

Furniture Manufacturer Apprenticeship Assessment Plan

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Summary of Assessment

The assessment plan for the Furniture Manufacturer has been designed to test that the Furniture Manufacturer has the skills, knowledge and behaviours required to carry out the role. The assessment plan covers the following 10 occupational areas:

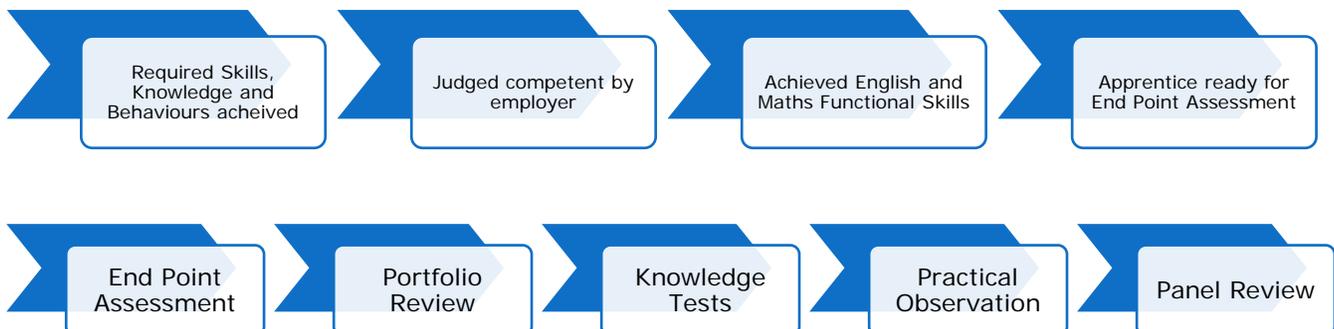
- General Furniture Manufacturer
- Bed Manufacturer
- Modern Upholsterer
- Furniture Finisher
- Fitted Furniture Installer
- Furniture Restorer
- Modern Furniture Service Repairer
- Foam Convertor and Upholstery Cushion Interior Manufacturer
- Wood Machinist
- Furniture CNC Specialist

This plan ensures that the Furniture Manufacturer is fully competent to a level that will be recognised by all employers. This plan outlines the end-point assessment that apprentices must successfully complete to achieve their apprenticeship. The apprenticeship will typically be 24 months' duration, with the end-point assessment being taken in the final three months. Apprentices will be awarded a 'fail,' 'pass' or 'distinction' based on their competency.

The apprentice will produce and maintain a portfolio of work they have undertaken. This evidence will ensure that the Furniture Manufacturer has developed the skills, knowledge and behaviours required for full occupational competence. During the course of the apprenticeship the employer may wish to hold regular reviews with the apprentice.

END-POINT ASSESSMENT

The independent assessment organisation selected from the Skills Funding Agency's Register of Apprentice Assessment organisations is responsible for coordinating and carrying out the end point assessment. When the apprentice, employer and provider have determined that the apprentice is ready to complete the apprenticeship they will hold a final review to go through the portfolio of work. The apprentice will need to have completed the Level 1 Functional Skills in English and Maths and taken the test for the Level 2. This will act as a gateway to the end point assessment.



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Assessment Overview

METHODS OF ASSESSMENT

Assessment Method	Area Assessed	Assessed by	Grading	Weighting
Portfolio of Work	All Skills, Knowledge and Behaviours	Independent Assessment Organisation	Fail/Pass/Distinction	30%
Knowledge Tests	Health & Safety and Industry core modules	Independent Assessment Organisation	Fail/Pass/Distinction	5%
Observation	Core modules and Occupational area skill, knowledge and behaviours	Independent Assessment Organisation	Fail/Pass/Distinction	65%

PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT: The portfolio will cover all skills, knowledge and behaviour requirements as detailed in the Assessment Modules available from British Furniture Manufacturers Association (<http://www.bfm.org.uk/>). The portfolio will need to be assessed at the end of the apprenticeship and must not have been assessed on programme. This will be assessed by the provider and employer and sampled by the Independent Assessor.

THE KNOWLEDGE TESTS: There are two tests consisting of multiple choice questions covering the core modules in health and safety and the industry. The question banks have been developed and are freely available to assessment organisations on request from The British Furniture Manufacturers Association (<http://www.bfm.org.uk/>).

OBSERVATION: The observed assessment will cover all the skills, knowledge and behaviours requirements as detailed in the relevant occupational assessment modules. It will also cover the core modules. It is expected that the observation will take approximately 2 hours and will be done in the workplace, a training providers premises or another employers premises with suitable resources.

On-programme Assessment

The suggested training and assessment for the apprenticeship is based on the 'Furniture Manufacturer Assessment Modules'. These detail the training modules that should be completed for the core requirements and each occupational area. These provide the full specification for end point assessment and are freely available from British Furniture Manufacturers Association (<http://www.bfm.org.uk/>).

It is recommended that on-going reviews will be completed by the provider and employer during the apprenticeship but will not contribute to the end point assessment.

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Assessment Gateway

When the apprentice, employer and provider have determined that the apprentice is ready to complete the apprenticeship they will hold a final review to determine that the apprentice is ready for the End Point Assessment. The apprentice will have also passed the English and Math's Functional Skills at Level 1 and taken the tests for Level 2. This will act as a gateway to the end point assessment.

End Point - Assessment

Successful achievement of the end-point assessment will lead to final certification of the apprenticeship and will demonstrate that the apprentice is a fully competent craftsperson in their occupational job role.

PORTFOLIO:

Each apprentice will prepare and submit a portfolio of work. This portfolio will enable the apprentice to demonstrate the specific work related tasks that they have completed in order to show how they have achieved both occupational and core competence set out in the Furniture Manufacturer Standard and Assessment Modules. The portfolio will also give the apprentice the opportunity to demonstrate that they understand the company in terms of their products, processes, procedures, tools, equipment, materials, documentation and information systems by showcasing what they have done, what they have learnt and how they have applied this knowledge and skills to real work tasks.

The portfolio of evidence will show how the apprentice has demonstrated the knowledge, skills and behaviours required to be a competent Furniture Manufacturer.

The portfolio will include, as a minimum, examples of competent performance that must include:

- Examples of the apprentice's work, such as items that have been produced or worked on, drawings, plans, production and/or quality records, reports, documents produced as part of a work activity, records or photographs of the completed activity
- Evidence of the way the apprentice carried out the activities to meet the requirements of Standard, such as assessor observations, supervisor/mentor references/ witness testimonies or authenticated apprentice reports of the activities undertaken.

Employers and providers should support the apprentice in planning, creating and recording evidence to create the portfolio and in ensuring opportunities to obtain all the necessary competencies, skills and knowledge and behaviours are identified.

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The portfolio will need to be assessed at the end of the apprenticeship to ensure it meets the standard and must not have been assessed on programme. This will be assessed by the provider and employer and sampled by the Independent Assessor.

KNOWLEDGE TESTS:

These are on demand multiple choice tests covering the health and safety and industry elements of the standard. They are externally set and marked by the assessment organisation, and undertaken either on the employer's premises or off site.

The question banks have been developed and are freely available to assessment organisations on request from British Furniture Manufacturers Association (<http://www.bfm.org.uk/>).

The Health and Safety test includes 45 questions and the apprentice will have up to 60 minutes to complete.

The Industry test includes 30 questions and the apprentice will have up to 40 minutes to complete.

OBSERVATION:

This involves observation of the apprentice manufacturing furniture or parts of furniture, covering the occupational outcomes in the standard, over a two-hour period. The observation should enable the apprentice to demonstrate the maximum possible range of skills, knowledge and behaviours, but also providing potential assessment opportunities for core elements of the standard.

A detailed specification for the observation is set out in the occupation assessment modules.

The apprentice is assessed by the assessment organisation. A panel of the employer and assessment organisation will then discuss the grade with the overall decision made by the assessment organisation. While the employer and provider can contribute to grading discussions in the event of any dispute it is the assessment organisation that makes the final decision on competence/grading.

LOCATION OF ASSESSMENTS

The end point assessment can take place in the workplace, a training providers premises or another employers premises with suitable resources. This will be agreed by the employer, provider and assessment organisation.

Independence and Internal Quality Assurance

THE ASSESSMENT ORGANISATION

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The independent assessment organisation is responsible for carrying out the end point assessment. Any assessors involved in the end point assessment should not be from the employer or training provider delivering the on programme training.

All assessment organisations must be on the Skills Funding Agency's Register of Apprentice Assessment Organisations (RoAAO). Assessment organisations must work collaboratively to ensure standardisation in delivery of assessment services for the standard e.g. hold cross-organisation standardisation events.

The assessment organisation's primary role will be to ensure that all decisions are consistent, credible and undertaken with integrity, it will:

- Provide documentation and guidance in relation to the requirements of the apprenticeship
- Monitor assessors and provide remedial support to ensure consistency and reliability of judgements on a risk based basis, for example, those newly qualified
- Co-ordinate the final decision panels and observe and intervene where necessary to ensure they are operated in accordance with the guidance
- Approve assessors for the purposes of conducting assessments and final decision panels based on check of knowledge, experience, assessment qualifications and independence
- Provide training for assessors in terms of the requirements of the apprenticeship and operation and marking of the assessment tools and initial grading
- Provide training for assessors in undertaking fair and impartial assessment and making judgements about performance and the application of knowledge and behaviours within a workplace setting
- Provide training for final decision panel members, in terms of the panel operation and grading; and how to communicate the decisions
- Hold regular standardisation events for technical experts and panel members to ensure consistent application of the guidance
- Ensure assessment organisation staff are trained in assessment and moderation processes and undertake regular continuing professional development
- Develop and manage a complaints and appeals procedure.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS OF ASSESSORS

Assessors must:

- Be registered and recognised by the assessment organisation
- Be competent to make qualitative judgements about the occupations they are assessing. Illustrations of competence could include the assessor:
 - Having substantial demonstrable experience in the job roles they are assessing
 - Being in a day-to-day line management, training or quality assurance role in the area they are assessing

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- Carry out their duties in accordance with the current national occupational standards for Assessment, and in line with current guidance on assessment practice issued by the assessment organisation
- Be in possession of or working towards the assessment qualifications or hold the A1/A2, D32/33 award,
- Maintain appropriate evidence of development activities to ensure their assessment skills and occupational understanding are current (CPD)
- Have a working knowledge of the apprenticeship standard and a full understanding of that part of the apprenticeship standard for which they have responsibility. The assessment organisation will confirm this through examination of relevant CVs supported by relevant references.
- Be approved by the assessment organisation who must maintain records demonstrating how they meet the requirements. The appointment of assessors may require the prior approval of the assessment organisation.
- Meet any additional requirements as specified by the assessment organisation

External Quality Assurance

The Furniture Manufacturer Trailblazer Steering Group will remain in place and monitor the External Quality Assurance of the standard and assessment plan.

The group will meet a minimum of twice annually and will:

- Ensure the Assessment Organisations are meeting the Internal Quality Assurance Requirements
- Sample Assessment decisions made by all Assessment Organisations
- Review any feedback received from apprentices, employers, providers and assessment organisations

Members will be drawn from furniture industry employers, including SMEs, interested in working collaboratively to maintain high quality standards in the apprenticeship standard. British Furniture Manufacturers Association (<http://www.bfm.org.uk/>) will provide the secretariat for the group.

Summary of roles and responsibilities

THE EMPLOYER:

The employer will agree which occupational area and the optional requirements the apprentice will undertake. It is recommended that the employer support the apprentice throughout their training and conduct regular reviews to monitor their progress throughout the apprenticeship. The employer will determine when the apprentice should be put forward for the end point assessment in partnership with the provider and apprentice.

A panel of the employer, provider and assessment organisation will discuss the grading with the overall decision made by the assessment organisation. While the employer and provider can contribute to grading discussions in the event of any dispute it is the assessment organisation that makes the final decision on competence/grading.

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THE TRAINING PROVIDER:

The training provider will provide support to the employer during the on programme training of the apprentice and deliver the course requirements to ensure the apprentice acquires the skills, knowledge and behaviours for full competency. They will also support the apprentice in the creation of the portfolio.

A panel of the employer, provider and assessment organisation will discuss the grading with the overall decision made by the assessment organisation. While the employer and provider can contribute to grading discussions in the event of any dispute it is the assessment organisation that makes the final decision on competence/grading.

THE ASSESSMENT ORGANISATION:

The assessment organisation will conduct the end point assessment. The final decision on grading is made by the assessment organisation who will consider the performance of the apprentice in all of the methods of assessment before deciding if the apprentice has met the requirements for full occupational competence.

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End-point – Grading

Assessment Method	Fail	Pass	Distinction
Portfolio of work	Less than 50%	50-79%	80% +
Knowledge Test	Less than 50%	50-79%	80% +
Observation	Less than 50%	50-79%	80% +

Overall Grade

Grade	Portfolio	Knowledge Test	Observation
FAIL	Fail	Fail	Fail
FAIL	Pass/Distinction	Fail	Fail
FAIL	Pass/Distinction	Fail	Pass/Distinction
PASS	Pass	Pass	Pass
PASS	Pass	Pass	Distinction
PASS	Pass	Distinction	Pass
PASS	Distinction	Pass	Pass
PASS	Pass	Distinction	Distinction
PASS	Distinction	Distinction	Pass
DISTINCTION	Distinction	Pass	Distinction
DISTINCTION	Distinction	Distinction	Distinction

The apprentice needs to pass all 3 end point assessments to pass. The apprentice must achieve a combined (weighted) score of over 80% for a distinction (see table above).

If an apprentice fails any part of the end point assessment they will be given the opportunity for additional support in areas as required and to re-take the assessment. The maximum grade allowed will be a pass.

The assessment organisation decides the grade for each element and the overall grade following discussion with the employer and provider.

An online library is available with criteria for grading the observation. This is freely available from British Furniture Manufacturers Association (<http://www.bfm.org.uk/>) and will be maintained by the assessment organisation(s) with input from employers.

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Employers are able to submit resources to the library via British Furniture Manufacturers Association (<http://www.bfm.org.uk/>).

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Delivering Consistent (Reliable) Judgements

In order to ensure consistency and assure employers' confidence in the Furniture Manufacturers assessment in different parts of the country, at different times, by different assessors, all assessment and quality assurance organisations will be asked to sample the skills, knowledge and behaviours covered in the assessment modules.

The end point assessment is required to meet the learning outcomes set out in this document to demonstrate the necessary knowledge, skills and competencies required from the Furniture Manufacturer Trailblazer standard.

Mechanisms for ensuring consistency will be the responsibility of Assessment Organisations and the Employer Group and will include the following:

- providing clear guidance for Training Providers and employers on assessment requirements
- applying the 'pass' mark for the assessment at the level of demand set by the Employer Group
- applying the standard consistently through external marking by the Assessment Organisation
- Standardisation
- The Assessment Organisation will develop and seek advice if necessary from the employer group

Implementation

AFFORDABILITY:

The end point assessment should cost around 5% of the total cost. This has been determined by consultation with current assessor's / training providers in the industry.

VOLUMES:

We expect around 840 Apprentices per year.

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