

# Public Sector / Commercial Procurement and Supply Apprenticeship Standard Level 4

## **COMMERCIAL PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY (FORMERLY PUBLIC SECTOR COMMERCIAL PROFESSIONAL) : Level 4**

### **Introduction**

The work of procurement and supply professionals includes the process of procurement, or buying goods and services; however, these roles can be much broader than just procurement. These roles can extend to a huge range of related commercial activity such as influencing policy, financial analysis, engaging in contract law, and developing strategy to deliver services. The variety of goods and services that procurement professionals are responsible for is vast: goods could range from buying a plane to negotiating new stationery supply. Securing services could include: finding new and innovative IT systems, outsourcing translation services or closing a deal on a construction project for a new building.

Encompassing the entire procurement cycle, achieving the Level 4 in Procurement and Supply will enable an individual to use their breadth and depth of experience to position themselves as a fully effective commercially skilled professional with transferable skills and career options that span the public, private and charitable sectors. This will be supported by the attainment of a Level 4 Diploma with the Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply (CIPS).

### **Typical Roles/Occupations may include:**

Commercial Support, Commercial Analyst, Sourcing Executive, Procurement Operations Support, Buyer, Assistant Buyer, Commercial Relationship Support, Commissioning and Performance Monitoring Officer, Framework Management Support, Contract Associate, Contract Support.

### **Entry Requirements:**

Any entry requirements will be determined by individual employers/ provider typically 5x A\*-C Grade GCSEs (must include English & Maths).

Level 4 Diploma by the Chartered Institute of procurement and Supply (CIPS) recommends a minimum one of the following:

- Two A-levels or International Equivalent, or
- Level 2 or 3 qualification literacy and numeracy
- CIPS Advanced Certificate Qualification, or
- A minimum of 2 years experience of working in a business environment

### **Qualifications:**

- CIPS Level 4 Diploma in Procurement and supply
- Level 2 Functional Skills qualification in Maths ( Pre- apprenticeship programme)
- Level 2 Functional Skills qualification in English( Pre- apprenticeship programme)
- Apprenticeship Certificate

The programme offers a broad range of activities to cover The End point assessment by an independent Assessment Organisation and also to meet the needs of different organisations within the Public and commercial sectors

## 20% off-the-job:

The detailed model includes ideas of how to use the 20% off-the-job training time. All companies provide formal and informal training that can be used as evidence for this funding requirement. Apart from the suggestions on the delivery model (shadowing a senior worker, researching and writing assignments, in-house formal or informal training) there are other activities that can fit easily with the work patterns of the procurement officers and are also useful for the employer:

The off-the-job training must be directly relevant to the apprenticeship framework or standard and could include the following:

- Work Journals
- Case studies research work
- Project set up and reviews
- Writing reports on case studies
- Keeping a log of all procurement and supply chain activities relating to the job
- Examining a company policy's strengths and weaknesses
- Exam preparation and portfolio development of project activities

## Maths and English do not constitute the 20% off the job training

### Duration of programme

**24 months** including the external assessment of CIPS Level 4 diploma in Procurement and supply. with flexible start dates through the year.

### Summary of roles and responsibilities

Assessor	Role
Employer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brings a view of the apprentice working with them in the workplace through the apprenticeship</li> <li>• Works with the training provider to carry out a continuous review of the evidence generated by the apprentice as part of the on-programme assessment process</li> <li>• Supports 'on the job' training and offers relevant experience</li> <li>• Decides on the timing of final assessment with the support of the Training Provider</li> </ul>
Training Provider (This function could be undertaken by the Employer)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brings a view of the apprentice from supporting them through the apprenticeship</li> <li>• Works collaboratively with the employer on the behaviours of the apprentice</li> <li>• Delivers 'off the job' training</li> <li>• Works with the employer and undertakes assessment of the apprentice against the standards as part of the on-programme assessment process</li> <li>• Supports the employer on deciding the timing of final assessment</li> </ul>
Independent Assessor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides an independent view as they will not have had any prior involvement with the apprentice</li> <li>• Brings added rigor and consistency to the assessment through their wider industry perspective, knowledge and experience</li> <li>• Assesses all components of the final end assessment independently using externally set marking/grading criteria</li> <li>• Participates in regular standardisation events</li> </ul>
Independent Assessment Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designs and offers the end assessments</li> <li>• Sources, allocates and manages the Independent Assessors</li> <li>• Runs standardisation events with Independent Assessors</li> <li>• Provides internal/external verification to ensure consistency of assessment decisions</li> </ul>

## Progression Route

Successful completion of levels 4, 5 and 6 together with three years work experience in procurement leads to full membership of the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply and MCIPS

## Delivery Plan

**Pre course:** If the initial assessment in English and Maths is lower than the required level, a tutor will work with the student in order to achieve the necessary level. Functional skills qualifications in Maths and English can be obtained through our intensive programme prior to the start of the apprenticeship.

**Programme:** Through Bi-weekly workshops and other activities at the workplace or at the College. A blend of theory and practical sessions will be delivered by qualified and highly experienced trainers. The trainers will support the students to achieve their qualifications and to prepare for End Point Assessment. The apprentices will be involved in research, writing reports on case studies, complete work place project and other activities within their 20% off-the-job training. Every 6 weeks a Learner Progress Report will be completed by the trainer and their line managers in the presence of the apprentice. SMART targets will be agreed and progress will be monitored and reviewed through e-portfolio and 1:1 sessions.

**End Point Assessment:** After 21 months in the programme, the students will be assessed by an independent End Point Assessment via project report, presentation and questioning.

## Personal attributes and behaviours expected

The following five attributes are identified by procurement professionals which play important part in the success of an apprentice to become a consummate procurement professional:

- 1. Excellent communication skills-** A procurement professional must be able to express him or herself clearly in writing and in conversation. Of course, a good communicator must also be able to listen in order to better understand the needs and perspectives of colleagues and suppliers.
- 2. Savvy negotiation skills-** This skill goes hand in hand with communication skills.. A good negotiator knows how to get the best value from a supplier while still maintaining a positive business relationship.
- 3. Ability to prioritize-** A great procurement professional knows how to prioritize. Being able to prioritize successfully means being able to efficiently analyse potential worse case scenarios and quickly rank which tasks need to be dealt with immediately and which can be put off until later.
- 4. Integrity-** Integrity is important to many professions, but it is especially important in procurement. Integrity helps professionals become leaders within the company and well respected by all stakeholders in the organisation. Integrity also implies a sense of reliability.
- 5. A positive attitude-** A positive, can-do attitude may be the most important attribute of all since it can't be taught. They must see their job important to be able to convince colleagues in other departments to follow through with the procurement process.

### Delivery pattern for a group of learners

Month 1	Month 2	Month 3
2 full day workshops including ▸ Apprenticeship and Programme Induction ▸ ILP, Skills Scan ▸ Introduction qualification & project activities ▸ 2 full day Work place activities ▸ D1: Context of Procurement and Supply	2 full day workshops including D1: Context of Procurement and Supply - Exam preparation Revision & Exam ( November ) 2 full day Work place activities	2 full day workshops including D2: Context of Procurement and Supply Exam preparation 2 full day Work place activities
Month 4	Month 5	Month 6
2 full day workshops including D2: Context of Procurement and Supply Exam preparation, Revision & Exam (January) 2 full day Work place activities	2 full day workshops including D3: Sourcing in Procurement and Supply. Exam preparation 2 full day Work place activities	2 full day workshops including D3: Sourcing in Procurement and Supply. Exam preparation, Revision & Exam(March) 2 full day Work place activities
Month 7	Month 8	Month 9
2 full day workshops including D4: Negotiating in Procurement and Supply .Exam preparation 2 full day Work place activities	2 full day workshops including D4: Negotiating in Procurement and Supply Exam preparation , Revision & Exam (May) 2 full day Work place activities	2 full day workshops including D5: Managing Contracts and Relationships Exam preparation 2 day Work place Activities
Month 10	Month 11	Month 12
2 full day workshops including D5: Managing Contracts and Relationships Exam preparation, Revision & Exam (July) 2 full day Work place activities	1 full day workshops including E.portfolio completion of formative assessment on skills and behaviour 3 full day Work place activities	1 full day workshops including E.portfolio completion of formative assessment on skills and behaviour 3 full day Work place activities

### **Months 13 to Month 21**

1 Full day workshops at college, training , formative assessment on skills and behaviour , Project planning , portfolio building

3 Full day workshops including Project planning portfolio building

### **Month 21 to Month 24**

Gateway trigger point: Completion of gateway form by employer, provider and apprentice.

Project scope to be defined and agreed by EPAO and the employer

Submission of 5000 words report, presentation and questioning assessment.

Grading of the assessment after month 24.

### **Assessment**

- Knowledge is assessed by completion of CIPS Diploma level 4 in procurement and Supply via five external examinations of 5 units within the qualification.
- Maths and English Functional skills are also assessed by Edexcel external examination.
- Skills and behaviour is formatively assessed through direct observation, professional discussion, case study review, project planning and portfolio building.
- All assessment results will be captured on an e.portfolio system ( Smart Assessor) where the apprentice, the employer and the delivery managers have access to monitor and track individual progress.

Upon the completion of CIPS level 4 diploma and preparation of evidence of skills and behaviour, the gateway for End Point Assessment (EPA) is triggered by the agreement of the employer, the apprentice and the provider. A declaration form is signed and submitted to End Point Assessment organisation (EPAO) an external body responsible for assessing the outcomes of an apprenticeship standard.

### **End-Point Assessment Gateway**

The EPA must only start once the employer is satisfied that the pre-requisite EPA gateway requirements have been met and can be evidenced to an EPAO; and that the apprentice is consistently working at or above the level set out in the occupational standard. Employers may wish to take advice from their apprentice's training provider.

### **End Point Assessment (EPA)**

Assessments will be delivered by an independent third party referred to as The Independent Assessment Organisation (IAO) who has not been involved in the delivery of the apprenticeship training and can make the sole decision on skills competence and knowledge with final decision of achievement.

**Requirements:**

- English & maths qualifications Level 2 (equivalent to grades A\*-C or 9-4 at GCSE). For those with an education, health and care plan or a legacy statement the apprenticeships English and maths minimum requirement is Entry Level 3. British Sign Language qualification is an alternative to English qualifications for those whom this is their primary language.
- A Diploma in Procurement and Supply Level 4, from the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (CIPS) 1

Agreement from the apprentice's EPAO of title and scope of the project that the apprentice will complete during the EPA period, which will form the basis for the project report EPA component; the apprentice's employer must also agree the title and scope.

The end-point assessment is designed to ensure the apprentice can demonstrate and is fully conversant with the skills, knowledge and behaviours expected of Commercial professionals in procurement and supply. The activities undertaken by the apprentice will be assessed to confirm to what extent the apprentice meets the standards. The end-point assessment consists of two key assessment methods:

- **Project Report**
- **Presentation and questioning**

**Key Features of EPA for this standard includes:****A. Project Report**

Apprentices must produce a project report based on a project completed in their workplace, after the End Point Assessment (EPA) gateway. End Point Assessment Organisation (EPOA) must agree the title and scope of an apprentice's project as a gateway requirement. The apprentice's employer must also confirm their agreement of the project title and scope, in that it aligns with their business/business needs.

Project report criteria:

- Maximum word limit of 5000 words (+/- 10%)
- Presented as a formal business report including:
  - ✓ an executive summary (not included in word count)
  - ✓ an introduction
  - ✓ a literature review
  - ✓ research and findings
  - ✓ recommendations and conclusions

**B. Presentation & questioning criteria:**

Apprentices must give a 10-minute (+/-1minute) presentation on their work role and responsibilities relating to commercial procurement and supply

The presentation must be followed by questioning by independent assessors.

Independent assessors will ask 6 open questions relating to procurement and supply

Example questions:

- ✓ How do you approach achieving the combination of quality and value for money?

- ✓ What have you learned from your experiences with different stakeholders?

After successful completion of the Project report and presentation and questioning, assessors will agree a grade for each assessment component to give the apprentice a final grade according to the model below:

To achieve a **pass** the apprentice must achieve a minimum score of 3 in both assessments and 4 to achieve a **distinction**.

1	2	3	4	5
Significant gaps	Minor gaps	Fully meets the standards	Fully meets and some evidence of exceeding the standards	Consistently exceeds the standards

#### Re-sit and re-take information

Apprentices who fail one or more assessment method will be offered the opportunity to take a re-sit/re-take. A re-sit does not require further learning, whereas a re-take does. Resits/re-takes must not be offered to apprentices wishing to move from pass to distinction. The apprentice's employer will need to agree that a re-sit/re-take is an appropriate course of action. Apprentices should have a supportive action plan to prepare for the re-sit/re-take. Both assessment methods must be passed within 6-months of each other, otherwise the entire **EPA must be retaken**. Apprentices who re-sit/re-take an assessment method will not be eligible for the overall award of a distinction, unless the EPAO identifies extenuating circumstances accounting for the fail, in which case the apprentice can re-sit/re-take the assessment method and the grade will not be capped. EPAOs must ensure that apprentices complete a different project and have a different question set for the presentation & questioning when taking a re-sit/re-take.

#### Three main components of this apprenticeship programme





### Apprenticeship Timeline

On-programme (typically 18 months)	End-Point Assessment Gateway	End-Point Assessment (typically 6 months)	Professional recognition (optional)
Training to develop the occupation standard's knowledge, skills and behaviours	Diploma in Procurement and Supply level 4	Project report	Diploma level membership of the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (CIPS)
Working towards Diploma in Procurement and Supply level 4 and English/maths Level 2 (if required)	English/maths Level 2  Agreement of project title and scope	Presentation & questioning  Graded fail, pass or distinction	

#### **Commercial Procurement and Supply occupational standard**

Diagram 1. Typical Apprenticeship Summary

