

**Updated 26th March 2021 – New Hair & Beauty EPA additional discretion**

**Full statement**

City & Guilds have been working with The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (Ifate), Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) and other End Point Assessment Organisation’s (EPAO’s) to agree a NEW Covid-19 discretion for eligible Hair and Beauty Apprentices End-Point Assessments (EPA).

It is important to highlight that the expectation is that the existing EPA will be undertaken, with any previously approved dispensations if necessary, from 12th April 2021, and that the discretionary EPA is **only** used for those eligible in exceptional circumstances.

We are continuing to work closely with other EPAO’s and internal City & Guilds teams to develop our discretionary EPA offer.  At this time, we are able to share the following;

**The NEW EPA discretion**

The discretionary EPA allows the replacement of the practical observation by a professional discussion, supported by a package of evidence and competency statement.

**The high-level principles for eligibility, for apprentices who will have already met the existing gateway requirements, are set out below:**

* Where close contact/personal services are not available (due to national or regional lockdowns, other restrictions or Government Covid-19 guidance) and the apprentice does not wish to delay their EPA
* Where it is not safe for the apprentice to undertake close contact work for personal medical reasons (e.g. shielding) or similar
* Difficulties in accessing appropriate venues (e.g. feasibility issues due to commercial difficulties)
* Where employment situation of the apprentice has changed, or is changing in a way which necessitates the use of this this discretion.

The above reasons are not exhaustive – they set out the high-level principles which will be implemented by City & Guilds, to assist in aligning our approaches to this discretion.

City & Guilds will consider any other request on its merits, and the key test is the degree to which it would or would not be possible for the EPA to be delivered in line with the assessment plan, or via the previously existing Covid-19 flexibilities and dispensations (as per Autumn 2020).

**Grading:**

In line with previous discussions with the employer group and Ifate, it should be noted that:

* **Apprentices can only be allocated a maximum of a pass grade if this new EPA Discretion is applied**.

(The distinction grade cannot be assessed through this approach, as the on-programme qualification used as an evidence base is assessed at pass/fail)

* **Re-sits and re-takes are not offered to apprentices wishing to move from pass to a higher grade.**

(In line with existing Ifate policy).