**9078 Carpentry and Joinery Level 2 EPA FAQs**

Q: Do apprentices have to achieve the theory test prior to the practical?

**Answer:** The assessment components can be taken in any order. The MCQ test does not have to be taken/achieved before the practical test.

Q: What is the process for updating EPA documentation? How often are EPA documents updated?

**Answer:** EPA and recording form packs are periodically reviewed to reflect current practice.

Q: What is the role and requirements of the technician?

**Answer**: A technician will need to be available during the assessment. Their role is not to give technical advice to apprentices but to provide support with the following:

* lifting/manual handling
* taking timber off machines
* supervision and technical help in the use of machinery (e.g. changing bandsaw blades)
* support with the sharing of equipment/ tools such as un-setting routers
* dealing with any defective materials, equipment or machinery.

The technician must be occupationally competent and may or may not be a tutor.

There is a minimum requirement of one technician. Depending on the number of apprentices, centres may wish to provide more than one.

Q: How are tasks allocated for multiple tasks?

**Answer:** Currently there are two different assessments which have been produced to meet the requirements of the assessment plan. Prior to the assessment, centres will be required to set up individual candidate work areas to accommodate both tasks. This will be a 50/50 split. The IEPA will advise in instances where there are odd numbers of apprentices. The IEPA will allocate apprentices the task on the day of the assessment. This will not be the responsibility of the centre.

Q: Are physical bays/partitions required and what size should they be?

**What are the requirements of candidate work areas?**

**Answer:** Physical bays or partitions can be used to divide the space but are not a requirement.

Candidate work areas must be positioned and laid out to ensure

* Apprentices can work safely
* Authenticity and independent working
* There is clear access space for transportation of equipment and materials
* That the IEPA can access apprentices work and ask questions.

Q Are there any specific requirements for setting up candidate work areas e.g. floors, ceilings?

In addition to minimum size requirements, the individual resource lists for each task will detail any specific requirements such as:

* Confirmation of whether prefabricated walls need to be constructed prior to assessment (will include dimensions)
* Provision of walls/floor for apprentices to fix structures to. In the case of fixing to the floor, sacrificial boards will be sufficient, and they will not need to be secured to the floor.

See EPA pack for further guidance on specific tasks.

Q: Will City & Guilds visit the assessment area prior to EPA taking place?

**Answer:** Prior assessment area checking visits are not required.

On the day of the skills test, the IEPA will confirm that the area is fit for purpose. If they have any concerns, they will report to the EPA team who will make the final decision.

Q: Can materials in the resource lists be substituted?

**Answer:** Materials can only be substituted if indicated on the resource list**.** This is done with the use of *examples, or the term “similar” or a list of acceptable alternatives*. No other substitutions are permitted; this is to ensure consistency of assessment as well as coverage of the standard.

Q: Do you think City &Guilds could revise the amount of unsustainable materials for the skills test?

**Answer**. When developing tasks City & Guilds considers material selection and quantity against the requirements of the standard balanced with cost effectiveness and sustainability. Tasks and materials will be reviewed regularly and we welcome recommendations on how we can be more sustainable.

Q: What are the arrangements for PPE in the skills test?

**Answer:** It is the responsibility of the apprentice to arrive with appropriate work clothing and footwear in line with the assessment venue’s health and safety procedures. Assessment venues should have suitable eye, ear and respiratory PPE available, but apprentices can also bring their own. The assessment will be stopped if appropriate PPE is not available.

Q: Can apprentices share equipment?

**Answer:** Theresources lists for each task will include recommendations on equipment and tools that

* can be shared between apprentices
* are allocated per apprentice

The allocation per apprentice is a recommendation. However, centres are advised to provide as much access to such items as possible, so apprentices are not waiting to use them. If several apprentices need access at the same time, this inactive time will not be counted towards the activity duration.

It is anticipated that apprentices are likely to share fixed machinery such as bandsaw, chop saw. Routers and other equipment which need to be set can be shared on the condition that these are first unset by the technician.

Q: Can apprentices use additional equipment and tools that are not included in the resources list?

**Answer:** The resource list for each task includes a range of tools and equipment for apprentices to select from. No additional equipment is required and should not be used.

During the assessment the apprentice will not have to demonstrate the use of all hand tools and equipment listed.

Q: Can apprentices use their own tools?

**Answer:** The assessment plan does not prescribe that apprentices cannot use their own tools. It is City & Guilds expectation that centres will ensure that equipment and tools are available to apprentices as per the resources list. It is not part of the IEPA’s responsibility to check. However, IEPAs will be observing to make sure apprentices use hand and power tools in line with the task instructions.

Q: What information will the candidate get on the day of the skills test?

**Answer:** At the start of the assessment, it is the IEPA’s responsibility to provide apprentices with copies of the task, tolerances and drawings. The IEPA will also introduce themselves to the group and provide verbal instructions and explanations. More information on the role of the IEPA can be found in the EPA pack.

Q: What are the expectations around induction of apprentices to the assessment area?

**Answe**r It is the assessment venue / centres responsibility that prior to the assessment taking place apprentices are trained on how to use any machinery. Additionally, if apprentices are new to a venue, they will need to be inducted to the assessment area in terms of fire exits, orientation and any health and safety requirements.

At the start of the assessment, the IEPA will inform apprentices that it is their responsibility to work in line with the health and safety procedures. The IEPA will not give specific health and safety instructions. If unsafe practice is observed the assessment will be stopped.

Q: Should the skills test be taken under test conditions?

**Answer:**  Yes, test conditions apply. Apprentices must not use their phones, and these should be turned off. Personal belongings should be stored away from the areas where the apprentices are working.

Q: Can apprentices request replacements if they make errors?

**Answer:** If apprentices make an error, component parts can be replaced but additional time will not be given. As stated in the assessment plan this will affect the overall grade.

Q What happens if apprentices lose assessment time by waiting for equipment and resources?

**Answer**: Any waiting time for the technician or other resources will not be counted the. IEPA has the discretion to extend time by 10%. Also, any operational issues affecting a candidate’s ability to achieve will be dealt with on an individual basis by the IEPA in consultation with their lead.