ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT AWARDS

Skills for a greener world

EEA Level 2 End-point Assessment for Groundworker

Specification

QAN 610/6026/4
ST0513 V1.2

Specification for

EEA Level 2 End-point Assessment for Groundworker

QAN 610/6026/4

Updates to this specification

Since the first publication of the Energy & Environment Awards Groundworker Specification (GW) – the following updates have been made.

Version	Date first published	Section updated	Page(s)
v1.0	August 2025	First published	All

Section 1: At a glance EPA summary

Qualification name	EEA Level 2 End-point Assessment for Groundworker
Ofqual qualification number	610/6026/4
Standard reference	ST0513
Assessment plan	V1.2
Standard title	Groundworker
Level	2
On-programme duration	Typically 18 months
Gateway readiness	Mandatory requirements: • Employer or training provider must confirm the apprentice is ready to take the EPA • Apprentice must achieve English and mathematics qualifications in line with the apprenticeship funding rules • Compile and submit an EPA portfolio which the professional discussion will be based • Submit any policies and procedures as requested by Energy & Environment Awards To confirm the Apprentice has met all Gateway pre-requisites, employer must complete, sign and submit the Gateway Eligibility Form (GER) to Energy & Environment Awards. See Appendix B, Groundworker Supporting Documents 'Gateway Eligibility Form.'

End-point assessment duration	Typically 3 months after the Gateway
End-point assessment methods and their order	The assessment components can be delivered in any order. • Knowledge test • Skills test • Professional discussion based on an EPA portfolio The whole end-point assessment must be completed over 3 x 8 hour day (24 hours in total) within a maximum period of 3 months after Gateway.
End-point assessment methods and component grading	Knowledge test: Fail; Pass or Distinction Skills test: Fail or Pass Professional discussion based on an EPA portfolio: Fail; Pass or Distinction
Overall Grading	Fail; Pass or Distinction
Certification	Energy & Environment Awards request Apprenticeship completion certificates from the ESFA
Glossary of Terms	Appendix A, Groundworker Supporting Documents

Objective

The purpose of the Groundworker (GW) end-point assessment (EPA) is to confirm that an apprentice is fully capable of doing their job before they receive their apprenticeship certificate. It also helps to demonstrate that what an apprentice has learned can be applied in the real world.

Once the apprentice has completed the GW end-point assessment requirements successfully and has been certified they could take on the following job role:

Groundworker: Groundworkers are essential in construction and civil engineering projects, responsible for preparing sites, installing drainage systems, concreting, construction roads and pathways, and performing final landscaping tasks Groundworkers are able to transfer between heavy construction and civil engineering sites as well as house building, commercial building and general building sites. Groundworkers work for all types of construction companies from small subcontractors to large main contractors.

Gateway readiness

Gateway takes place before the EPA can start. The employer and training provider will review their apprentice's knowledge, skills and behaviours to see if they have met the minimum requirements of the apprenticeship set out in the apprenticeship standard and are ready to take the assessment. Only apprentices who complete gateway successfully can start the EPA. Gateway pre-requisites are listed in the summary table above. The Gateway Eligibility Form must be completed see Appendix B, Groundworker Supporting Documents.

Recognition of prior learning (RPL)

Energy & Environment Awards does not recognise any apprentice prior learning (RPL) or prior achievement (RPA) for the purpose of amending the assessment requirements of any end-point assessments.

Please refer to the Energy & Environment Awards RPL and RPA policy at https://www.energyenvironmentawards.co.uk/end-point-assessment/policies-and-fees/

In order for Energy & Environment Awards to award an end-point assessment qualification, the apprentice must successfully complete all required assessment components with Energy & Environment Awards. This means that:

- each of the EPA components must be completed in full with Energy & Environment Awards
- where an apprentice transfers to Energy & Environment Awards from another EPAO they have to undertake the entire EPA with Energy & Environment Awards
- components of the EPA cannot be certificated in isolation
- evidence produced for the portfolio must be related to the time the apprentice is on their apprenticeship programme to demonstrate current practice
- examples used by the apprentice, during the professional discussion, must relate to the time they were on their apprenticeship programme

This does not affect the Gateway requirements which must be met in order for an apprentice to be eligible for end-point assessment.

This does not affect any reasonable adjustments that may be granted.

Section 2: End-point assessment components

Component 1: Knowledge test

Overview

The knowledge test is a computer-based test which consists of 50 multiple-choice questions. Paper-based tests are available on request.

Apprentices have 90 minutes to complete the test.

The multiple-choice questions will have four possible answers of which one will be correct.

The Pass mark is 30 correct answers.
The Distinction mark is 42 correct answers.

For this paper:

- access to the internet or intranet is NOT allowed
- apprentices cannot refer to any reference books or materials
- a scientific calculator is not required.

Apprentices must take the test in a quiet space, free from distractions and influence, in the presence of an Energy & Environment Awards-approved invigilator.

Knowledge Test Coverage

The knowledge test consists of 50 knowledge questions.
The table below lists each of the knowledge elements, assessed in the knowledge test. Amplification and Guidance can be found in the table below.

Number of Questions	Knowledge	Amplification and Guidance (where required)
4 - 6	**K1**: The principles of health, safety, welfare and environmentally responsible work practices and how they must be applied in relation to the work, self and to others including understanding the principles of risk assessments	1. Principles of: • health, safety, welfare and environmentally responsible work practices: impact on the physical and mental well-being of workers; preventing accidents and injuries; well-being of workers; minimising environmental impact • risk assessments: identify hazards; who might be harmed and how; the likelihood and severity of the risks; control; review and update 2. Application of health, safety, welfare, and environmentally responsible work practices: • personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, helmets, and safety boots; regular health checks • safety protocols, such as proper lifting techniques, correct use and maintenance of machinery and tools

Number of Questions	Knowledge	Amplification and Guidance (where required)
		• access to clean drinking water, rest areas, and sanitary facilities • practices that reduce waste, such as recycling materials and using eco-friendly products • protecting local wildlife and habitats • taking personal responsibility for one's own health and safety and ensuring the safety and well-being of colleagues and the public
5 - 7	**K2**: Basic awareness of environmental and health hazards e.g. Japanese knotweed, asbestos. How to identify contaminated ground conditions and the procedures for working safely on it	Basic awareness of: 1. environmental hazards, including description and identification of Japanese knotweed, contaminated ground 2. health hazards, including description, identification and procedures for safe work for asbestos 3. procedures for working safely on contaminated ground: • site assessment • Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) • safe working practices • decontamination procedures

Number of Questions	Knowledge	Amplification and Guidance (where required)
		• emergency procedures • environmental protection
2 - 4	**K3**: Basic principles of Building Information Modelling (BIM), drawings, method statements, manufacturers' information, work schedules and specifications	1. Basic principles, including definition, purpose and content, of: • Building Information Modelling (BIM) • drawings e.g. plans, elevations and sections • method statements covering scope of work, safety measures, equipment and materials, step-by-step instructions • manufacturer's information e.g. technical details and installation instructions • work schedules e.g. list of tasks, timeline and dependencies • specifications e.g. material requirements and quality standards
1 - 3	**K4**: Technology including key factors and systems of work appropriate to different work environments and industry sectors	1. Technology such as: • GPS and surveying equipment, drones • wearable technology • machinery with safety features

Number of Questions	Knowledge	Amplification and Guidance (where required)
		• two-way radio • mobile apps • automated machinery • prefabrication

5 - 7	**K5**: The differences between modern and traditional construction methods and the physical and environmental factors when undertaking construction work and their potential impacts	1. The **differences** between modern and traditional construction methods:
		• traditional methods such as bricklaying, timber framing, stone masonry:
		  ○ labour-intensive, time consuming, physically demanding and rely heavily on manual skill
		  ○ higher risks of injury and fatigue
		  ○ proper training and safety measures are essential
		  ○ materials may be less sustainable or harder to source and have higher costs
		• modern methods such as prefabrication, modular construction, 3D printing:
		  ○ made off-site

Number of Questions	Knowledge	Amplification and Guidance (where required)
		○ more efficient because reduce construction time and labour requirements, less physical strain. ○ need to be trained in using new technologies and equipment ○ greater precision and quality control ○ incorporates sustainable practices and materials 2. The **physical** factors and their potential impacts: • site conditions such as soil type, topography, and existing structures may involve excavation, levelling, and soil stabilisation • weather conditions may delay work, affect material properties, and pose safety risks • access and logistics of transporting, delivering and storing materials and equipment stored safely and efficiently 3. The **environmental** factors and their potential impacts: • sustainability: should use sustainable practices, such as recycling materials, minimising waste, and using eco-friendly products

Number of Questions	Knowledge	Amplification and Guidance (where required)
		• pollution: activities can generate noise, dust, and emissions; measures to control pollution • biodiversity: impact on local wildlife and habitats; steps to protect local ecosystems, such as avoiding work during sensitive periods for wildlife, creating buffer zones, and following guidelines for habitat preservation
3 - 5	**K8**: The principles and methods of working within confined space work	1. The principles of working within confined space work including: • definition and examples • risk assessment • permit-to-work system 2. The methods of working within confined space work including: • training and competency • ventilation systems and monitoring air quality • Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) • communication • emergency procedures

Number of Questions	Knowledge	Amplification and Guidance (where required)
		• supervision and monitoring
3 - 5	**K9**: Erecting and dismantling access/working platforms	1. **Erecting** access/working platforms: planning and preparation; erecting the structure; guardrails and safety measures; inspection and testing 2. **Dismantling** access/working platforms: preparation; dismantling the structure; component check; site clean-up
3 - 5	**K11**: Locating and excavating to expose buried utility services	1. Locating buried utility services: • pre-work planning: utility maps and records; permits and notifications • site survey: visual inspection; marking out • detection equipment: Cable Avoidance Tools (CAT); Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) 2. Excavating to expose buried utility services: • safety precautions: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE); safety briefing • hand digging: initial excavation; probing • mechanical excavation: controlled use; spotters • exposing utilities: gradual exposure; support and protection

Number of Questions	Knowledge	Amplification and Guidance (where required)
		• colour coding of buried utility services (gas, water, sewage, electric, communications) • verification and documentation • post-excavation procedures; inspection and repair; backfilling; final checks
4 - 5	**K12**: Providing temporary works including excavation support	1. Temporary works and safety considerations covering: excavation support systems e.g. shoring, trench boxes, sheet piling; access platforms and scaffolding; formwork and falsework
4 - 6	**K13**: The basic principles of internal/external drainage and ducting systems	1. **Internal** drainage: • components: pipes and fittings; U-bend trap; vent pipes • installation principles: slope and gradient; pipe sizing; connections and seals 2. **External** drainage: • components: manholes and inspection chambers (including awareness of BS EN 124 requirements); gullies and drains; main sewer lines

Number of Questions	Knowledge	Amplification and Guidance (where required)
		• installation principles: site assessment; trenching; pipe laying, Buchan Traps and Non-Return Valves (NRVs) • awareness of drainage gradients • environmental considerations: Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS); pollution prevention 3. **Ducting** systems • components: duct pipes; access chambers; markers and warning tape • installation principles: route planning; depth and protection; sealing and waterproofing • Safety considerations: utility detection; signage and marking
1 - 3	**K14**: Measuring, marking, cutting and installing geo membranes to stabilise soil	4. Measuring, marking, cutting and installing geo membranes: • measuring: site assessment; using measuring tapes or laser distance meters; allowances • marking: boundary marking; guidelines • cutting: tools; cutting process • installing: site preparation; unrolling the membrane; positioning; securing: anchoring; seaming; backfilling

Number of Questions	Knowledge	Amplification and Guidance (where required)
		• safety considerations: Personal Protective Equipment (PPE); manual handling; environmental protection
1 - 3	**K15**: Gauging, mixing, placing, compacting and finishing mortars and concrete by hand and by mixer	1. Mortars and concrete: • gauging: understanding proportions, measuring materials by volume/weight • mixing: by hand including preparation, dry mixing, adding water; by mixer including loading the mixer, mixing process, checking consistency • placing: surface preparation, formwork; placing the mix • compacting such as tamping, rodding, vibrating plate, vibrating poker • finishing such as trowelling, jointing, screeding, floating, curing
1 - 3	**K16**: Reinstating excavations and ground surface finishes including installing street ironworks	1. Reinstating excavations: • backfilling, levelling • ground surface finishes: surface restoration, paving and asphalt

Number of Questions	Knowledge	Amplification and Guidance (where required)
		• installing street ironworks e.g. manhole covers, gully grates, valve boxes • safety considerations
1 - 3	**S19**: Prepare to, then direct and guide the movement of vehicles, plant or machinery (types of vehicles, plant and machinery only)	1. Purpose and features of: • vehicles: dump trucks, excavators; backhoe loaders • plant and machinery: bulldozers, skid steer loaders, trenchers, compactors: concrete mixers, pumps • specialised equipment: hydraulic breakers, laser levels, pipe layers, augers Note: Only types of vehicles, plant and machinery will be assessed in the multiple-choice test

Knowledge test roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Invigilator	Is typically provided by the employer or training provider. Attend induction training as directed by Energy & Environment Awards. Must not invigilate an assessment, solely, if they have delivered the assessed content to the apprentice. Invigilate and supervise the apprentice during tests and in breaks during assessment methods to prevent malpractice in line with the Energy & Environment Awards' invigilation procedures.
Employer/Training Provider	Ensure that the knowledge test is scheduled with Energy & Environment Awards for a date and time which allow the apprentice to be well prepared. Following Energy & Environment Awards guidance in setting up and confirming IT provision for the on-screen test.
Energy & Environment Awards	Arrange for the knowledge test to take place, in consultation with the employer/training provider. Mark knowledge test answers accurately according to the mark scheme and procedures.

Component 2: Skills test

Overview

In a skills test, an independent assessor, appointed by Energy & Environment Awards, observes an apprentice completing three tasks, set by Energy & Environment Awards, in a simulated environment. These tasks are laying paving using slabs, concreting, and drainage/installing ironworks. The simulated environment will reflect a realistic work environment, situation and conditions and will ensure the test can be carried out within timescale, consistently and cost-effectively. By completing the three tasks the apprentice will demonstrate the application of all the relevant knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) assessed in the skills test.

The following table outlines the procedure for conducting the skills test:

Assessors	1 independent assessor, appointed by Energy & Environment Awards.
Practical structure	The skills test must be carried out over an assessment time period of 3 x 6 hour days +/- 10%. This allows sufficient time for the knowledge test and professional discussion to be scheduled during the 3-day period, which can include consecutive or non-consecutive days. 30 minutes for lunch breaks is allowed for each day. There may also be breaks during the skills test to allow the apprentice to move from one location to another and for comfort breaks. During these breaks, the clock will be stopped and then restarted to ensure that the assessment duration is not reduced. Independent assessors may observe up to a maximum of 3 apprentices at any one time, (subject to Energy & Environment Awards approval of the assessment environment), to allow for cost effective use of resources while maintaining quality and rigour. Apprentices will not be allowed to communicate with each other during these breaks or at any time during the skills test. Due to the physical nature of the tasks requiring two persons to lift certain materials, a person not being assessed should be made

	available by the employer. This person must not direct any activity and must take instruction from the apprentice. After the task completion the independent assessor will ask 6 open questions to assess related underpinning knowledge. They may ask follow-up questions where clarification is required. Questioning will be completed within the total time allowed for the skills test.
Where will the assessment take place?	The skills test must be conducted: • in a simulated environment that reflects a realistic work environment, situation and conditions
What are the tasks that will be covered?	The skills test comprises three tasks: • laying paving using slabs • concreting • drainage/installing ironworks For further details refer to 'Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSBs) coverage' below pages [23-28]
Who sets the task(s)?	Energy & Environment Awards set the tasks. Energy & Environment Awards provide guidance on the requirements for the simulated environment and associated resources required for the skills test. For further details refer to Appendix D, Groundworker Supporting Documents The apprentice will be provided with both written and verbal instructions on the tasks they must complete including timescales.
What resources can the apprentice use?	Equipment and resources needed for the skills test must: • be provided by the employer or training provider • include a suitable simulated environment • include plant, machinery, equipment and PPE required for the job • be in good and safe working condition

	• include the availability of an additional person to help with lifting tasks requiring two persons Relevant work instructions/manuals must be available in hard copy or electronically.
How many questions will the apprentice be asked?	The independent assessor: • will ask 6 standardised open questions to assess the related underpinning knowledge • may ask follow-up questions in order to seek clarification
What will the questions focus on?	Underpinning knowledge related to the tasks.
Grading	Fail or Pass

Skills test knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) coverage

The skills test covers:

Health and Safety	Amplification and Guidance (where required)
K10 Establishing work area protection	Apprentices should have an understanding of the: • Health and Safety at Work Act • principles of Construction Design and Management requirements for establishing the working area, safety of other workers and protection for members of the public • minimum requirements for signing, lighting (where applicable) and guarding
S1 Work safely and securely in compliance with given information, organisational policies and procedures, and current health, safety and welfare legislation including following the procedures for working in contaminated ground	Apprentices should: • use the Task Briefing and Risk Assessment/Method Statement to identify and secure the work area, which should be fenced off and suitably signed, with barriers of sufficient strength and stability • undertake works following the RA/MS • implement legislative and regulatory requirements for, amongst others, HASWA, CDM, PUWER, MH, PPE, COSHH, etc. As the skills test is carried out under simulated conditions, apprentices should be prepared to answer questions about procedures for working in

	contaminated ground such as: site assessment; identifying PPE; containment and control; excavation and handling
Skills Test: Interpreting available information and the skills test brief	Amplification and Guidance (where required)

S3 Interpret and follow verbal and written work instructions from supervisors and site managers	Apprentices must be able to demonstrate interpreting and following:
	• verbal instructions
	• written instructions and information used in
	  ○ drawings and sketches, e.g. symbol, notations and measurements
	  ○ utility maps, e.g. symbol and notations
	  ○ task briefs
	  ○ method statements

S4 Access, interpret and use drawings and specifications	Apprentices must be able to identify: • the task requirements using the briefings and drawings provided. This includes identification of e.g. specification, dimensions, tolerances and interpretation of these to plan the works area • appropriate resources from the briefings • safety requirements
S5 Select the required resources including tools and fixtures	Apprentices should be able to:

	• select the correct materials and hand/power tools or specialist equipment required to complete work activities associated with the task, taking into consideration the safe use of the materials, equipment and suitability of tools and equipment • check equipment is within service date and has a valid PAT certificate/sticker
S8 Gauge and mix mortars and concrete by hand and by mixer	Apprentices should be able to • set up and use the correct hand and power tools, plant and equipment required • select appropriate quantities of materials, mix and pour concrete • take into consideration safe use of the equipment and suitability of tools and equipment, including suitable PPE, RPE, for the mixing of concrete for use in the slab and bedding/haunches
S11 Install and test basic drainage and ducting	Apprentices should be able to: • select and use the correct hand and power tools, plant and equipment required to cut, lay, joint and test drainage and ducting • take into consideration safe use of the equipment and suitability of tools and equipment, including suitable PPE, for the provision of the drainage and associated fittings and chambers • work to the levels and dimensions and appropriate tolerances

S13 Transport and place, then compact and finish concrete to slabs/bases, footing oversites, paths, form slab edgings including positioning reinforcement and kerbs	Apprentices should be able to: • select and use the appropriate hand and power tools, plant and equipment required to move, place, compact and finish the concrete slab and associated edgings • take into consideration safe use of the equipment and suitability of tools and equipment, including suitable PPE and application of a mesh cutter, for the cutting of the reinforcement mesh, cutting of the edging and placement of the concrete slab • work to the levels and dimensions and appropriate tolerances
S14 Set out and lay flags, paviours and edging to paths, driveways and other areas	Apprentices should be able to: • select and use the appropriate hand and power tools, plant and equipment required to move, place, compact and finish the paviours and associated edgings • take into consideration safe use of the equipment and suitability of tools and equipment, including suitable PPE and MH techniques, for the formation and compaction of the sub-base and bedding • work to the levels and dimensions and appropriate tolerances
S15 Install ironworks relating to access covers and frames, and gully grates and frames including preparatory brickwork	Apprentices should be able to: • select and use the appropriate hand and power tools, plant and equipment required to move, place, compact and finish the inspection chambers and associated rain-water fittings

	• take into consideration safe use of the equipment and suitability of tools and equipment, including suitable PPE and MH techniques • work to the levels and dimensions and appropriate tolerances
Skills Test: Select and safe use of resources, tools and equipment	Amplification and Guidance (where required)
S6 Move, handle and store resources complying with relevant legislation and guidance	Apprentices should be able to: • select and use the appropriate manual handling techniques and equipment required to move and handle materials and ancillary equipment used within the tasks, including suitable PPE
S7 Use and maintain power tools and equipment (including: compactor plates, boning rods, portable power tools, levels, straight edges, lines, pins and laser equipment)	Apprentices should be able to: • select the correct hand/power tools or specialist equipment required to complete work activities • ensure the equipment is fit for purpose and maintained in accordance with manufactures guidance and regulatory requirements
S9 Select and use basic setting out equipment including tape measures, levels, straight edges, lines and pins, boning rods and laser equipment under guidance of the supervisor	Apprentices should be able to: • select and use the correct setting out equipment to comply with dimensional requirements of the various tasks, including use of appropriate PPE

S16 Locate and excavate to expose buried utility services using electronic location instruments	Apprentices should be able to: • select and use the correct cable avoidance tool (CAT) and associated signal generators to correctly and accurately locate services • demonstrate appropriate methods of safe excavation and support of the utility apparatus
Skills Test: Fault finding and problem solving	Amplification and Guidance (where required)
B6 Logical thinking	Examples of logical thinking include: • analytical thinking • problem solving • ability to identify logical sequence of tasks
Skills Test: Work organisation	Amplification and Guidance (where required)
B5 Independent working	Apprentices should be able to: • work independently but understand the need to request assistance when the task requires • understands limits of authority and ask for help where required • be self-reliant and able to manage time within the tasks
B7 Working effectively	Apprentices should be able to:

	• work safely to ensure a safe working environment for themselves and others in the workplace in line with health and safety requirements at all times
B8 Time management	Apprentices should be able to: • take responsibility for work for example, completes allocated work, takes proactive approach, knows own limitations

Skills test roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Independent Assessor	Provide written and verbal instructions for the skills test including timescales. Administer the skills test line with Energy & Environment Awards' requirements. Use language in the delivery of the EPA that is appropriate to level 2. Invigilate and supervise the apprentice during tests, including moving between tasks and breaks, to prevent malpractice in line with the Energy & Environment Awards' invigilation procedures. Record and report assessment outcome decisions for each apprentice, following instructions and using assessment recording documentation provided by Energy & Environment Awards.
Employer/Training Provider	The training provider must liaise effectively with the employer to ensure the apprentice is prepared for the skills test. Ensure that the apprentice is given sufficient time away from regular duties to prepare for and complete the EPA.' Provide the venue for the skills test which must be suitably equipped to allow the apprentice to attempt all aspects of the skills test. Provide all necessary tools and equipment for the apprentice. Ensure the apprentice has access to the resources used on a daily basis. Provide Energy & Environment Awards with access to any employer-specific documentation as required for example, company policies.

Role	Responsibility
	Ensure that any required supervision during the EPA period, as stated within this EPA Plan and this Specification, is in place. When necessary, provide an additional person to assist the apprentice with lifting specific materials. This person should not be involved in the assessment process. Employer/training provider must remain independent from the delivery of the EPA
Energy & Environment Awards	Arrange for the skills test to take place, in consultation with the employer/training provider and independent assessor. Energy & Environment Awards will review the arrangements for the skills test and carry out an approval process

Component 3: Professional discussion based on an EPA portfolio

Overview

The professional discussion is based on the apprentice's EPA portfolio and focuses on holistic evidence covering the KSBs relating to the professional discussion. The apprentices may refer to their EPA portfolio to help answer professional discussion questions.

The EPA portfolio is **not assessed**. The EPA Portfolio Template is designed to assist the apprentice during their professional discussion. The apprentice should use the EPA Portfolio Template to collate evidence in preparation for their professional discussion. It should only contain evidence compiled throughout the apprenticeship. The EPA Portfolio Template will be issued to employers/training providers by their Energy & Environment Awards Service Delivery Coordinator and must be completed and submitted to Energy & Environment Awards at Gateway.

The following table outlines the procedure for conducting the professional discussion based on an EPA portfolio:

Assessors	1 independent assessor approved by Energy & Environment Awards will conduct the professional discussion.
Professional discussion structure - based on an EPA portfolio	The apprentice's Manager/Mentor must support the completion of the EPA Portfolio Template tasks in accordance with company policy and procedures. **Types and number of questions:** • The independent assessor will ask 15 questions • Standardised open questions will be asked based on the contents of the evidence in the EPA portfolio to explore the apprentice's level of knowledge, skills and behaviours • Additional follow up questions are allowed, to seek clarification **Locations:** Employer's premises or a suitable venue for example a training provider's premises. **Time:**

	• The professional discussion must last 75 minutes • The independent assessor has the discretion to increase the time by up to 7.5 minutes (10%) to allow the apprentice to complete their last answer **The professional discussion will be:** • conducted by 1 independent assessor • face to face or remote, as agreed • recorded in writing using the professional discussion record template provided by Energy & Environment Awards • video recorded using relevant technology such as Microsoft Teams or an audio recording device • conducted under examination conditions The apprentice must have access to their EPA portfolio throughout the professional discussion. Although questioning will cover ALL the elements of the GW standard (listed below in this section of the Specification), the independent assessor will prioritise areas according to what they see in the EPA portfolio **For further guidance on the EPA portfolio refer to Section 5 Practical Guidance on EPA Portfolio**
What topics will be covered?	**For further details refer to 'Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSBs) Coverage below pages [33-37].**
When will the EPA portfolio be referred to?	The EPA portfolio: • will be reviewed by the independent assessor before the professional discussion • can be referred to by the apprentice to illustrate their answers **Note**: the EPA portfolio is **not** directly assessed.
Grading	Fail, Pass or Distinction

Professional discussion knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) coverage

The professional discussion based on EPA portfolio covers:

Task 1: Communication and working with others	Amplification and guidance (where required)
B1 Effective communication	Apprentices should be able to: • demonstrate when they have effectively used written and spoken communication methods • describe how they adapt their communication to different audiences (e.g. customers, colleagues) to present information • explain the importance of body positive language
B2 Customer service	Apprentices should be able to: • describe how they provide good customer service using skills and techniques such as empathy, communication, adaptability, efficiency, relationship building, problem-solving, product knowledge
B3 Respect	Apprentices should be able to: • describe how they build respectful relationships by applying the principles of equality and diversity to meet the requirements of fairness at work
B4 Teamwork	Apprentices should be able to describe: • working with others (colleagues, supervisors, clients and the public)

Task 1: Communication and working with others	Amplification and guidance (where required)
	• leading by example in a collaborative and non-confrontational way • adjusting to change in relation to the requirements of the organisation

Task 2: Health and safety	Amplification and Guidance (where required)
K6 The techniques to handle and move loads manually and with mechanical aids including guiding the movement of articulated vehicles, plant and machinery using hand signals, hand signalling equipment and verbal/electronic communication equipment and storing resources safely and securely	Apprentices should be able to: • identify the appropriate techniques and equipment required to safely move and handle materials and ancillary equipment used within tasks, including suitable PPE; use of hand signals and hand signalling equipment; verbal/electronic communication • describe the procedure for manual handling operations: assessment of a safe load , calculation of a mass and weight for loads, safe kinetic lifting technique, use of lifting aids, e.g. wheelbarrows, sack barrow and pallet trucks • demonstrate an awareness of relevant regulatory guidance: Safe use of work equipment. Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER) 1998. Approved Code of Practice and guidance ,: Manual handling. Manual Handling Operations

Task 2: Health and safety	Amplification and Guidance (where required)
	Regulations 1992 - Guidance on Regulations (fourth edition), Health and Safety (Signs and Signals) Regulations 1996
K7 Why, when and how health and safety control equipment should be used when undertaking groundworks	Apprentices should be able to: • identify the appropriate forms of protection, the purpose, selection, and correct use of appropriate PPE and RPE (Respiratory Protective Equipment) to mitigate risks including the body parts they are intended to protect • demonstrate an understanding of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) at Work Regulations, Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER)
B10 Risk Management	Apprentices should be able to: • determine how dangerous the job is and use the best ways to make it safer, starting with the most effective methods.
S19 Prepare to, then direct and guide the movement of vehicles, plant or machinery	Apprentices should be able to follow key steps to ensure safety and efficiency: • site assessment to identify potential hazards or obstacles and ensure the ground conditions are suitable • establish communication methods

Task 2: Health and safety	Amplification and Guidance (where required)
	• establish safety measure requirements such as correct PPE and set up of barriers and warning signs • identify the appropriate techniques and equipment required to move and direct plant and equipment within the workplace

Task 3: Carrying out work	Amplification and Guidance (where required)
S2 Conform with productive working practices and completing the work in accordance with the programme of work	Apprentices should be able to: • describe how they carry out work productively, to the agreed specification, in conjunction with other team members where appropriate, maintaining good working relationships • describe how they plan a sequence of work, using appropriate resources, in accordance with organisational procedures to ensure work is completed within the allocated time
S10 Install, maintain and remove temporary protection and safety arrangements for the work area relating to barriers and temporary structures, including protection, safety notices and safety lighting	Apprentices should be able to: • describe the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act as well as the principles of Construction Design and Management requirements for establishing the working area, safety of other workers and protection for members of the public

Task 3: Carrying out work	Amplification and Guidance (where required)
	• identify the minimum requirements for signing, lighting (where applicable) and guarding
S12 Measure, mark, cut and install geo-membranes to stabilise soil for re-instatement and excavations	Apprentices should be able to: • describe the process to measure, mark, cut, set out, position and secure geo-synthetic membranes for ground stabilisation • identify the requirements for using and maintaining the relevant hand and power tools
S17 Provide and remove temporary works including shallow excavation support (up to 1.2 metres)	Apprentices should be able to: • demonstrate how they identify and erect trench support systems of sufficient strength and stability • describe RA/MS and how they apply legislative and regulatory requirements e.g. HASWA, CDM, PUWER, MH, PPE, HSG150 requirements
S18 Form and reinstate excavations and surfaces to sub-grades, sub-bases and road bases	Apprentices should be able to: • demonstrate how they use appropriate equipment to construct the backfill, sub-base, base and surface layers to the correct level, using methods to compact the material that avoid damage to services,

Task 3: Carrying out work	Amplification and Guidance (where required)
	disposing of any unsuitable materials safely whilst keeping the site clean and safe
B9 Adaptability	Apprentices should be able to: • demonstrate how they respond positively and appropriately to changing circumstances

Professional discussion roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Independent Assessor	Record and report assessment outcome decisions for each apprentice, following instructions and using assessment recording documentation provided by Energy & Environment Awards.
Employer/Training Provider	The professional discussion must be scheduled with Energy & Environment Awards for a date and time which allow the apprentice to be well prepared. Ensure the apprentice has access to their portfolio before and on the day of the professional discussion.
Energy & Environment Awards	Arrange for the professional discussion to take place, in consultation with the employer/training provider and independent assessor.

Section 3: Grading and grading criteria

Component 1: Knowledge test

The following grade boundaries apply to the knowledge test:

Grade	Minimum mark	Maximum mark
Fail	0	29
Pass	30	41
Distinction	42	50

Component 2: Skills test

The apprentice must demonstrate KSBs in an integrated way.
A Fail will be awarded if an apprentice has not achieved **all** the Pass descriptors.
To gain a Pass, an apprentice must successfully achieve **all** the pass descriptors, as shown below.

Skills test	To achieve a Pass the apprentice must achieve **ALL** of the following:
Health and Safety K10 S1	Work safely, following health and safety regulations and site policies and procedures. (K10, S1)
Interpreting available information and the skills test brief S3 S4 S5 S8 S9 S11 S13 S14 S15	Interpret drawings and written instructions accurately, follow verbal instructions and select the correct resources for the task (S4, S3, S5, S9) Gauge and mix mortars according to drawings and specification. (S8) Install drainage equipment in accordance with drawings and specifications. (S11) Transport and place, then compact and finish concrete to slabs/bases to specification and drawings. (S13) Set out and lay flags, paviours and edging according to specification and drawings. (S14) Install ironworks in accordance with specification and drawings. (S15)

Skills test	To achieve a Pass the apprentice must achieve **ALL** of the following:
Select and safe use of resources, tools and equipment S6 S7 S9 S16	Move, handle and store resources safely and correctly in accordance with legislation and site safety procedures. (S6) Use and maintain tools and equipment in-line the specification and manufacturer's instructions (S7, S9) Locate and excavate to expose buried utility services according to current regulation (e.g. HSG47) (S16)
Fault finding and problem solving B6	Solve problems effectively (B6)
Work organisation B5 B7 B8	Completes the tasks as independently as far as the role allows, producing outcomes to requirements (B7) Complete the task within the time allocated without direction from others (B5, B8)

Component 3: Professional discussion based on an EPA portfolio

The apprentice must demonstrate core and pathway specific KSBs for Groundworker in an integrated way.
A Fail will be awarded if an apprentice has not achieved all the Pass descriptors.
To gain a Pass, an apprentice must successfully achieve all of the Pass descriptors.
To gain a Distinction, an apprentice must successfully achieve **all** of the Pass descriptors and **all** of the Distinction descriptors.

Professional discussion based on an EPA portfolio	Pass Apprentice must successfully achieve all of the Pass descriptors	Distinction Apprentice must successfully achieve all of the Pass descriptors and all of the Distinction descriptors.
Task 1: Communication and working with others		
Communication and working with others B1, B2, B3, B4	Demonstrates when they have used a range of communication methods to effectively communicate with customers and colleagues and explain the importance of positive body language and presentation (B1)	Can provide examples of where they have exceeded a) customer and b) colleague expectations and the positive outcome their actions created. (B1, B2, B3, B4)
	Demonstrate how they develop respectful and positive relationships with customers	

Professional discussion based on an EPA portfolio	Pass Apprentice must successfully achieve all of the Pass descriptors	Distinction Apprentice must successfully achieve all of the Pass descriptors and all of the Distinction descriptors.
	and colleagues and work effectively as part of a team (B2, B3, B4)	
Task 2: Health and Safety		
Health and Safety K6, K7 S19 B10	Challenges unsafe working practices (B10)	Can provide examples of where they have taken the lead in challenging unsafe working practices and how they did it (B10)
	Provide examples of where they have directed and guided the movement of vehicles, plant or machinery according to site safety rules (S19)	Can explain the consequences of not following site safety rules and procedures when moving and handling loads and guiding the movement of vehicles (S19, K6, K7)
	Correctly describe the techniques to handle and move loads (K6)	

Professional discussion based on an EPA portfolio	Pass Apprentice must successfully achieve all of the Pass descriptors	Distinction Apprentice must successfully achieve all of the Pass descriptors and all of the Distinction descriptors.
	Correctly describe why, when and how health and safety control equipment should be used (K7)	
Task 3: Carrying out work		
Carrying out work S2, S10, S12, S17, S18 B9	Demonstrate and describe how they would complete the work in accordance with the programme of work and work instructions (S2)	Demonstrate an evaluation of actions taken to complete work in accordance with the work programme and explain the contingency and problems solving steps used. (S2, B9)
	Describe how to select the correct procedure and equipment to respond to unexpected situations (B9)	
	Correctly describe how to install, maintain and remove temporary protection and safety arrangements for the work area (S10)	Can explain the consequences of not utilising temporary protection or making safety arrangements including shallow excavation support (S10, S17)

Professional discussion based on an EPA portfolio	Pass Apprentice must successfully achieve all of the Pass descriptors	Distinction Apprentice must successfully achieve all of the Pass descriptors and all of the Distinction descriptors.
	Provide examples of and correctly describe the procedure to provide and remove temporary works including shallow excavation support (S17)	
	List the procedural steps to measure, mark, cut and install geo-membranes (S12)	Provide alternative suggestions for how to achieve the end results given different job parameters such as time and cost for the customer and organisation (S12, S18)
	Provide examples of and outline how to form and reinstate excavations and surfaces to sub-grades, sub-bases and road bases (S18)	

Overall grading

The apprenticeship will be graded fail, pass or distinction. The final grade will be determined by collective performance in the three assessment components.

The knowledge test and professional discussion are marked separately and awarded a fail, pass or distinction.

The skills test is marked separately and awarded a fail or pass.

The knowledge test is based on the number of correct answers achieved. The grade for the other two assessment components is based on the number of criteria achieved.

The overall grade for the GW Standard is based on the grades in individual components as follows:

Knowledge test	Skills test	Professional discussion	Overall grading
Fail in any component			Fail
Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
Pass	Pass	Distinction	Pass
Distinction	Pass	Pass	Pass
Distinction	Pass	Distinction	Distinction

The grading criteria that will be applied for each assessment criteria along with additional details can be found in Section 3 of this Specification.

The overall grading for the GW standard is based on the grades in the individual components as follows:

- Fail – if a Fail is awarded for at least one of the components

- Pass – If at least a Pass is awarded in all 3 components
- Distinction – If a Distinction is awarded in all in the knowledge test and professional discussion and a pass in the skills test

Section 4: Resits and retakes

Apprentices who fail one or more EPA components can re-sit or re-take the failed component at the employer's discretion. The apprentice's employer needs to agree that a re-sit or re-take is appropriate. A re-sit does not need further learning, but a re-take does. Apprentices should have a supportive action plan to prepare for a re-sit or a re-take.

The employer and Energy & Environment Awards agree the timescale for a re-sit or re-take. Failed EPA components must be re-sat or re-taken within the 3 month end-point assessment period, otherwise the EPA will need to be re-sat or re-taken in full.

Re-sits and re-takes are not offered to apprentices wishing to move from pass to a higher grade.

An apprentice will get a maximum EPA grade of pass for a re-sit or re-take.

Apprentices will complete a different knowledge test when taking a re-sit or re-take.

For the skills test, apprentices will complete a different set of all three tasks when taking a re-sit or re-take.

The Energy & Environment Awards resit and re-take policy can be found at: https://www.energyenvironmentawards.co.uk/end-point-assessment/policies-and-fees/

Section 5: Practical guidance

Skills test planning and approval form

Purpose

Energy & Environment Awards must approve the employer/training provider Skills Test assessment plans. The purpose of the approval is to provide Energy & Environment Awards with assurance that the Skills Test will be conducted in line with the GW assessment plan. The approval must take place before the first Skills Test assessment is carried out. To access the service, see Appendix E, Groundworker Supporting Documents 'Level 2 GW Skills Test Planning and Approval Form.'

Submitting the form to EUIAS

To obtain approval, employers must complete the Level 2 GW Skills Test Planning and Approval Form'. This must be submitted to the EUIAS Service Delivery Team for approval at least 2 months before Gateway.

EUIAS Approval Process

Once the Skills Test Planning and Approval Form has been received the approval process will be conducted by Energy & Environment Awards. The outcomes will be shared with the employer/training provider no later than 5 working days following the review.

The employer/training provider must ensure:

- the Skills Test is to be carried out at a suitable premises. Site access for the assessor and any specific requirements must be advised in advance
- all equipment and resources are suitable for the task, in good safe working condition and certification where applicable

Please be aware:

- Skills Test approval does not guarantee the apprentice will pass the assessment
- No health and safety risk assessment has been carried out by Energy & Environment Awards

- Energy & Environment Awards approval does not remove any of the training provider obligations to ensure full coverage of the standard, and full compliance with relevant legislation
- Energy & Environment Awards approval is based only on information supplied and is not a guarantee that the selected resources on the day of the assessment will be sufficient for the Skills Test

Preparing for the skills test

Where possible, the employer/training provider should provide the apprentice with the opportunity to carry out a practice skills test as close to the real assessment described in Section 2 of the specification (Component 2). Practice skills test briefs are available in the Appendix D, Groundworker Supporting Documents.

A suitable person should be chosen to play the part of the assessor. A form for assessing the practice skills test is available in Appendix E, Groundworker Supporting Documents, and should be used by the person playing the part of the independent assessor.

Preparing for the professional discussion

A practice professional discussion should take place between the apprentice and the person acting the role of an assessor. The apprentice should draw on evidence from their EPA portfolio during the discussion.

Guidance on the EPA portfolio

Throughout the on-programme part of their apprenticeship, the apprentice must compile an EPA portfolio to support them in the professional discussion. The professional discussion will draw on the evidence contained in the EPA portfolio.

The EPA portfolio should reflect their individual experiences and the activities carried out during this period and meet the requirements outlined in the assessment plan.

A completed EPA portfolio is one of the Gateway requirements.

The EPA portfolio is **not assessed**. It serves the following purposes:

- It provides the opportunity for each apprentice to provide examples of the knowledge, skills and behaviours that will be assessed in the professional discussion
- A carefully prepared EPA portfolio will support the apprentice during the professional discussion
- It allows the assessor to review the EPA portfolio before the professional discussion to help focus and contextualise the questions the apprentice will be asked

The EPA portfolio is a record of how each apprentice demonstrated the knowledge, skills and behaviours that are assessed in the professional discussion. Apprentices will have access to their EPA portfolio during the professional discussion. When the employer/training provider registers their apprentices with Energy & Environment Awards they will have access to the EPA Portfolio Template.

The role of the employer/training provider

Employer/training providers are expected to support the apprentice in preparing their portfolio by:

- providing clear instruction and deadlines to allow the apprentice to plan and compile their portfolio in preparation for the Gateway meeting
- advising on which pieces of evidence to select
- authenticating evidence as valid
- signing off the EPA portfolio
- submitting the portfolio to Energy & Environment Awards as part of Gateway requirements.

What to expect in the practice professional discussion?

The practice professional discussion will be based on the EPA portfolio which will provide the apprentice with the opportunity to practice discussing their KSBs gained throughout their on-programme and by referring to the evidence from their portfolio using their responses to the tasks and associated evidence. A suitable person should be chosen to play the part of the assessor.

A practice professional discussion based on an EPA portfolio template is provided for use to prepare the appropriate questions to ask and to record the apprentices' performance. See Appendix F, Groundworker Supporting Documents 'Practice Professional Discussion Template.'

As part of the practice exercise, apprentices should have access to their portfolio to support their responses.

Preparing for the knowledge test

While on-programme, the employer and/or training provider should brief the apprentice on the areas to be assessed by the knowledge test, as detailed in Section 2 in this specification. It is good practice to identify the areas within the learning programme where the relevant knowledge is delivered, ensuring that apprentices are aware that elements of these might come up in the test.

The knowledge test is aligned to the standard rather than a specific job role that the apprentice may be doing. The questions have been written to reflect the Groundworker role as a whole and not focussed on specific plant, machinery, or employer-specific processes.

In readiness for end-point assessment, the apprentice should complete a practice knowledge test. This should be undertaken in advance of the live knowledge test, with enough time to mark the test, and provide feedback to the apprentices. See Appendix C, Groundworker Supporting Documents 'Practice Knowledge Test.'

For maximum effect, ensure the test is taken in exam conditions similar to those that will be experienced in a live test.

Section 6: Authenticity and security of apprentice work

The apprentices must be advised by their training provider and employer that copying of any work (whether it is from another apprentice or from internal, external documents or source) and presenting it as their own will be deemed as malpractice and will lead to their work being disqualified. Apprentices must not share their work or allow any person to copy their work as this is not allowed and would also be deemed as malpractice.

In signing off the portfolio, training providers and employers must be satisfied that the evidence in the portfolio is:

- **adequate**: evidence must cover all relevant KSBs within the assessment plan. Adequate does not mean a large quantity of evidence. The evidence should focus on quality rather than quantity
- **authentic**: apprentices must be able to confirm and talk about the evidence that they submit with the independent assessor, appointed by the Energy & Environment Awards. It is vitally important apprentices only submit evidence relating to them
- **appropriate**: all evidence must be relevant to the KSBs assessed during the professional discussion based on an EPA portfolio
- **recent and up to date**: all evidence must be linked to the tasks in the EPA portfolio template. The evidence must be recent and current which demonstrate the apprentice's competence. The independent assessors, appointed by Energy & Environment Awards will assess current competencies. Apprentices must gather the evidence during their on-programme training.