

# *Navigating change*

The future of apprenticeships

## Speakers and *workshop leads*



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## Key *policy changes*

- Evolving assessment plans - full review of all 700+ standards – simplification of plans
- End-point assessment (EPA) is replaced with 'apprenticeship assessment'
- Reduced minimum duration – from 12 to 8 months
- Flexible off-the-job training
- Revised English and maths requirements
- Foundation apprenticeships Spring 2025
- Removal of funding for Level 7 January 2026
- Apprenticeship units from April 2026
- New Ofsted framework





## What's *happening now*

- **700+ standards reviewed by August 2026:**
  - 300+ EPAOs now AOs (155 Ofqual recognised)
- **Initial assessment plans:**
  - 3 published, 2 still being worked through
- **Skills England published the general requirements and 192 standards listed:**
  - First list published on 17 December – 93 standards
  - Second list published Feb with further - 99 standards
  - Skills England restored consultation surveys in 26
- **Ofqual consultation closed for regulatory reform:**
  - Due to be published Spring 2026



## What's *happening now*

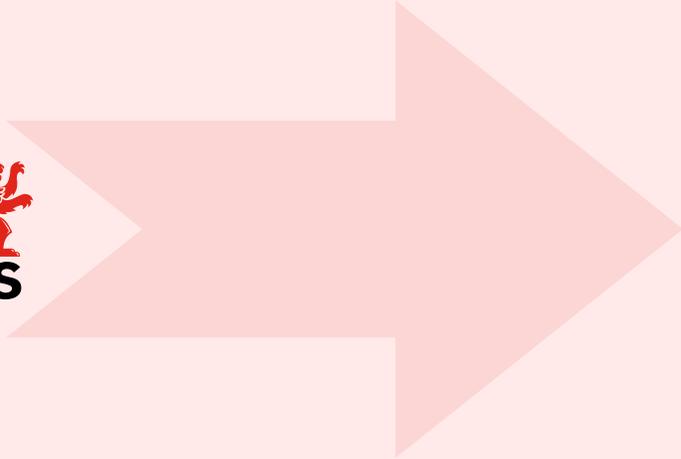
First batch of new reformed standards approved - 29

Apprenticeship Route	L3	L4	L5	L6	L7	Total
Care services				1		1
Health and science	2	1	4	16	4	27
Legal, finance and accounting					1	1
<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>29</b>

### Skills England state

- Available for starts from 25<sup>th</sup> March 2026
- Additional standards will be released via Skills England Revision Report
- Minimum hours for compliance has been inserted into new reformed standards

# What *we know*



- 1 Assessment will be more proportionate to the competency being tested and removes any duplication.
- 2 Assessment plans can be designed to allow assessment to take place on-programme.
- 3 Training providers can deliver and mark elements of some assessment plans, AOs will still shape the assessment and ensure the validity of outcomes.
- 4 Verification that behaviours have been demonstrated will be provided by employers.
- 5 Alignment with IS-8: Focus will be on sectors noted in the UK's Modern Industrial Strategy 2025, to support skills growth.
- 6 Assessment plans will be short, high level and contain the minimum number of assessment methods for validity.

# What *we know*

## Requirements and guidance for apprenticeship assessment

### Assessments

No minimum number of assessments

Each apprenticeship assessment plan will set out **one required assessment method** which must be used in each version of the apprenticeship's assessment that is made available..

Assessment organisations **will select from appropriate methods to assess the remaining content** where required, balancing validity and reliability with delivering proportionate assessments that reduce assessment burden.

An apprenticeship assessment plan will have as a minimum:

- Introduction,
- Assessment outcomes,
- Assessment requirements,
- Performance descriptors.

### Additional qualifications mandated within occupational standards

Additional qualifications can be mandated as a completion requirement for an apprenticeship.

They are determined on a case-by-case basis for individual standards for one of the following reasons:

- The qualification is a **regulatory or legal requirement** to operate in that occupation
- The qualification is **required for professional body** membership
- The qualification has such currency in the labour market that an apprentice would be **at a significant disadvantage without it**

Where the mandated qualification fully covers the required knowledge and skills statements no additional assessment is needed.

# What we know

## Requirements and guidance for apprenticeship assessment

### **Gateway to completion**

The achievement of any additional qualifications mandated within the occupational standard.

The achievement of English and maths qualifications, as per the latest version of the apprenticeship funding rules.

### **Verification of behaviours**

It is the responsibility of the employer to review behaviours throughout the apprentice's programme and confirm sufficient demonstration of these behaviours before a certificate can be requested.

### **External Quality Assurance**

Ofqual and The Office for Students and other bodies on specific standards.

## What *we know*

- 3 of the first 5 assessment plans have been made available in draft by Skills England
- Some differences can be seen across the 3 draft assessment plans
- Skills England prescribed approaches
- City & Guilds is working on two classification approaches for assessment (qualification or shared assessment approach)

Standard	ST	Level	Mandated Assessment	Additional Assessment (AO to choose one as a min)	Mandated Qualification (Exc Maths & English)	Grade	Professional Recognition	Classification approach
Accountancy Technician	ST0002	3	Knowledge assessment Professional discussion underpinned by a portfolio		AAT Advanced Diploma in Accounting & AAT Level 3 Diploma in Accounting	X,P,M, D	The apprenticeship aligns with the AAT for Qualified Bookkeeper	Qualification
Data Technician	ST0795	3	Simulated Task	Project Professional discussion Observation Portfolio	None	P, D	None stated	Shared
Early Years Educator	ST0135	3	Observation administered and marked by the assessment organisation in the workplace.	Professional discussion Oral question and answer Case study based on child study Additional observation	Paediatric First Aid or Emergency Paediatric First Aid	P, D	None stated	Shared



## Discussion *session*

### Purpose

We're shaping our approach to apprenticeship assessment through sector engagement and design thinking - your input will help validate our insights to create practical, effective solutions for providers, employers, and learners.

### Table Topics

- **Delivering internal assessment** – capacity, quality, consistency, employer confidence, support
- **Managing the transition** – staff upskilling, guidance, clarity, employer engagement
- **Assessment methods and sector fit** – sector fit, on-programme vs summative, real-world & digital assessment
- **Learner-facing support** – guidance, resources, employer expectations
- **Feedback**

Table lead shares **1 insight or opportunity + 1 risk or concern**.  
Be specific and practical.

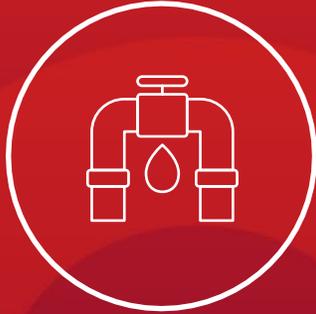
### Time

**15 minutes** for discussion.  
**10 minutes** for feedback

# Our *apprenticeship offer*

We will continue to be an **Awarding Organisation** fully committed to apprenticeships

For apprenticeships, we will be known as an **Assessment Organisation**



**BSE**



**Transport**



**Construction**



**Leadership**



**Hair & Beauty**



**Digital**



**Business**



**Engineering**



**Health &  
Social Care**

## Our *apprenticeship offer*

### Sectors we will operate in:

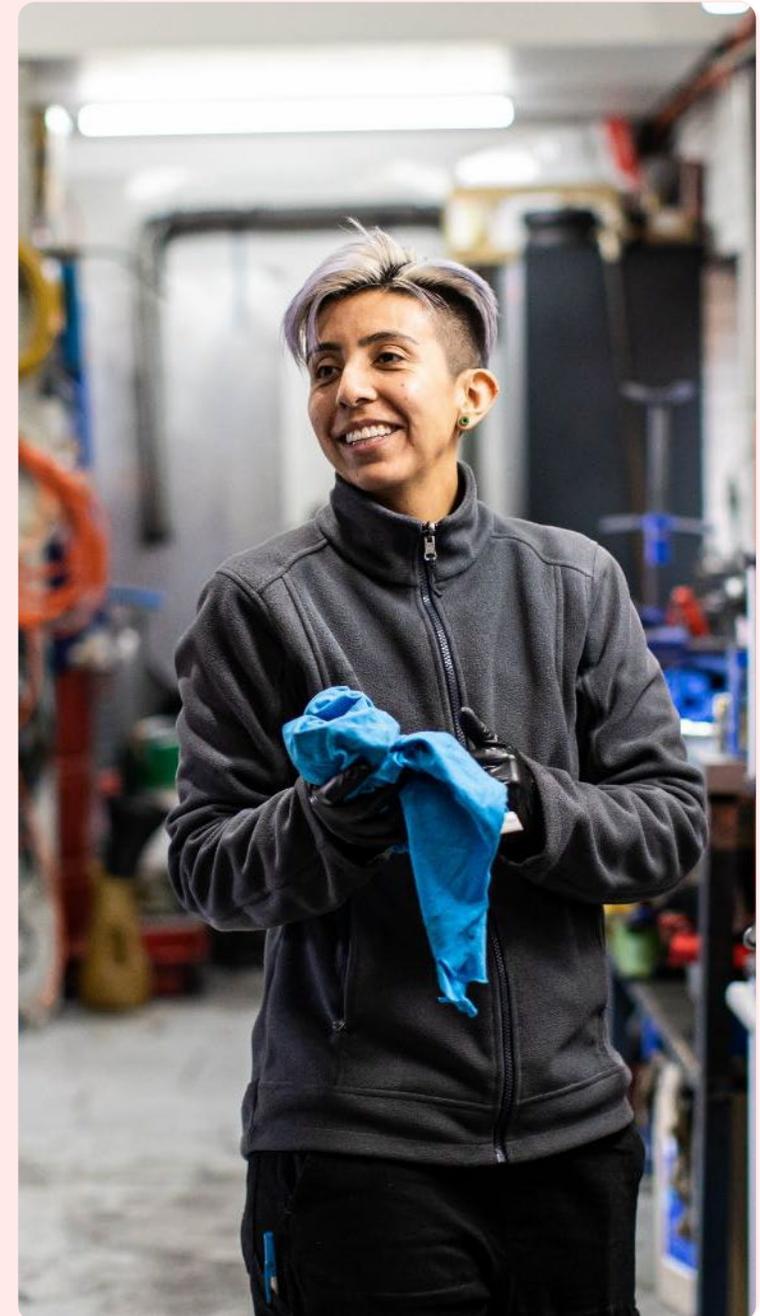
- Out of the 192 standards listed so far to be revised as a priority by Skills England, **we operate in 37 standards**, and we plan to expand into more.
- **On-site construction foundation apprenticeship launched Jan-26**

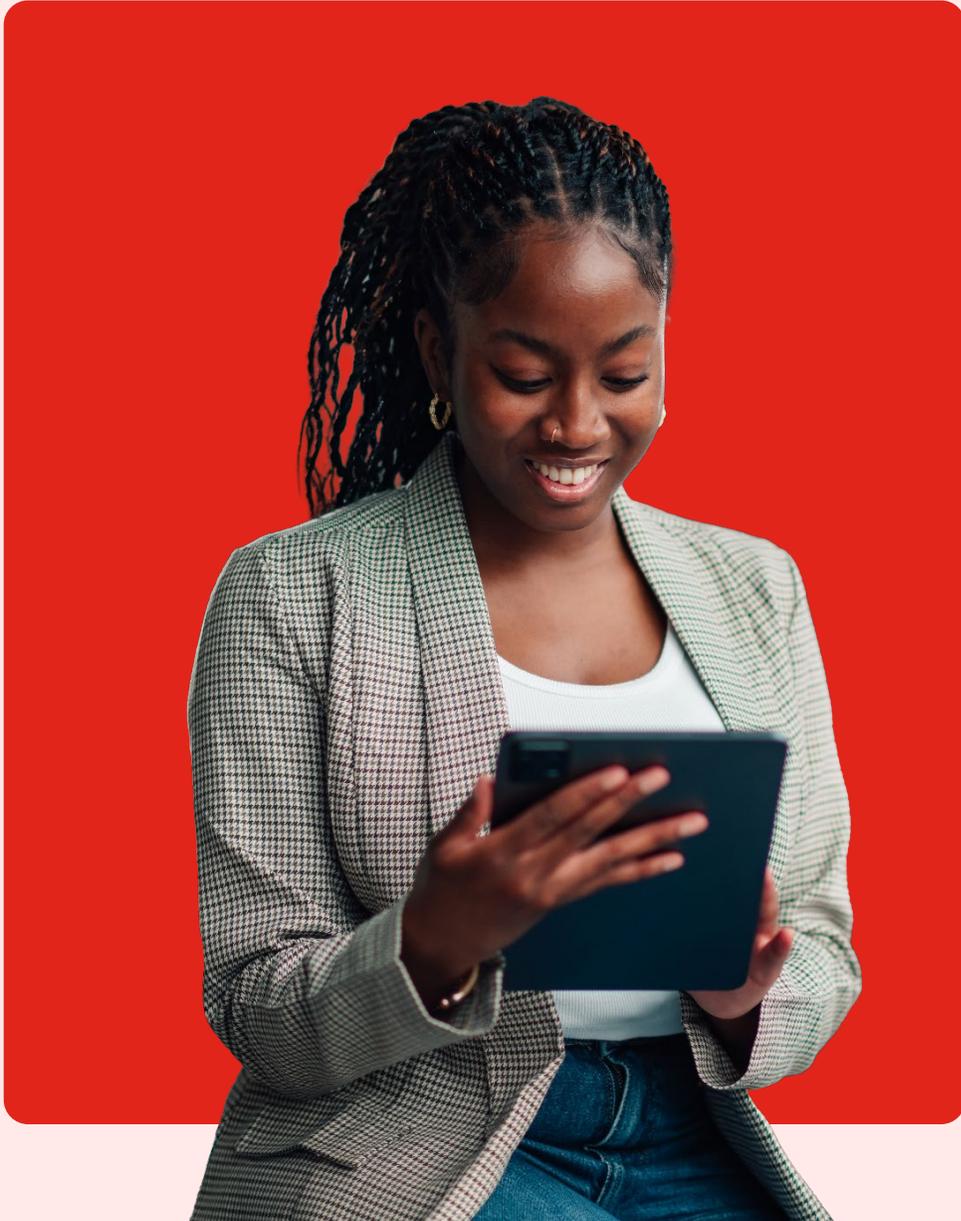
### Existing standards with end-point assessments:

- **Level 3** Mechatronics maintenance technician
- **Level 3** Engineering and manufacturing support technician (Apr-26)
- **Level 3** Engineering maintenance technician - dual discipline and single discipline (May-26)

### Examples of new and existing standards in review by City & Guilds

- **New standard: Level 4** Artificial intelligence and automation practitioner [ST1512]
  - With an assessment plan - released by Skills England in Dec 2025
- **Updated standard: Level 2** Welder [ST0349]
  - Released as an end-point assessment by Skills England in Dec 2025, and on the priority list for a reformed apprenticeship assessment.
  - Welding standards also being scoped by City & Guilds include Level 3 Plate welder and Level 3 Pipe welder (not on the priority list for reform).





## What *City & Guilds service* will look like

A new **assessment service** is being explored to support the transition to internal assessment for several of our standards.

We continue to offer a **comprehensive range of mandatory qualifications and non-mandatory qualifications** to complement and enhance your on-programme offer.

- Underpinned with technical expertise and support resources to help you plan and deliver successfully.



## What *City & Guilds service* will look like

**Two approval pathways** to deliver apprentice assessment:

- 1. Fast-track approval** to ensure a smooth transition for customers wanting to continue or expand provision in a sector you already work in
  - You can add an apprenticeship assessment using our express approval route if you already offer an aligned technical qualification
- 2. Full approval** if delivering a new sector, or are new to City & Guilds



## Working *together*

### Future face-to-face and online networks, webinars and events

#### Keep up to date on announcements and developments

- Visit our apprenticeship reform webpage

#### Your Voice – Our customer community research platform

- Give feedback on areas that interest you, take part in activities and earn rewards.

#### Customer councils

- Sector voice, shape the product offering and approach for your sector

#### ATC 2026 - 2 and 3 March

- Come and talk to us on stand number A0 at the ATC

*We would like to say*

*Thank you*



## About City & Guilds

City & Guilds is the global skills partner, empowering people, organisations and economies to develop the skills they need for growth. With almost 150 years of trusted expertise, we support people into work, help them develop on the job and move into the next job.

We work with Governments, employers, training providers, colleges and industry stakeholders to design and deliver high-quality training, qualifications, assessments and credentials that lead to meaningful career progression. We understand the life changing link between skills development, social mobility and success. Our solutions span critical sectors including construction, engineering, transport, energy and electrical, serving over 1 million learners annually.

Through our comprehensive portfolio of brands and trusted global network, we set industry-wide standards for technical, behavioural and commercial skills to improve performance and productivity. We believe you can achieve your potential - and we're here to help make it happen.

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