

## Apprentice Advice:

# Best way to approach a professional discussion

**Preparing for a professional discussion in your end point assessment is essential to ensure you present yourself confidently and effectively. Here are some steps to help you prepare:**

**Understand the assessment criteria:** Familiarise yourself with the specific criteria against which you will be assessed. Use the resources that Marshall Assessment send to your training provider. Review the assessment guidance, grading criteria, and any other relevant materials to understand what is expected of you.

**Review your work:** Gather and review your own work related to the assessment criteria. Identify relevant projects, tasks, or training you have completed that demonstrate your skills and knowledge in that area. Review your achievements, challenges faced, and lessons learned from these experiences.

**Reflect on your development:** Consider your professional journey leading up to the end point assessment. Reflect on your strengths, weaknesses, and areas of improvement. Think about the skills and competencies you have developed throughout your training or apprenticeship, and how they relate to the topic of discussion.

**Practice articulating your ideas:** Practice expressing your thoughts, opinions, and ideas on the topic. Pay attention to clarity, coherence, and conciseness in your responses. Practice speaking confidently and maintaining a professional demeanour.

**Anticipate potential questions:** Try to anticipate the types of questions you may be asked during the discussion. Consider questions that may assess your understanding of the topic, problem-solving abilities, decision-making skills, or ethical considerations. Prepare thoughtful responses in advance, but also be prepared to think on your feet during the discussion.

**Seek feedback:** Asking your training provider to simulate a professional discussion with you will help. Additionally, ask a mentor, supervisor, or colleague run through some of the topic areas with you. Request feedback on your communication skills, content knowledge, and overall performance. Incorporate their suggestions and improve accordingly.

**Stay up to date:** Keep yourself updated on the latest developments and trends in your industry or field of expertise. Follow relevant news, read professional publications, attend webinars, or participate in relevant forums to stay informed.

**Manage your nerves:** It's normal to feel nervous before a professional discussion. Practice relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, positive visualisation, or meditation to help manage anxiety. Remember that preparation and self-confidence can go a long way in reducing nervousness.

**Remember, the key to a successful professional discussion is demonstrating your knowledge, skills, behaviours, and the ability to communicate effectively. With thorough preparation and practice, you can showcase your competence and excel in your end point assessment.**