and efficiency	O
13.	being flexible with respect to changing demands, priorities, schedules, working hours, weather conditions	PD
14.	being aware of the surroundings and noticing and responding to problems that may adversely affect public perception (e.g. litter-picking)	O

15.	being customer focused, polite and friendly	0
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4. End Point Assessment Process



5. Gateway

The gateway milestone is reached when the employer, training provider, and apprentice collectively affirm that the apprentice has showcased the requisite knowledge, skills, and behaviours (KSBs) expected of a proficient Keeper and Aquarist, as outlined in the Occupational Standard.

The commencement of the End-Point Assessment (EPA) process should only occur once the apprentice's employer is content that the EPA requirements have been fulfilled and can be

substantiated to an End-point Assessment Organisation (EPAO). Additionally, the employer should ensure that the apprentice consistently operates at, or above, the proficiency level specified in the Apprenticeship Standard ST0789. Employers may consider seeking guidance from or consulting with the training provider for additional insights.

5.1 Gateway Requirements

To pass through Gateway and take the EPA the apprentice must produce evidence that they have:

- completed a minimum of 12 months of training
- undertaken a minimum of 6 hours per week off-the-job training. Part-time apprentices' OTJ training hours may vary but should make up at least 20% of their working hours. OTJ training should take place during your regular working hours. (Dependent on apprenticeship start date. Refer to the apprenticeship funding rules for further details.)
- collated a portfolio of evidence
- achieved Level 2 English and mathematics

5.2 Portfolio Submission

As part of the Gateway process, the apprentice will need to present a portfolio of evidence. It's important to note that this does not entail submitting the entire on-programme portfolio. Instead, the submission is limited to providing evidence for the knowledge, skills, and behaviours (KSBs) discussed during the professional discussion, substantiated by a portfolio.

The Portfolio Evidence table details a list of recommended types of evidence that can be included in the portfolio.

The following list is not exhaustive and is provided as guidance:
Theory assignment with organogram of organisational structure
Evidence- photocopies, photos of written communication
Diary of undertaken tasks, photos or video evidence
Practical task/ role play scenarios with tutors - tutor report/ statement
Presentation done in class or to staff about their research project - photos/ videos
Theory assignment on work place policies
Diary of animal encounters from apprentice
Photocopy/ photo evidence of reporting
Theory assignment and written plan for a chosen species
Diary of evidence with photocopies/ photos of reporting
Evidence diary, photos, signed risk assessments
Research project on a chosen species
Research project, theory assignment and a poster presentation of aims, methods and results of research undertaken
Theory assignment, attending ethical review meeting at collection and evidence of this
Performance reviews
Performance reviews. Supervisor statements
Diary of CPD

The assessment does not involve a direct evaluation of the portfolio; instead, it serves as a foundation for the professional discussion and will not receive a mark from the EPAO. The IEPA will examine the showcase portfolio before the interview but will not offer portfolio feedback following the review.

5.3 Uploading Gateway Evidence

The training provider is responsible for enrolling the apprentice for the End-Point Assessment (EPA) via ACE360 with iPET Network. Complete details of the apprentice are

essential for registration, encompassing the apprentice's full name, email address and contact telephone number, Unique Learner Number, employer particulars, as well as the start and end dates of the apprenticeship.

The training provider will upload all of the required gateway evidence, including a gateway declaration form, Health and Safety Location Risk Assessment and any mandated qualifications to ACE360. Health and Safety Location Risk Assessment and any mandated qualifications to ACE360.

5.4 Independent End Point Assessor Allocation

Upon approval of the gateway submission, we will designate one of our Independent End-Point Assessors (IEPAs) to conduct the End-Point Assessment (EPA) for your apprentice. Subsequently, we will validate the EPA booking details through the ACE360 platform.

6. End Point Assessment Components

The End Point Assessment components for the Level 3 Keeper and Aquarist apprenticeship standard consist of the following:

- Multiple Choice test
- Observation
- Professional discussion - Underpinned by a portfolio

The assessment methods can be taken in any order and must be take over two days.

6.1 Multiple Choice Test

- 50 minutes
- Any suitable location as per iPET Network's Remote Invigilation Policy
- Graded Fail / Pass / Distinction

The knowledge test comprises a regulated assessment format, involving a set of multiple-choice questions. This test will include 25 multiple-choice questions, each offering four

options, with only one being the correct answer. Each question holds a value of one mark, and any incorrect or omitted responses will be scored as zero.

The questions have been written against the knowledge descriptors aligned with the Apprenticeship Standard.

The apprentice must take the knowledge test in a suitably controlled environment that is a quiet space and free from distractions and influence. Access to reference books or materials is not allowed.

The knowledge test is taken online and remotely invigilated using Rogo. Remote invigilation software also allows for the test to be taken at other locations that suit the apprentice. Paper copies are also available on demand.

It is important that the requirements for taking the knowledge test including the room / desk layout and pre-test checks are met. Where these requirements are not met the test could be voided.

6.2 Observation

- 3 hours minutes (10%+)
- Apprentices work place
- Graded Fail / Pass / Distinction

The observation offers apprentices a chance to showcase their ability to safely and effectively apply the Knowledge, Skills, and Behaviours in their workplace. This process will leverage the apprentice's skills and bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application

The apprentice will complete this practical assessment in the workplace to reflect part of a typical working day.

The IEPA will observe the apprentice for 3 hours. This includes a total of 50 minutes for questioning. (10 minutes of questioning at the end of each of the 5 tasks).

The timings of the task are allocated below:

Task 1
26 minutes for the observation plus 10 minutes at the end for questioning
Task 2
42 minutes for the observation plus 10 minutes at the end for questioning
Task 3
26 minutes for the observation plus 10 minutes at the end for questioning
Task 4
26 minutes for the observation plus 10 minutes at the end for questioning
Task 5
10 minutes for the observation plus 10 minutes at the end for questioning

The observation may be split into discrete sections held over a maximum of 1 working day. The length of a working day is typically considered to be 7.5 hours. The Independent End Point Assessor has the discretion to increase the time of the observation by up to 10% to allow the apprentice to complete a task at the end of this component of the EPA.

The following activities **MUST** be observed during the observation:

The Independent End Point Assessor must be unobtrusive whilst conducting the observation.

Task 1: Diets

- Interpret and evaluate diet sheets in order to safely store, prepare and present the diet for a nominated species or group and consider the individual needs of the animals.

Task 2: Servicing an enclosure

- For a nominated species, safely enter, service, clean and exit the enclosure identifying any potential physical hazards and biohazards and dispose of the waste appropriately.
- Correctly collect, document and store a suitable veterinary sample.
- While looking at a nominated enclosure, assess the existing features and suitability of the enclosure, highlighting the existing features which allow the animal's physical, social and behavioural needs to be met, propose improvements that could be made to the enclosure to better meet these needs, and identify any potential physical hazards or biohazards.

Task 3: Enrichment

- For a nominated species, create and deliver suitable enrichment. Evaluate the effectiveness of the enrichment in terms of animal behaviour.

Task 4: Animal Training

- Identify and select an animal to train using positive reinforcement-based techniques and apply these techniques in the animal's routine, monitoring and recording the results and giving feedback to the responsible supervisor*

** In relation to this task a colleague can take on the role of responsible supervisor. The colleague will not be allowed to ask questions or prompt the apprentice in any way.*

Task 5: Enhanced animal contact situation

- Post gateway, during the EPA period, the apprentice will be required to conduct an animal contact situation with a visitor, or live audience. This will be documented by video recording the apprentice only and should not include any visitors or audience members, to be played to the IA on the day of the observation.
- The animal contact situation must be a live demonstration with an animal and the recording of the encounter should be no more than 10 minutes (+10%).
- During this task the Independent End Point Assessor will view the recording during the observation time and assess the apprentice on the KSB's mapped to this method and ask any follow up questions required.

The observation should be conducted in the following way, to take account of the occupational context in which the apprentice operates:

For Tasks 1-5 the apprentice will have 10 minutes at the end of the task for the Independent End Point Assessor to ask any questions based on the task to confirm the apprentice's understanding. Independent end point assessors must use the question bank as a source for questioning but must use their professional judgement to tailor those questions appropriately and are responsible for generating appropriate follow-up questions in-line with the assessor's training and the EPAO's standardisation process.

The Independent End Point Assessor will not be allowed to ask any questions during the tasks and will have the opportunity to ask any questions during the time allocated at the end of the assessment.

KSBs observed, and answers to questions, must be documented by the Independent End Point Assessor. The Independent End Point Assessor will make all grading decisions.

6.3 Professional Discussion Based on Portfolio Evidence

- 90 minutes (10%+)
- Any suitable location (quite room, free from distraction, noise and influence)
- Graded Fail / Pass / Distinction

The professional discussion will be a structured discussion between the IEPA and the apprentice and is held under controlled conditions. The professional discussion will normally take place face-to-face, on the employer/training providers premises. The professional discussion consists of a minimum of 15 competency-based questions, some of which will be taken from the iPET Network standardised question bank and some will be generated by the assessor. Follow-up questions may be used to probe further into the detail to satisfy the IEPA of the apprentice's depth of knowledge.

The IEPA will review the apprentice's portfolio before the assessment and this will inform the professional discussion. The apprentice will be expected to attend the assessment with a copy of their portfolio, this can be electronic or paper based so that they can refer to this when answering questions. Where an apprentice would like to access their online portfolio via a phone or other device, they should notify the IEPA of this prior to the assessment starting. The IEPA will then allow the apprentice to take the device into the assessment with them. The device can only be used for the purposes of accessing an online portfolio and the screen must be viewable by the IEPA during use.

The assessment methods can be delivered in any order and must be taken over two days.

7. Preparation for End Point Assessment

Being aware of what to anticipate in each assessment can boost the apprentice's confidence when facing an EPA. As the training provider or employer, you possess knowledge about your apprentice and are in an ideal position to assist and guide them in their preparation for the end-point assessment.

7.1 Preparing the Apprentice for the Multiple Choice Test

Fully utilise sample papers or assessments to enable the apprentice to practice answering multiple-choice questions at the suitable level.

Ensure you are well-informed about the software requirements and access to the IT platform ROGO. Familiarise yourself with the ***Examination and Invigilation End Point Assessment Policy***.

Check that the apprentice will be taking the test in a suitable environment.

7.2 Preparing the Apprentice for the Observation

Regular assessments by the apprentice's work-based supervisor are crucial to verify that the apprentice consistently performs tasks up to the required standard. These checks serve to prevent the development of detrimental habits that could jeopardise the apprentice's success in the EPA.

To enhance readiness for the assessment, the apprentice should practice designated tasks in controlled settings with an assessor, adhering to specified time constraints. This practice helps familiarise the apprentice with the tasks and contributes to reducing stress on the assessment day.

In anticipation of the assessment, the employer must ensure that the apprentice has access to the necessary facilities and equipment as outlined in the assessment plan. If the IEPA determines that the facilities and/or equipment are insufficient for the apprentice to complete the assessment, they reserve the right to cancel the EPA. Therefore, meeting all

requirements is crucial. Any concerns before the assessment day should be directed to the EPA Team for advice.

7.3 Preparing the Apprentice for the Professional Discussion Based on Portfolio Evidence

Before reaching the gateway, the apprentice should have fulfilled all the requirements outlined in the apprenticeship standard, ensuring they possess the necessary knowledge, skills, and behaviours to effectively respond to questions during this assessment.

Within a 90 minute timeframe, the apprentice is tasked with answering all the questions. It is advisable to provide support by engaging in mock question sessions beforehand, allowing them to practice delivering concise responses. It's also beneficial for them to practice answering questions from individuals they may be less familiar with. The key to feeling at ease in an assessment environment is through consistent practice.

It is essential to confirm that the apprentice is acquainted with the structure of their portfolio and the mapping of each Knowledge, Skills, and Behaviours (KSB). This familiarity enables them to effortlessly locate relevant evidence when responding to questions.

8. What to Expect on the Day of End Point Assessment

Please be aware that as part of iPET Network's quality assurance procedures, there might be the presence of a Lead Independent End Point Assessor or Internal Quality Assurer for one or more components of your apprentice's End Point Assessment. In such instances, there is no need for concern; their role will be discreet, and they will neither speak nor participate in the assessment of your apprentice in any manner.

The apprentice must attend adequately prepared for their EPA. It is the responsibility of the employer and training provider to clearly communicate the specifics of when and where the assessments will occur to the apprentice. Providing the apprentice with access to pertinent support resources and opportunities to ask questions will ensure they have a clear understanding of what to anticipate on the assessment day.

8.1 Authenticating the Apprentice's Identification

At the commencement of each assessment component, the apprentice's photographic identification, such as a current passport or driving license, will be verified to ensure authenticity and compliance with the General Data Protection Regulations 2018 (GDPR). In the event that the apprentice does not possess these forms of photographic ID, please contact iPET Network ahead of the scheduled End Point Assessment date.

8.2 Apprentice Instruction and Conduct

Mobile devices must be turned off and left outside the designated room/area for the assessment, except when used to access the portfolio or required as part of an assessment component.

Apprentices are prohibited from possessing unauthorised materials or equipment, such as notes and bags, as their presence will be regarded as a breach of assessment rules.

Compliance with instructions for each assessment, including adhering to exam conditions outlined in the assessment plan, is expected from apprentices. Failure to comply may result in the assessment being halted or deemed invalid.

Given the controlled environment of the assessments, the IEPA will oversee the supervision of apprentices during breaks to uphold the security of the assessment.

8.3 Unexpected Situation or Emergencies

In an emergency, the assessment will be paused and the apprentice will be given the chance to answer the remaining questions or complete the practical tasks when the assessment is able to restart (this may not be on the same day, depending on the nature of the emergency). Any questions asked up to that point will be marked and the apprentice will not be able to return to those questions.

When the assessment resumes, the apprentice will be allowed the remaining time to complete the remaining questions or practical tasks.

If the apprentice feels unwell at any time during the assessment, the Independent End Point Assessor should be notified immediately.

If the apprentice is unable to continue with the EPA the IEPA will pause the assessment and notify iPET Network.

In an emergency, such as the fire alarm sounding, the assessment will be paused and the apprentice will be given the chance to answer the remaining questions or complete the practical tasks when the assessment is able to restart (this may not be on the same day, depending on the nature of the emergency). Any questions asked up to that point will be marked and the apprentice will not be able to return to those questions.

When the assessment resumes, the apprentice will be allowed the remaining time to complete the remaining questions or practical tasks.

If the apprentice feels unwell at any time during the assessment, the Independent End Point Assessor should be notified immediately.

If the apprentice is unable to continue with the apprenticeship assessment the Independent End Point Assessor will pause the assessment and notify IPET Network.

9. Independent End Point Assessors (IEPAs)

IEPAs are recruited and trained to conduct and mark the observation and the Professional Discussion underpinned by portfolio.

The IEPA will be occupationally competent, qualified to level 3 or above, relevant work experience as a Zoo Keeper / Aquarist with a minimum of 5 years working experience in the zoological sector.

All IEPAs will participate in standardisation activities at least annually.

10. End Point Assessment Marking and Results

The observation and professional discussion Informed by Portfolio Evidence have pre-determined standardised grading criteria as set out in the Assessment Plan. The IEPA can use only these grading criteria to make their judgement.

The multiple choice test will be automatically marked by iPET Network's secure online e-assessment platform.

All elements of the EPA are subject to internal quality assurance once the assessments have been completed.

10.1 Overall Grading

This apprenticeship includes fail, pass and distinction grades. To achieve a pass grade, apprentices will competently perform their role, demonstrating the application of the KSBs against the standard.

A final grade will be awarded as per the criteria in Table 1.

Table 1

Assessment Method 1: Multiple Choice Test	Assessment Methods 2: Observation	Assessment Method 3: Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio	Overall Grading
Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
Pass/Distinction	Pass	Pass/Pass/Distinction	Pass
Pass/Distinction	Pass/Distinction	Pass	Pass
Pass	Pass/Distinction	Pass/Distinction	Pass

Distinction	Distinction	Distinction	Distinction
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If the Apprentice fails any one of the assessments it will be deemed to be an overall fail

The final grade decision, subject to standardisation and moderation, is recommended by the IEPA using the grading criteria above and guidance and documentation provided by iPET Network. Once internal quality assurance processes have been completed iPET Network will confirm the final grade.

10.2 Publishing Results

Once iPET Network has received the results of each element of the EPA and internal quality assurance processes have been followed, results will be provided to the training provider to disseminate to the employer and apprentice. Results are provided within 10 working days to the training provider following the apprentice's completion of each component of the EPA.

For successful apprentices:

- Confirmation of the element grade i.e. Pass or Distinction will be entered onto ACE 360 for each component of the EPA.

For unsuccessful apprentices:

- For the element that the apprentice has been unsuccessful in a Fail grade will be entered on ACE 360 and feedback will be uploaded to assist the apprentice in preparing for a resit or retake. For the observation and the professional discussion this will consist of assessor feedback on the areas not achieved and for the multiple

choice test this will consist of a breakdown of how many questions were passed or failed against each of the 11 knowledge test criteria

11. Re-sits and Re-takes

If an apprentice does not succeed in one or more assessment methods, they may have the opportunity for a re-sit or re-take, as long as all assessments are completed within a six-month timeframe. Re-sits or re-takes beyond this period would necessitate a complete re-evaluation of all elements of the EPA.

Decisions regarding each individual case will be made collaboratively between the employer and iPET Network, and any actions, if approved, will be at the employer's discretion. Re-sits are not permitted for the sole purpose of improving a grade, such as moving from a Pass to a Distinction.

In cases where a re-sit or re-take is agreed upon, the grading will generally be capped at a Pass unless there are exceptional circumstances verified by iPET Network. A re-take indicates that the apprentice requires additional learning or training, while a re-sit does not; apprentices needing a re-take should have a support plan in place to prepare them for this.

12. Certification

iPET Network will apply for the Apprenticeship Certificate on the day of disclosing the apprentice's overall result in the End-point Assessment. The DFE will then dispatch the Apprenticeship Certificate to the employer of the apprentice via recorded delivery. This process may take an additional 20 days from the date of application by iPET Network.

13. End Point Assessment Cancellation

There may be instances where it becomes necessary to cancel or reschedule an EPA booking. Depending on the time remaining between the cancellation and the scheduled EPA event,

relevant fees for cancellation or amendment may apply. Please refer to the **End Point Assessment Lead Training Provider / Employer Centre Pack**.

14. End Point Assessment Enquiry or Appeal

The apprentice has the right to make an assessment appeal for part or all of their end-point assessment; please refer to the iPET Network **EPA Enquiries and Appeals Policy**. Appeals must be submitted using the iPET Network **Appeals Form**.

Version Control

Date of Amendment	Version Number	Amendments
09/01/2024	1	Updated Standard Version
27/02/2026	1.1	Formatting of Document Changed