

Digital Skills Newsletter - 19

Keep-in-Touch

REMONDER: ESFA – Switching to new version or new Standard

Key principles

The original Digital Standards are now being referred to as “Original” or “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. It is important that the switch is in the best interest of the Apprentice and sufficient time is still available to cover new/revised Outcomes.

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

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 - 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

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.

In this Issue

ESFA – Switching Standards

- Key principles
- Considerations for change
- Recording the change
- New standards
- Funding rules
- Prior learning

Apprenticeship Standards update

- Old versus Revised/New

Other news

Updates and webinars

Note from David and Ken

14 September 2021

City & Guilds will need you to unregister from one Standard number to the new Standard number and we may still charge the £40 registration fee.

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.

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.

Funding rules

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 \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeship-funding-rules-2021-2022)

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

Prior learning in apprenticeships

ESFA have published new guidance for providers and employers on prior learning expectations in apprenticeships, including more information about how to conduct the initial assessment and assess prior learning and experience in accordance with the policy intent and the apprenticeship funding rules.

We will include information in the Autumn Provider Funding and Policy Update webinar, planned for October.

[Apprenticeships: recognition of prior learning – GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeships-recognition-of-prior-learning)

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) <i>New Standard</i>
Software Developer v1 ST0116/AP04 (9648-71)	Software Developer ST0116/AP05 (9600-12) <i>New Version</i>
Network Engineer ST0127/AP03(9648-77/77)	Network Engineer ST0127/AP04 (9601-12) <i>New Version</i>
Cyber Security Technologist v1 ST0124/AP02 (9660-12/13)	Cyber Security Technologist ST1021/AP01 (to be developed) <i>New Standard</i>
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) <i>New Version</i>

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

Apprenticeship support

Exemplars

EPA Pro now has materials published for the 3 Revised and 1 New Standard;

- Single document for the Employer explaining the EPA elements and guidance on how they can support the apprentice
- Separate documents for the Project, Project Q&A, Portfolio and Professional Discussion for You and the Apprentice

5 minute webinar series 2021

Seven (7) new pre-recorded webinars are now available on our Digital and IT Updates and webinars page covering;

- On-programme, Gateway and the elements of EPA plus a Learner Journey
- <http://bit.ly/CGDigitalUpdate>

Teach meets for the new EPA

Short live webinars covering the new EPA assessment methods:

- Project and the Project Q&A including presentation advice
- Portfolio and Professional Discussion

Help building your curriculum for the Revised and New Standards, our opportunity to ask questions and explore what is required to develop programmes

14 September 2021

Apprentice Connect from City & Guilds Foundation

Apprentice Connect is an initiative developed by City & Guilds apprentices who wanted to improve the information, advice and guidance offered to young people on apprenticeships.

To educate and inspire as many young people as we can, we created this online learning module. It's a short but practical overview of what's involved in an apprenticeship and the key things to consider.

What you'll learn

We've split the module into four bite sized topics. Click each below to find out more.

1. What is an apprenticeship?

2. Diving deeper

3. Employability

4. Take it further

<https://cityandguildsfoundation.org/apprentice-connect-apprenticeship-information/#how-it-works>

Apprentices to University

We have been asked on a number of occasions the following questions:

“Do the Standards have UCAS points?”

“Will Universities accept apprentices on to degree programmes?”

In answer to the first, **No**. The Standards have not been designed as a stepping stone into university, they are an employee learning their trade. Of course, they could progress to a Degree Apprenticeship and continue as an employee if the their employer can or wishes to accommodate this.

The second question is not so easy to answer, **Yes** it is possible for an apprentice to go on to a standard degree programme, **BUT** it is not as straightforward as getting there from A Levels or similar.

One of the key issues is that even a single Standard will have apprentices working in totally different ways and developing differently due to the demands of their employer – no consistency as with A Levels or T-Levels. Some may do Vendor qualifications, some may do all their qualifications with an EPAO with Infrastructure Technician.

Remember Universities have to cope with sifting a very wide range of applicants with different certifications from across the UK – A Levels, BTECs, Nationals, Higher Nationals, Baccalaureates – and then throw into the mix students from overseas. They need a clear indication of the apprentices capability.

What you need to know and can do

- Make sure the learner has had the right advice – if their aim is university, should the be on an apprenticeship
- You, the apprentice, employer or their parents will need to contact the university (ies) they may be interested in
- Look at Degree Apprenticeships rather than straight degrees – will the employer fund it?

There are some employers who like the idea of their apprentices continuing their education using the apprenticeship model – working and learning - Airbus for example have worked with an HEI to create their own Degree Apprenticeship programme.

Apprenticeship COVID Flexibilities to be Kept

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.

Greater London Assembly free courses

The GLA/Mayor of London is providing £5m to deliver the Mayor's Academies Programme (MAP)

- £3m will support new Academy Hubs and will bring skills providers, employers and other partners together to help tackle skills gaps.

£6m of London's Adult Education Budget (AEB) has been made available to providers working within an Academy Hub to provide bespoke support that will help these newly skilled people into work.

- Jobs available include employment in the hospitality, digital, health and the green economy.
- This may be an opportunity to promote our 'Ready For' programmes. Full information below.

[Mayor offers unemployed Londoners free training to secure jobs | London City Hall](#)

[Mayor's Academies Programme | London City Hall](#)

Afghan Relocation Assistance Programme (ARAP)

ESFA have confirmed to providers that individuals covered by the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP), are exempt from the 3-year ordinary residency rule in the UK.

- As long as they reside in England and the course takes place in England, they will be immediately eligible for further education 19+ funding.

There are approx. 20,000 Afghan refugees entering UK and many will want access for themselves and family members to learn and and/or improve their English. Contact us to discuss ESOL/English language needs with, if you may be supporting refugees.

14 September 2021

Internet connectivity support fund

DfE have announced new support funding for disadvantaged learners to provide mobile dongles or broadband routers between September and December 2021. This is for **Colleges only**.

- Colleges will be able to claim back up to £75 per learner to help disadvantaged students absent due to Covid get online in the new academic year under a new “connectivity support grant” scheme.
- Colleges will have to pay up front, as claiming back the funding cannot occur till Jan 2022

[Get help with technology programme: conditions of internet access support grants - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Adult Education Budget winning providers

ESFA have published the list of providers that won national AEB contracts in the commercial procurement process earlier this year.

- sub-contracting is likely to be a prominent facet of the new landscape, please contact us if you have been successful so we can link with your sub-contracting providers as well.

[Adult Education Budget Procurement Contracts for Services 2021/22 – Contracts Finder](#)

Price rise – change in Registration Fee

City & Guilds has looked to maintain our overall EPA pricing since we started, but as you will be aware costs have risen and some adjustment is unfortunately required. Our aim is to remain competitive, and the price rise for the Digital and IT sector only affects registration that has risen by £15, our final EPA payment will remain the same.

How might this affect you, here is an example.

Flagged to increase?	Learner registered?	Cost impact	Example
		None	Infrastructure Technician total £1,000 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remains at this total price
		Registration increase of £15	Infrastructure Technician total £1,015 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No increase on EPA final price on registration

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

5 October 2021 (09.30 – 10.30)

<https://bit.ly/CGDigi5Oct>

26 October 2021 (09.30 – 1030)

<https://bit.ly/CGDigi26Oct>

16 November 2021 (09.30 – 1030)

<https://bit.ly/CGDigi16Nov>

14 September 2021

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:

Ken Gaines ken.gaines@cityandguilds.com

OR

David Wackett david.wackett@cityandguilds.com

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