



Professional Discussion (Supported by Portfolio)

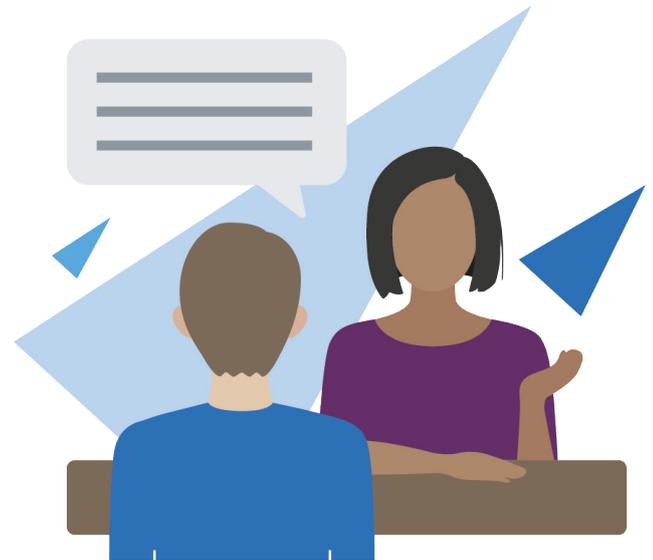
Top tips for getting the best out of your Professional Discussion, what to expect and how you can prepare.

What is a Professional Discussion?

A Professional Discussion is a structured, two-way discussion between the apprentice and the end-point assessor. Using your portfolio to evidence and support your answers, it is designed to allow you to demonstrate all that you have learnt and applied to your role.

Now, the key word here is 'discussion'. It is **not** a question and answer or an interview. However, neither is it just a chat! It is a formal discussion designed to allow you to fully explain all the work within your portfolio to the end-point assessor.

Professional Discussions can differ in length, anything from 45 minutes to 2 hours, depending upon the assessment plan and the number of questions asked is dependent upon the length of the discussion.



Why is my Portfolio so Important?

A Professional Discussion which is supported by a portfolio usually means that your portfolio is submitted at the point of Gateway so it can be reviewed by the assessor at least 2-3 weeks before the assessment. Although they will not mark it, your assessor will use the portfolio to prepare for the discussion, enabling them to select the most suitable questions to allow you to demonstrate your knowledge, skills and behaviours to the best of your ability.

Your assessor wants you to achieve the best result you can. So, we're going to let you into a secret. Put as much effort into your portfolio as you can! It's easy when the answer is in front of you, right? Present your assessor with a fabulous portfolio and they may only need to try and ease out those distinction* answers!

**This will be dependent upon the assessment plan as not all EPAs have a distinction grading option.*



How Can I Prepare?

- Use our Portfolio guidance ahead of your EPA
- Make sure you know and understand the assessment criteria your portfolio must be referenced against. This way you'll see any potential gaps for yourself before your assessor does!
- Use the support and guidance of your Employer and Training Provider to collate the evidence you need to build a fabulous portfolio
- Ask your Employer and Training Provider to help you practice with our mock set of questions
- Practice saying 'I did' instead of 'we'. It is very easy to talk about what your team have done, but we want to know what you have done
- Record and playback your mock discussion(s). This will help you to refine your answers
- Ask if a more unfamiliar person, such as another assessor or manager, could ask you questions. This way, you'll be ready and prepared for assessment day

What Can I Expect?

Most Professional Discussions can be carried out remotely using Microsoft Teams, so ensure you have access to a computer or tablet with a webcam, a good internet connection and a microphone and speakers. Remember to have your photographic ID ready so we can verify it's really you and don't forget to bring along your portfolio so you can refer to it!

Our assessors are selected because they have a wealth of knowledge and skill in the sector. They are also selected on their ability to put you at ease, make you feel comfortable and allow you to demonstrate your best practice. They also understand which questions to ask and may use some starter warm-up questions to ease you into the assessment before moving to using more complex ones. They want you to do all the talking and take the lead in the discussion and are therefore trained to carefully listen to your responses. Remember, it's ok to ask your assessor to repeat or further explain a question.

Awarding UK provides all our learners, training providers and employers with tailored handbooks that give you all the information you need for a successful EPA. Get in touch for more details.