

Support Offer for Awarding Organisations

Overview

With the move towards more flexible assessment principles and increased regulatory scrutiny, AOs (previously referred to as EPAOs) face new challenges in designing, validating, and delivering high-quality apprenticeship assessments. SDN is a nationally recognised consultancy in technical education and assessment reform. Our team brings strategic insight and practical expertise to help AOs meet these evolving requirements — with confidence.

Areas of support

Organisational readiness & diagnostic review

- In-depth discovery sessions with leadership and delivery teams.
- Reviews of your governance and operational policies, processes, and practices
- Review of standards and assessment plans
- Assessment of current capability (design, delivery, QA) against new regulatory and sector expectations.
- Mapping organisational risk areas, regulatory gaps, and resource needs.
- Benchmarking readiness against Ofqual criteria.

Output: Readiness report and roadmap for transition to target state or enhancement (including any expansion of scope, redesign, or quality improvement priorities).

Assessment design & development support

- Review of assessment strategies, delivery models, and associated documentation.
- Co-design and quality assurance of assessment materials aligned to new principles (validity, reliability, flexibility).
- Mapping KSBs to evidence, designing methods and instruments.
- Development of internal templates, frameworks, and standardisation protocols.
- Peer review clinics and structured feedback loops with SDN experts.

Optional add-ons:

- Development of live documentation, deployment guidance, and grading rubrics.
- Handbook & Protocol Development – produce an internal end-to-end EPA operations manual including deployment, grading, moderation, and feedback.

Regulatory submission & recognition support

- End-to-end support for Ofqual submissions (initial recognition, scope expansion or new regulatory requirements).

- Drafting, reviewing, and refining application narrative, policies, and supporting evidence.
- Recognition interview preparation.

Team development support

- EPA Team Training – tailored workshops to upskill staff in assessment design, moderation, and delivery under the new flexible model.
- Assessor Training – includes the Level 3 Award in Undertaking End-Point Assessment or bespoke CPD modules.

Specialised areas of expertise

- Integrated Degree Apprenticeships – specialist support for HEIs in embedding EPA into governance and validation, regulated by OfS.
- Ofqual-regulated AOs – developing understanding of Ofqual’s General Conditions, and qualification-specific requirements
- Professional Body Mapping – aligning EPA standards with chartered recognition and professional membership.
- Working with employers to assess behaviours effectively – training, tools, and guidance to help employers interpret and assess behaviours in real workplace settings, aligned to apprenticeship standards and regulatory expectations.

We offer flexible, modular support tailored to your organisation’s size, sector, and maturity. Packages can be scaled for new entrants or mature AOs.