Digital Skills Newsletter - 18

Switching Standards

ESFA – Switching to new version or new Standard

Key principles

While we may fere to the original Digital Standards as "Old" versions, this does not make them obsolete and still give apprentices the skills they need for their job. The "New" versions come in two sorts;

- **New** have replaced a Standard and is completely or significantly different in content
- **New version** that is an updated Standard to reflect changes in the job skills but is not entirely or significantly changed

It is possible for apprentices and employers to change to the **New version** of a Standard, if it is appropriate to do so, and even a **New** Standard but with caveats

While there is no easy way to define whether or when an apprentice should change versions – circumstances will vary between apprentices – City & Guilds would suggest you look at when they were registered and how far along they are in the programme, as changing could have consequences for you, the employer and very much so for the apprentice.

Where an apprentice does change versions, you must make sure that the training and assessment they receive across the whole apprenticeship delivers occupational competence in all aspects of the new standard version. Ask yourself if there is sufficient time to build in more learning without having a significant extension to the programme? Would you need to extend your programme? Would the employer allow this?

What is important is that the apprentice sits the End Point Assessment (EPA) relevant to the standard they've been trained against i.e. an apprentice should not sit the new version of the EPA if they have trained against the old standard.

Considerations for change

This is not a case of "oh, new must change", employers, apprentices and providers should carefully consider the advantages and disadvantages of changing versions. Timing, extra work, apprentice preparation for the EPA, etc.

The best interest of the apprentice is paramount in this consideration, it is not just yours or the employer's decision to make and all parties must agree to the change.

If changing the apprentice must:

- have enough time remaining on their apprenticeship to cover all the new KSBs.
- have enough time to enable them to prepare for and pass the revised EPA.

The duration of the apprenticeship should not be unduly extended. And in many cases the employer – and the apprentice – may not wish to do so. You need to check carefully the difference between versions to see if the time left on programme will allow the relevant learning and preparation to happen.

Of course, you as the training provider must have the capability to deliver the new training required to cover all of the KSBs in the new version or be able to sub-contract as necessary before making the decision. And you need to check that there is an EPAO for the new version available before changing, otherwise there is little point in making the move.

Recording the change

You can't just decide that the apprentice is changing versions and that's it. From ESFA's perspective, as of Autumn 2021, employers and providers will be able to select the standard version through their Apprenticeship Service account using the approvals functionality (where the funding for the apprentice's training is through the Service). If the apprentice is not funded via the Apprenticeship Service, they remain recorded against the original version on the ILR.

City & Guilds will need you to unregister from one Standard number to the new Standard number and we may still charge the £25 registration fee to cover administrative costs.

The employer must update both the apprenticeship agreement, that will cover duration and what they will be doing as part of the programme, as well as the commitment statement to reflect the move to the new version.

It is imperative that providers ensure that the EPAO knows exactly what the apprentices are entered for in respect of the assessment and certification, as this will impact on what will be checked for your apprentices to get through Gateway.

New standards

These are Standards that either replace a previous product – Information Communication Technician for Infrastructure Technician and Unified Communications Technician - or have been significantly changed both in content and assessment – Cyber Security Technologist now has 3 pathways and has a major overhaul, with more sophisticated EPA.

If the employer and apprentice decide to change to the new standard, the apprentice will need to be withdrawn and enrolled on the new apprenticeship through the Apprenticeship Service or ILR as appropriate. As with switching version through City & Guilds, it will be unregistering from one product number and registering on the new one.

It should go without saying that you should not be switching any apprentice to a new Standard unless an EPAO is available.

You will need to follow the rules around recognition of prior learning and need to plan training that must result in a minimum apprenticeship of 12 months remaining, including 20% off the job. Funding must be reduced to reflect this.

Basically, the apprentice is on a new Standard and so they are – to a certain extent – back at day zero but with Prior Learning.

Of course, things have changed and you do need to make sure you have the latest information published by ESFA, as the rules have been updated to cover circumstances where an apprentice changes to a new version – these should be consulted before changing versions.

You should also note that where an apprentice changes to a new version of a standard, the funding remains the same, irrespective of any changes to the funding band – and this includes whether the new funding is higher than the Standard being moved from.

Apprenticeship Funding Rules 2021/2022 are now available at:

[Apprenticeship funding rules - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](www.gov.uk)

A clarification version was of the rules was published on 2 July and following feedback to ESFA this has now been turned into Version 1 for 2021/2022.

Version 1 includes further updates to the Standards Versioning section of the rules and it has clarified the rules to reflect that the availability of an end-point assessment organisation must be considered before enabling an apprentice to move versions.

Digital and IT Apprenticeship Standards Update

Apprenticeship versions with City & Guilds

Old/Original Standard	Revised or New Standard
Infrastructure Technician v1 **ST0125/AP02 (9648-73/75)** Unified Communications Technician v1 **ST0130/AP01 (9790-71)**	Information Communication Technician **ST0973/AP01 (9602-12/9602-13/960214)** *New Standard*
Software Developer v1 **ST0116/AP04 (9648-71)**	Software Developer **ST0116/AP05 (9600-12)** *New Version*
Network Engineer **ST0127/AP03(9648-77/77)**	Network Engineer **ST0127/AP04 (9601-12)** *New Version*
Cyber Security Technologist v1 **ST0124/AP02 (9660-12/13)**	Cyber Security Technologist **ST1021/AP01 (to be developed)** *New Standard*
Digital Marketer **ST0122/AP02 (9648-74**	
IT Technical Salesperson **ST0115/AP02 (9705-12)**	
Digital Support Technician **ST0120/AP01 (9700-12)**	
	Data Analyst **ST0118/AP03 (9770-12)** *New Version*

City & Guilds will keep the "Old" products open on our systems for at least 18 months or until registrations/EPA bookings cease.

13 July 2021
Change in resit grading

As many apprenticeship Standards are to be transferred to Ofqual for EQA, changes are likely to be made in terms of resit grade capping. This has already happened with the new Information Communication Technician:

First sit of EPA   : Fail/Pass/Merit/Distinction
Resit of EPA   : Fail/Pass

The resit grading will apply, regardless of an apprentice getting a Distinction in one of the Assessment Methods and failing the other.

The other revised Standards will continue as currently, with Fail, Pass, Merit or Distinction be available for first sit of EPA and resit.

Other news

RoATP changes

ESFA have updated the entry requirements for the RoATP. Previously, since the opening earlier this year, only providers that were intending to deliver apprenticeships that catered to critical worker roles were able to apply. As from 16th August, the following are the new entry criteria, but there is still a restriction on who can apply;

- fill a training need (gap in provision), and
- have been named as a preferred provider in an employer business case can be invited to join the register

[Register of apprenticeship training providers - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](www.gov.uk)

EdTech Support Funding for CPD

Applications are now open for the EdTech mentoring development grants. The Education and Training Foundation (ETF), funded by the DfE, are offering 82 grants of up to £1,000 to support the professional development of mentors and coaches specialising in EdTech (Educational Technology).

The grants are designed to support participants to undertake:

- self-directed digital professional development
- mentoring/coaching of colleagues to enhance the quality of online/blended delivery across their organisation

Applications should be submitted by 10 September 2021, with a maximum of two applications per FE provider. This is an opportunity for provider staff to gain funding to upgrade their knowledge to support EdTech/remote delivery more effectively. Full information can be found here - [EdTech Support Grants](#)

13 July 2021
Apprenticeship COVID Flexibilities to be Kept

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IfATE has announced that certain flexibilities introduced to assist with delivery during the pandemic, will be retained permanently. Some temporary discretions, which only apply to specific apprenticeships, will be switched off on 31 December 2021. The seven flexibilities that will be kept permanently are:

- remote delivery of assessment (including invigilation) – check out the latest services from City & Guilds now with remote proctoring
- assessment gateway sign-off being done remotely – electronic signatures, etc.
- pauses being allowed between elements of end point assessment
- assessment element delivery being in any order
- simulated environments being used instead of observation in workplaces
- assessments taking place outside of usual venues
- assessment exams being online instead of on paper

One of the key adaptations for Digital EPA has been the dispensation to allow the Synoptic Project to be done at home. This is one of the items that has a closure date of 31 December 2021.

Process for feedback – January 2022

All apprentices to get feedback and a new straightforward view has been trialled with Business Admin and this along with Team Leader, Ops dept manager, Adult care, Lead adult care, Carpentry & Joinery and Brick Standards are due go live in September. Digital is part of the second to waves of role out and is likely to be available in January 2022.

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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

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

Next Digital and IT Skills webinars
14 September 2021 (09.30 – 10.30)   https://bit.ly/CGDigi14Sep
5 October 2021 (09.30 – 10.30)   https://bit.ly/CGDigi5Oct
26 October 2021 (09.30 – 1030)   https://bit.ly/CGDigi26Oct

A special Wales Forum will be held on 7 October 2021 (09.30 – 11.00)
https://bit.ly/2CGDigi7OctWales

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

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Note from David and Ken

As always urge you to Stay Alert and Stay Safe. Please make sure you check the Covid-19 webpage. www.cityandguilds.com/covid-19