Digital Skills Newsletter - 28

Keep-in-Touch

Wales Urgent News

4520-04 has been restored to the Qualifications in Wales list of funded products. Those using this either stand-alone or as part of an apprenticeship may continue to do so.

Portfolios

Please remember that the Portfolio is about quality and not quantity. We have mentioned in the last two updates that we are seeing lots of bitty evidence or one per Outcome rather than a more project or story write up approach.

However, we are getting some quite large portfolios in with several good write ups, but quantity may be unnecessary. Recently, one of our IEPAs has noted getting 15 documents of 30 pages or more each. While the content was good, well indexed, and reflective accounts to show how the apprentice had used their learning, it is questionable as to whether it needed all 15 documents to cover the Outcomes of the Standard. More is not better.

Digital Marketer review- Urgent

The Employer Group meeting is now open to a wider audience. We need more employer presence from the Digital Marketer apprenticeship market, as it is currently mainly those from Marketing Assistant.

What needs to be decided is the final Knowledge, Skills, and Behaviours outcomes – the Group will be given these for consultation – the assessment methods that should be used and the final title of the Standard itself. This is your opportunity to help influence this Standard's development and ensure that the assessment is fit for purpose through your employers – speak with them and get them signed up by letting David or Ken know their email addresses that can be passed to the 2 Co-Chairs of the Trailblazer Group (TBG).

In many of the revisions of Standards in the Digital Space, we are seeing a preference for the following types of assessment:

- Portfolio (not assessed) with Professional Discussion
- Project (or Case Study) possibly with a Presentation followed by Q&A

Part of the review was driven to remove the on-programme multiple-choice qualifications, which we know both you and your apprentices are not keen on. One employer body is suggesting that one (or more) of these be moved to the EPA. We think this is not appropriate in this field and other methods (the above included) would be better suited to have apprentices demonstrate their knowledge.

However, IfATE and the Group will not be swayed by providers or EPAOs and that is why we need your help to find employers to help with determining what they see as efficient, effective, and robust assessment for the new product.

The deadline for the final submission that would include the Standard, Assessment Plan and quotes for the training and EPA need to be submitted to IfATE during September 2022.

Revised and new Standards update

Software Development Technician: this Standard has now been signed off by Minster and due for publication. It is one of four developments that we are looking to have on our pipeline for creation this coming year.

Software Tester: this Standard has now been signed off by Minster and due for publication. It is not part of our current planned developments.

Digital Support Technician: waiting for final sign off – funding will be the same, with the TBG looking to get this up and running as quickly as they can, and we can.

Cyber Security Technologist (2021): development of this is still going and the handbooks, etc. are being prepared but we have had issues that we have discussed with IfATE and other EPAOs, as well as the TBG. We felt the Scenario Demonstrations timings did not allow for full coverage of the KSBs assigned and with the task and write up being done within the time it also seemed unlikely that an apprentice would meet any distinction criteria.

We sent a proposal to the TBG and what could/could not be covered in the timescales and heard back from them on 14 April, so need to examine the reply and discuss with other EPAOs.

Cyber Security Technician: It is one of four developments that we are looking to have on our pipeline for creation this coming year.

Data Technician: It is one of four developments that we are looking to have on our pipeline for creation this coming year.

VRQ / WBQ qualifications published

IT Professional Systems and Principles / System Support - update

7540 Level 2 and 3, 7630 Level 4 and 4520 Level 2 to 4 are now available with all the new units we promised and a clean up to remove the old named vendor and languages units. As part of this process, we have also created a document that shows the range of programmes you could deliver now use the existing and new units that range from:

If you are already delivering these qualifications then there is no action required on your part, you can continue to deliver your current programmes (please check units) and now take advantage of the additional units. If you do not deliver the products currently you will need to complete the qualification approval in Walled Garden.

- **7540-12 Level 2 Systems & Principles / System Support**
- **7540-13 Level 3 Systems & Principles / System Support**
- **7630-04 Level 4 Systems & Principles**
- **4520-02 – 04 ICT Professional Competence**

19 April 2022

IT qualifications in Wales – Apprenticeship Frameworks in Wales

Training providers working in Wales will be aware that there have been several apprenticeship frameworks published that are more role specific and this will mean some changes for the market going forward. We have been told that the IT, Software, Web, and Telecoms framework is likely to close this September and at some point, so will the IT User framework, the latter not being seen as a job role and the drive being the Digital Application Support framework.

In response to this, City & Guild has provided a list of qualifications that it would like to put into the role specific apprenticeship frameworks which have appropriate units to use for each. This is a short-term action, and the medium term will see us create specific certification routes within these products to meet the job role of the framework. While Wales has led in the use of qualifications in this way, this last piece of work aligns with what is now expected in England to create Occupational-entry Technical Qualifications (OTQs) that align to Level 3 Apprenticeship Standards.

Qualification re-alignment requested

Apprenticeship Framework	Qualification (s)
Digital Application Support	7574 Diploma in IT Use Skills (Level 2 and Level 3)
Data Analytics	7630-04 and/or 4520-04 (suggested Level 3 Option)
Digital Telecommunications	7540-13 and 7630-04(suggested Level 2 Option)
IT Infrastructure	7540-13 and 7630-04 (suggested Level 2 Option)
Information Security	7540-13 and 4520-03 / 7630-04 and 4520-04
IT Solutions Development and Support	7540-13 and 7630-04 (suggested Level 2 Option)
Digital Content Management	7513-30 and 7513-40

On 8 April we were informed of the following:

- City & Guilds products should be seen in the role related frameworks by the end of May 2022
- The IT, Software, Web, and Telecoms Framework will be closed during Spring 2023
  - Any apprentices that are registered prior to its closure will be allowed to complete their apprenticeship as planned, they will not need to swap to anything else

3668-02 and 03 Cabling Communications qualifications

The new versions of the Cabling Communications qualifications have also been published and in both cases will be recognised for ECS cards – at different levels. We have been asked for several years for a full progression to a Level 3 product that provides greater breadth and depth for those who are looking to be professional cable communication installers or wish to design systems, and these are the response developed with industry to meet the requirements that employers have told us are needed for the job roles the wish to employ. This is what they are called and the rules of combination:

- 3668-02 Level 2 Award in Communications Cabling
  - ✓ 1 Mandatory unit plus 1 Optional unit from selection of three
  - ✓ Linked to the ECS Blue Card – Associate Network Cable Installer
- 3668-03Level 3 Certificate in Communications Cabling
  - ✓ 2 Mandatory units plus 1 Option unit from nine including up to date Fibre and wireless cellular
  - ✓ Linked to the ECS Gold Striped Card – Network Cable Installer

For those providers already offering 3667-02, you will be automatically approved to deliver both new qualifications. If you are interested in delivering these products, please refer to the handbooks and the equipment required to ensure you can provide the learning and experience expected.

The old 3667-03 will remain, as this covers just Design and Planning of cabling and is still appropriate for those wishing to focus on this alone.

Supporting learning and EPA

Information Communication Technician – EPA Webinar

As the ICT Standard has now been running since last May, we know that some of you will have apprentices coming through for EPA within the next 3 months or so. We ran a session on the EPA for this Standard earlier this year and will do a repeat performance for those who missed or those just starting to deliver this new Standard.

The session will go through the requirements of the two assessment methods and the support material we have provided, as well as leave time for questions from you on any issues you may be facing or want to clarify. The date of the event and link to register is:

17 May 2022 (13.30 – 15.00) – Information Communication Technician EPA

https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5510860453045417740

Links to various external information for apprenticeships

Area	Links
Coronavirus	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-apprenticeship-programme-response
Coronavirus	https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/covid-19-information-regarding-apprenticeships/
App Redundancy Support	https://help.apprenticeships.education.gov.uk/hc/en-gb/articles/360015630040-Redundancy-SupportService-for-Apprentices
QAR Achievement Rates	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/qualification-achievement-rates-qar-2020-to-2021
Apprenticeship/ Traineeship Latest Data	https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/apprenticeships-and-traineeships/2020-21
Apprenticeship Funding Bands	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-funding-bands?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=84ccd136-7a5e-4b36-b402-8809afaef7d0&utm_content=daily
Apprenticeship Funding Rules	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apprenticeship-funding-rules?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_source=b948706d-a63b-4ec0-94db-800ec0744760&utm_content=daily
Ofqual Approach to EQA	https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-end-point-assessments-a-guide-for-employers

Other news

Adult Education Budget – Ukraine

ESFA have confirmed that all Ukrainian adults and their family members supported through the Ukraine Family Scheme and Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme are immediately eligible for FE 19+ funding and are exempt from the 3-year residency requirement.

They can access funding immediately. This has been confirmed in the recently updated version of the AEB Funding Rules for 2021-22.

- https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-a-ukraine-family-scheme-visa

- https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-a-visa-under-the-ukraine-sponsorship-scheme

DfE and Level 2 IT User qualifications – Consultation results

The DfE have launched a consultation on the L2 and below qualification offer as part of the skills reforms.

The consultation is seeking views on proposals to reform technical and academic qualifications at level 2 and below. (GCSEs, Functional Skills Qualifications and Essential Digital Skills Qualifications are not included)

Aims to create a streamlined qualifications landscape to ensure that every qualification approved for public funding has a distinct purpose, is high quality, and supports student progression. This will inevitably lead to some qualifications at L2 and below being defunded.

- ➢ Consultation Documents - https://consult.education.gov.uk/post-16-qualifications-review-team/review-of-post-16-qualifications-at-level-2-and-be/

- ➢ Consultation Announcement - https://www.gov.uk/government/news/post-16-qualifications-boosted-to-help-more-people-to-progress

- ➢ Alongside the above consultation, the DfE has published the responses summary to their L2 Call for Evidence The Response document can be found https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/post-16-study-at-level-2-and-below-call-for-evidence

MCA and GLA – how to not lose Level 2 IT User funding

Some educational funding has been placed into the hands of Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCA) and Greater London Authority (GLA), which allows them to place qualifications on a list for funding where local demand shows it is still required but Government funding may not be available.

For those providers who use the Level 2 IT User qualifications (7574) either as a standalone or alongside other products to develop or enhance people digital skills, this may be the way to keep those programmes going. You and the local employers you work with can lobby your MCA or the GLA and have this product included along with a number of others that we have listed a couple of months ago here and on the webinar.

If this level of product loses funding, then learners will face a steep step from Essential Digital Skills (with very small breadth and depth of content) Level 1 to Level 3 full blown applications skills and knowledge. Please use this facility to help continue your delivery.

UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)

Earlier this week the Dept for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, announced the introduction of the UKSPF, the Government's replacement for the European Social Fund (ESF) allocations to individual regions and areas can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-shared-prosperity-fund-prospectus/ukspf-allocations

Funding for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund will be £2.6 billion between 2022 and 2025, with this figure reaching £1.5 billion per year by March 2025, a portion of the funds will be used to support the Government's new maths Multiply Programme for Adults.

The full announcement can be found here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/news/communities-across-uk-handed-control-of-26-billion-levelling-up-funding

Government Maths Multiply programme

The Governments new Multiply scheme aims to improve the numeracy skills of millions of adults. £270 million is being handed out to Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCA) and local councils in England. A further £160 million will be spread across Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

Multiply will offer adults who do not already have a GCSE grade 4 or higher in maths free flexible courses that fit around their lives. Courses are expected to be available this autumn in person or online (a new digital platform is due to be launched next year, giving learners access to numeracy training on-demand), at work or at home on a part time or intensive basis.

Employers will be able to team up with the local authorities to deliver "bespoke" programmes to train their staff.

City & Guilds is looking at the maths/numeracy content we have that may fit with this offer and will be providing more information on our bite-sized and SmartScreen offer very soon.

Adult Education Budget funding rules

ESFA have published the 2022-23 Draft AEB Funding Rules. we will cover any changes to the rules and an overview of the contents in the first summer term Funding and Policy Update webinar in May.

For those of you interested in the details, the document can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/adult-education-budget-aeb-funding-rules-2022-to-2023

T Level Funding Guidance

ESFA have also published the T Level Funding Guidance for 2022-23, we will cover any changes to the rules and an overview of the contents in the first summer term Funding and Policy Update webinar in May.

The document can be found here - https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/t-level-funding

Government Skills Revolution Campaign for SME's

The Government has launched a Skills Revolution campaign aimed at SMEs to encourage them to access the opportunities and funding available to them to upskill/reskill their workforces. If you check the hashtag #SkillsRevolution! On LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook, you will see the series of promotions they have put out.

19 April 2022

The actual. Government web page can be found:

https://find-employer-schemes.education.gov.uk/?utm_source=li&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=rev&utm_term=moti&utm_content=video_success

It lists the various options employers can access and might be of some interest to providers and smaller businesses.

IfATE Launch Recruitment for their Apprentice Panel

The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) has launched a recruitment campaign for new people to join their panel of apprentices. The panel influences policy thinking on apprenticeships from an apprentice's viewpoint, and members act as ambassadors for apprenticeships.

This could be an opportunity for your apprentices to make sure programmes they are on or have been on are the best they can.

The closing date for applications is midnight on Monday 16 May 2022

More information can be found here - https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/about/newshub/news-events/launch-of-apprentice-panel-open-recruitment-2022/

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 Keep-in-Touch webinars

10 May 2022 (09.30 – 10.30)	https://bit.ly/CGDigitalandIT10May22
7 June 2022 (09.30 – 10.30)	https://bit.ly/CGDigitalandIT7Jun22

Specific topic webinars

11 May 2022 (12.00 – 13.15) – Funding and Policy

https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4316802919775245067

17 May 2022 (13.30 – 15.00) – ICT EPA

https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5510860453045417740

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

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OR	
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