

Level 2 End-Point Assessment for Gas Network Operative



EPA Specification Section 3 – Service Delivery and Gateway Eligibility

- EUIAS Service Delivery
- How to prepare for gateway
- The Gateway meeting
- Timeline

Contacts

This specification has been designed to provide all the advice and guidance you need to prepare yourself and your apprentices for end-point assessment. However, if you have any further questions please contact the EUIAS Help Desk using one of the following:

Help Desk email: enquiries@euias.co.uk

Help Desk telephone: 0121 713 8310

EUIAS Service Delivery

Whether you are an employer or a training provider (or both) your initial engagement will probably be with a business development manager who will introduce you to this document and take you through the EPA service that we offer. Our aim is to make the experience as straightforward and easy to engage with as possible.

The key to a successful EPA experience is early identification of requirements to enable proper planning to take place and this section explains the requirements for preparing for the Gas Network Craftsperson (GNO) EPA.

All the requirements discussed below are important, but some of them are critical, in particular the Gateway Eligibility Requirements. It is important to note that the end-point assessments cannot proceed without the Gateway Eligibility requirements being met. A completed Gateway Eligibility Report with supporting documents is required for each apprentice before EPA.

The EPA Window

All end-point assessments have a 'window' during which the end-point assessment must be completed, to avoid apprentices 'timing out'. The EPA window for the GNO Standard three months. The EPA window for each apprentice commences on the date they take the first element of their EPA, for example, the day of the multiple choice test. All EPA activities must be completed within this 3 month window and EUIAS will work with you to schedule the EPA as close to the beginning of the window as possible to allow for re-sits if necessary.

Service Level Agreement (SLA) and Cohort Registration Form

EUIAS uses three documents to capture the details of the end-point assessment agreement:

- Service Level Agreement form – signed by the lead provider
- Cohort Registration form – signed by and the lead provider; this form identifies the apprentices in the cohort

Initial Engagement

Initial engagement with EUIAS will usually take place well before the EPA is due to take place and sometimes before the apprentices start their programme. The initial engagement meeting will cover:

- The numbers of apprentices in the cohort
- Any Reasonable Adjustments you want to apply for
- The expected date(s) of EPA
- The employer and or lead provider for each apprentice
- Completion of the Service Level Agreement
- Arrangements for 'site review' to confirm that the proposed locations and requirements for the assessments:
 - The location and invigilation of the multiple choice test
 - The location of the practical assessment and questioning provides opportunities for the apprentice to cover the standard. The practical assessment will involve the apprentice

- undertaking a set task. The adapted task must be appropriate
- The location of the Interview underpinned by portfolio of evidence

Further details of the assessment methods are in Section 5 of this EPA Specification.

The EUIAS operates a two-stage payment schedule:

- Stage One applies at the registration stage when the initial registration fee is due
- Stage Two applies at Gateway, when the balance of the agreed fee is due

During the initial engagement, we will also cover the support that is available for the employers and or training providers. We are confident that most, if not all the answers you need are contained within this Specification, but we are always available to provide answers to specific queries using the Help Desk email enquiries@euias.co.uk

Appointment and Registration

The appointment stage is the first formal stage of working with EUIAS. This stage must involve both the employer and the training provider (if applicable).

Successful appointment involves the completion of the Cohort Registration Form, officially appointing EUIAS as the EPAO for this cohort. The form contains

- Details of the training provider (if applicable)
- Confirmation of learner numbers and names
- Confirmation of expected EPA dates
- Confirmation of the level of service agreed with EUIAS, with pricing
- Confirmation that you will give a minimum of three months' notice of apprentices being ready for EPA (especially important if you bring forward the completion date)
- Signatures from training provider
- A purchase order from the lead-provider to EUIAS to the value agreed

If it has not already taken place, the details of the EPA will be discussed (as described in the Initial Engagement Section above) with the employer and training provider (if applicable) to agree roles and responsibilities.

On Programme

It is the responsibility of the training provider to create and deliver the apprentice training programme, ensuring you comply with the relevant ESFA rules. The EUIAS has no formal involvement in the 'on-programme' aspect of the apprenticeship. However, we DO provide guidance on how to put together the portfolio that is required for the Interview which is underpinned by portfolio of evidence. This can be found in Section 5.

We do appreciate that circumstances change so please notify us if:

- expected end-dates change, giving at least three months' notice of readiness for end-point assessment
- any cohort details change, especially if an apprentice drops off the programme
- any anticipated changes in venues for the end-point assessments.

Scheduling the end-point assessment

The EPA for GNO is very resource intensive, both in terms of availability of specialist settings for the practical assessment with questioning and in terms of availability of the specialist assessors that are required. The apprentices must be available for all assessments. Employer, training provider and EUIAS must keep in touch and notify each other of any changes as soon as they occur.

To help things run smoothly, you must inform EUIAS between 3 and 6 months before you expect to have your Gateway meetings with the cohort. The EUIAS Service Delivery team will be contacting you during this time, to facilitate two-way communication. Your proposed EPA date may be sooner than was originally anticipated at the time of registration, which is OK so long as the apprentice(s) has been on programme for at least a year.

We cannot confirm any EPA arrangements until we have confirmation of Gateway Eligibility Report, as discussed in the next section, but we will put together a provisional plan and share it with you. As a customer, you probably want to confirm Gateway Eligibility Report on one day and have the first end-point assessments the next day. The reality is that scheduling takes time and can take varying periods of time. The early notification helps us put together a provisional schedule, but we can only confirm it after Gateway Eligibility Report requirements are all met. The fewer changes you make to the information you give us three months before Gateway, the sooner it will be before we can start the EPA. We too commit to making last-minute changes as rare as possible.

We always aim to accommodate your requirements when scheduling, taking account of availability of apprentices, location and availability of assessment venues, availability of assessors and also ensuring that we have evidence of the pre-requisites, in particular the apprentice:

- has achieved Level 1 English and Mathematics
- has compiled and submitted a portfolio of evidence to EUIAS **1 month** prior to the interview as the portfolio will underpin the interview
- has achieved Network Construction Operations (Gas) Level 1 qualification, as a minimum
- with an education, health and care plan or a legacy statement the apprenticeships English and Mathematics minimum requirement is Entry Level 3 and British Sign language qualification are an alternative to English qualifications for whom this their primary language

As soon as possible after Gateway, EUIAS will confirm with you the end-point assessment arrangements for each apprentice in the cohort.

We will always try to schedule as soon as possible within the 6-month window, to allow time for any re-sits before the window closes.

How to prepare for gateway

On completion of their on-programme learning apprentices should be ready to pass through 'gateway' to their end-point assessment.

At this point, the employer, training provider and apprentice should hold a Gateway Eligibility meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to confirm that all parties agree the apprentice has met the requirements of the apprenticeship standard and is ready for end-point assessment. Note that the EUIAS is NOT present at this meeting. It is your sole responsibility to assure yourself, along with the training provider (if applicable) that the

apprentice is ready for end-point assessment.

You are advised that the apprentice should prepare for this meeting by bringing along work-based evidence, including:

- mid and end-of-year performance reviews
- feedback to show how they have met the apprenticeship standards while on-programme.

Before the meeting, apprentices **must** have:

- achieved Level 1 English,
- achieved Level 1 Mathematics
- has achieved Network Construction Operations (Gas) Level 1 qualification, as a minimum
- for those with an education, health and care plan or a legacy statement the apprenticeships English and Mathematics minimum requirement is Entry level 3 and British Sign language qualification are an alternative to English qualifications for whom this their primary language
- compiled a portfolio to submit to EUIAS, which will underpin the interview

The portfolio **must** contain the following information:

- evidence related to the KSBs that will be assessed by the interview
- typically, ten discrete pieces of evidence
- evidence must be mapped against the KSBs
- evidence may be used to demonstrate more than one KSB; a qualitative as opposed to quantitative approach is required
- evidence sources may include:
 - workplace documentation and records, for example job task sheets, job cards, time sheets, equipment maintenance and service records
 - witness statements
 - annotated photographs
 - video clips (maximum duration in total 10-minutes)

The above is not a definitive list; other evidence sources are allowable.

- The portfolio evidence should **not** include any methods of self-assessment
- All employer contributions should focus only on direct observation of evidence (for example witness statements) rather than opinions
- All evidence provided must be valid and attributable to the apprentice
- A statement from the employer must confirm that the portfolio of evidence submitted to EUIAS at the gateway point

The portfolio is **not** assessed, it informs the questioning for the interview and allows the apprentice to refer to it to demonstrate competence.

Apprentices should be advised by employers and providers to gather this evidence throughout their on-programme training, **copies or scans of certificates WILL be required by EUIAS** before the apprentice can start EPA. Typically, the English and Mathematics qualifications will be functional skills

qualifications at Level 1 or GCSE grade E-D or 2-3 or above.

It is recommended that employers and providers complete regular checks and reviews of this evidence to ensure the apprentice is progressing and achieving the standards before the gateway meeting is arranged.

The Gateway meeting

To comply with end-point assessment rules, EUIAS is not present at the Gateway meeting. Ideally it would be conducted with the apprentice, training provider and the employer present. Gateway meetings last about an hour and are completed on or after the apprenticeship on-programme end date.

During the meeting, the apprentice, employer, and training provider will discuss the different aspects of the apprenticeship standard and confirm that the apprentice has met the full criteria of the apprenticeship standard during their on-programme training. A copy of standard and the assessment plan (ST0204/AP03) should be available at the meeting. In addition, the apprentice should be informed that EUIAS will be conducting the end-point assessment and that copies of the following policies are available on the EUIAS web site at euias.co.uk

- Appeals Policy
- Complaints Policy

At the meeting, the apprentice should be informed that they are required to have proof of their identity with them for each end-point assessment element. EUIAS will accept the following as proof of identity:

- a valid passport
- a UK driving licence
- a valid warrant card issued by HM forces or uniformed services
- other photographic ID card such as an employee ID card or travel card

At the meeting, the Gateway Eligibility Report (GER) below must be completed, agreed and signed by all 3 parties* and submitted to EUIAS at enquiries@euias.co.uk with the subject line “GER – apprentice name – provider name”.

A completed GER form is required for every apprentice entered for end-point assessment.

*Where possible. We recognise that some meetings will take place at distance in which case an email agreement from the apprentice should be appended to the GER form.

The current GNO assessment plan (ST0204/AP03) prescribes the Gateway meeting. The Gateway Eligibility Report is a requirement of EUIAS. If it is not possible to have the employer present at the time the Gateway Eligibility Form is completed by the apprentice and training provider, EUIAS will contact the employer to gain their signature.

Reasonable adjustments

If you wish to apply for reasonable adjustments on behalf of any of your apprentices, please do so at the same time as submitting the GER form, using the EUIAS Reasonable Adjustment Policy and Application that can be found at euias.co.uk

Re-sits and Re-takes

Any component that is failed can be re-sat within the EPA window. It is not possible to re-sit outside of the EPA window. If an apprentice is not successful, they can undertake a period of further training and re-take the failed components within a new EPA assessment window.

Timeline

Typical timeline in months, before and after the Gateway.

Initial engagement – typically 24 - 30 months before Gateway

Initial engagement, informal meeting between EUIAS and to agree:

- The numbers of apprentices in the cohort
- Any Reasonable Adjustments you want to apply for
- Expected location(s) for the multiple choice test, practical assessment with questioning and interview underpinned by portfolio of evidence
- The expected date(s) of EPA
- The Training Provider
- The payment schedule
- Completion of Service Level Agreement

Registration - 24-30 months before Gateway to 6 months before Gateway

The apprentice is on-programme and compiling their portfolio of evidence to support the interview.

Formal Appointment/registration using the Cohort Registration form (Triggers Stage 1 payment) EUIAS:

- EUIAS will issue the Privacy Notice which must be shared with every apprentice in the cohort

Employer and training provider:

- Confirmation of expected EPA dates
- Confirmation of the level of service agreed with EUIAS, with pricing
- Confirmation that you will give three months' notice of apprentices being ready for EPA
- Completion of the Learner Submission form including each learner in the cohort
- A purchase order from the lead provider to EUIAS to the value agreed

24 months before Gateway to
6 months before Gateway

Update calls (as agreed)

- EUIAS will periodically call designated contact to enquire about progress towards EPA
- EUIAS provides on-going support via enquiries@euias.co.uk
- Lead provider will give at least 6 months' notice of any proposed change to EPA dates

6 months before Gateway to Gateway

- Lead provider provides details of practical assessment to EUIAS i.e. venue, type of plant/equipment

3 months before Gateway to Gateway

- Employer or training provider to compile evidence of meeting eligibility requirements (Level 1 English and Mathematics, achieved or taken the tests for Network Construction Operations (Gas) level 1 qualification; for those with an education, health and care plan or a legacy statement the apprenticeships English and Mathematics minimum requirement is Entry level 3 and British Sign language qualification are an alternative to English qualifications for whom this their primary language; and compiled a portfolio to submit to EUIAS, which will underpin the interview
- Lead provider should be arranging the multiple choice test, practice assessment with questioning and interview underpinned by portfolio of evidence for the apprentices

Gateway

Employer and training provider:

- Provide completed Gateway Eligibility Report for each apprentice
- Ensure ALL eligibility requirements are met for each apprentice going forward to EPA
- Purchase order for Stage 2 payments

Gateway, and the 3-month EPA window

End-point Assessment window (Nb. 3-month window for each apprentice commences on the date of their first EPA activity)

The multiple choice test and the practical assessment with questioning can be undertaken in any order, but we strongly recommend the multiple choice test is carried out first. Our pricing is based on being able to test every apprentice in the cohort at the same time (multiple choice test). **The interview underpinned by portfolio of evidence must be the final assessment component.**

EUIAS:

- Schedule the assessments, in discussion with the employer/training provider
- Provides assessors for all assessment activities (unless otherwise agreed)
- Provides invigilator for multiple choice test (if agreed in the price)
- Arranges re-sits within the 3-month EPA window, if required
- Carries out a final moderation to confirm grading decisions
- Will provide results of EPA with 11 days of final moderation

Employer or training provider:

- Ensures apprentices are briefed and prepared for EPA, including location and timings of assessments
- Ensures apprentices are preparing for the interview by collating evidence for their portfolio
- Provides venue for the (and re-sits if required)
- Provides access and details of venue for the practical assessment with questioning, as previously agreed with EUIAS

NB. A re-take will be arranged, with the agreement of all parties, for apprentices who have failed an element or elements and are deemed to require further training before being ready for end-point assessment.