

Digital Skills Newsletter

FLASH UPDATE 07

Assessment mitigation 2020-2021

We wanted to keep the mitigation and adaptations we were allowed during the Summer but must recognise that these were allowed due to the exceptional circumstances and having many learners part way through programmes. This meant that no new evidence/assessment was possible or full lockdown meant access to on-line testing could not be done – even with remote invigilation as an option.

City & Guilds has been in consultation with other organisations and directly with the Nations regulators to get agreement from them on what they will allow us to offer to you during the current academic year. This is because everyone is starting (more or less) from the same point and all are on a level playing field (more cliches available). Consequently, some adaptations that proved useful and popular over the Summer are no longer available and we now must work with options that are closer to Business-as-Usual.

There may still be issues for some centres and we would ask that you let us know as soon as these become obvious to you. This will allow us to discuss the problem with various stakeholders to find out how we can help you or whether we can offer alternative adaptations with the regulators. While we cannot promise any changes, we will always look to do offer the best solutions we are allowed and investigate those that you have looked to use.

Mitigation proposed for Digital and IT Skills sector

- Credit based qualifications
 - Evolve tests to be taken using Remote Invigilation or in the centre/employer premises as normal
 - Assignments to be taken using remote supervision or in the centre/employer premises as normal
 - Portfolio evidence to be gathered as normal, remote observations allowed but will need someone from the employer organisation present to assist with questions as needed
 - **NO** centre assessed work allowed and the *Centre Assessed Grading* tool will not be available as an adaptation for Evolve tests
- Apprenticeship Standards
 - On-programme Evolve tests to be taken using Remote Invigilation or in the centre/employer premises as normal
 - EPA Evolve tests to be taken using Remote Invigilation or in the centre/employer premises as normal

Where a qualification has a paper and includes *On-demand paper-based exam* which is set and marked by City & Guilds, these are still on **Delay** and will not be issued at this time.

Please send you enquiries to adaptation.quality@cityandguilds.com

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City & Guilds has purchased an apprenticeship management programme that is currently designed for use with End Point Assessment Standards. The product is EPA Pro and is used successfully by several other End Point Assessment Organisations (EPAOs), as well as being in trial with ourselves for some months.

It was hoped that we would have migrated most, if not all, our centres currently working with Standards to the new system, but Covid-19 got in the way. However, the pilot enabled us to iron out some issues and get some edits to the system for our processes and we are now well under way to have all centres migrated by the end of February 2021.

This is being done in 5 waves, the third of which is underway now. But what will it do?

These are the key points:

- **Simplified and streamlined** – We've simplified all aspects of EPA delivery from registration to evidence upload and exam booking through to results and certification, reducing the administration, and allowing you to reach EPA success sooner.
- **Clarity and control** – The end-to-end journey is made clearer for you and your apprentices: with real-time information sharing, two-way planning meetings and speedy results and action planning, you're in control of EPA more than ever.
- **Fully supported** – EPA Pro centralises your EPA support from City & Guilds and ILM, giving you a single platform through which we can help manage and improve your EPA experience.
- **Realtime progress reviews** – reduces the administrative burden for providers, employers and apprentices

For more information and update on migration: <http://bit.ly/CGEPAPro>

Traineeships and AEB in Digital and IT Sector

The Government is committed to re-skilling/upskilling and quick development of employees needed across a range of sectors. Also, they have recognised that digital skills, everyday use, and management of our digital world are a key factor in how people work now – and actually did before March. This means that all Traineeships programmes need to include some element of digital skills training alongside the main vocational area, as well as English, maths and employability skills. Traineeships funded by AEB 19+ can include digital skills but is not compulsory, unless the learner is deemed to have skills below Level 1.

For those working in the digital curriculum area this presents two opportunities: delivery of digital and IT Traineeships or AEB 19 + funded programmes, and delivery of digital skills for other sector teams. But what might a typical Traineeship or AEB 19+ funded programme consist of (the presentation [27 Oct 2020] and information on our website shows further options):

Example: Digital Skills – Using IT

Work placement: Explores the possibility of using the following to create a profile of achievement

Work preparation training – employability skills		Digital skills	
Level 2 award in employability skills	60 TQT	Level 1 e-mail, IT security, using the internet, spreadsheets, collaborative technologies	10-15 TQT per subject
Maths and English		Vocational taster	
Functional skills in mathematics and English	66 TQT per subject	Level 1 Certificate for IT Users (iTQ)	130 TQT

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Work preparation training – employability skills		Digital skills	
Level 2 award in employability skills	60 TQT	Level 1 e-mail, IT security, using the internet, spreadsheets, collaborative technologies	10-15 TQT per subject
Maths and English		Vocational taster	
Functional skills in mathematics and English	66 TQT per subject	Level 1 award in ICT systems support - PC maintenance	90TQT

Funding for 16-19 and 19+

16-19 Funding			
Band	Planned Hours	Learner Types	National Funding rate (per student)
5	540+	16-17-year-olds and students aged 18+ with high needs	£4188
4	450+	Students aged 18+ without high needs	£3455
4	450-539	16-17-year-olds and students aged 18+ with high needs	£3455
3	360-449		£2827
2	280-359		£2234
1	Up to 279		£4188 (per FTE)

IT user example

19 + Funding	
Programme area	Funding element
Traineeship core element (work preparation and placement)	£1500
English functional skills	£724
Maths functional skills	£724
Example vocational element: Level 1 certificate for IT users	£724
Addition: Digital skills – IT user units	£50 - £168 per unit
Potential funding (plus any additional IT user units selected)	£3672

IT Professional example

19 + Funding	
Programme area	Funding element
Traineeship core element (work preparation and placement)	£1500
English functional skills	£724
Maths functional skills	£724
Example vocational element: Level 1 award in ICT systems support - PC maintenance	£504
Addition: Digital skills – IT user units	£50 - £168 per unit
Potential funding (plus any additional IT user units selected)	£3452

These are some recent highlights around the latest publications from EFA and the Government, please go to the Government web pages to get the details (links provided).

- Funding Rules
 - Version 4 of the AEB funding rules
 - Updated with new information relating to take home pay, Universal Credit, unemployed status, and low wage eligibility for full funding
 - Version 2 of the Apprenticeship funding rules
 - Updated to include the new 75% rule for redundant apprentices
- Incentives for hiring a New apprentice
 - The incentives have not changed but there is a slight update to be aware of:
 - As part of the Government's Plan for Jobs, employers are being offered £2,000 for each new apprentice they hire aged under 25, and £1,500 for each new apprentice they hire aged 25 and over, up to the 31 January 2021. **This includes taking on an apprentice who has been made redundant.**
 - This means that an employer may still get the relevant incentive, even if the apprentice they take on has been made redundant from their previous employer and therefore has a shorter duration to completion.
 - Employers must apply for the incentive and get the payment in two equal instalments - 50% of the payment 90 days after the apprentice's start date and the remaining 50% after the apprentice completes 365 days of their apprenticeship. If an employer is taking on an apprentice who has been made redundant by another employer, the rule works, as follows;
 - *1 year or more to completion* – full incentive, i.e. both payments – 50% after 90 days, 50% at 365 days.
 - *Less than 1 year to completion* – 50% incentive only, for the remaining time of the apprenticeship
- Delayed AEB final assessments and funding
 - Increase in queries about AEB funded qualification assessments, with worries about funding and completion payments
 - ESFA are aware that some students may still be finishing assessments where they had originally planned to complete their learning by 31 July 2020, because assessments have been delayed due to coronavirus
 - There may be AEB achievements that will not be recorded in time for the final 2019-20 year end ILR return (R14), and subsequently will not be funded through ESFA usual processes
 - If you have not been able to record these achievements in the 2019 to 2020 R14 ILR, you can record them in the 2020 to 2021 R04 (December return) ILR, ESFA will pay this as an exceptional part of their usual process
 - This is likely to mainly affect ITPs, as FE college funding is managed differently
- Apprenticeships starts at Level 2 and Level 3 research report
 - DfE have published a report on the findings of a qualitative investigation to understand the causes and effects of changes in apprenticeship starts at Level 2
 - Doesn't tell us anything that City & Guilds has not already heard from our provider network, and various other sector bodies, and has been telling DfE for some time
 - Level 2 apprenticeships are an excellent and much needed progression route for the 40% of school leavers that exit school without a full Level 2

27 October 2020

Essential Digital Skills Qualifications (EDSQs)

City & Guilds has started the development of its EDSQ offer, which we plan to make available for centres to register learners on from September 2021. These qualifications are at Entry level 3 and Level 1, and will be eligible for 19+ AEB funding. They are also expected to be the Core Digital element of Traineeships from 2021/22 (IT User qualifications and units are eligible for this component for 2020/21). More information will be made available as the development progresses.

Updates and webinars – and more

Are you still a bit unsure as to how some of the things around Apprenticeship Standards work or just want a reminder of some of the things we have discussed at events and on webinars? Then, please visit our Updates and Webinars page.

<http://bit.ly/CGDigitalUpdate>

You will find a wealth of information there for you to view at any time that includes:

- 5 Minute Apprenticeship Standards videos
- ALL webinars since March – including lessons learnt/best practice for the EPA elements
- Question and Answer document from our webinars
- Published Newsletters
- Documents for the dispensation for Apprentices doing the Synoptic Project

Please check out the information held there as this may answer many of the questions you have.

Next webinars

20 November 2020 (09.30-10.30): <https://bit.ly/CGDigital20Nov>

Note date change from webinar presentation

8 December 2020 (09.30-10.30): <http://bit.ly/CGDigital8Dec>

5 January 2021 (09.30-10.30): <http://bit.ly/CGDigital5Jan>

If you have any specific topics you would like discussed at these events, please forward your suggestions to:

Ken Gaines ken.gaines@cityandguilds.com

OR

David Wackett david.wackett@cityandguilds.com

Note from David and Ken

We always urge you to Stay Alert and Stay Safe. Please make sure you check the Covid-19 webpage.

www.cityandguilds.com/covid-19