City&
Guilds

Digital Skills Newsletter - 22

Keep-in-Touch

Apprenticeship Standards update

Digital Marketer revision will be a replacement Standard and not just an edited version of the current offer with a new Assessment Plan.

The Trailblazer/Employer Group (TBG) now responsible for the redevelopment work has done the initial work to finalise new set of Knowledge, Skills and Behaviour outcomes that will be sent out for wider consultation shortly. The new product will replace both the existing Marketing Assistant and Digital Marketer standards, and it has been suggested that the new product be titled Marketing Assistant (Multi-channel) to reflect its breadth of reach and focus on it being an entry point for marketing professionals that will see them using digital products.

The TBG has undertaken mapping to Digital Marketer standard, and we will look to provide this once we have been sent the material to share with you.

There is a deadline for submitting the new proposal of March 2022, though this does not mean that the assessment plan is finalised by that time, as the TBG must submit a proposal for a new Standard and then the Standard with Assessment Plan. This will then go through various IfATE departments for scrutiny before finalisation.

We will need to provide costings of the EPA for them and may ask some of you for training provider costs, which will go to ESFA and then to the Minister for sign off on what funding they finally allocate.

Federation of Awarding Bodies (FAB) Awards

We are pleased to tell you that at this year's FAB Conference, City & Guilds was voted EPAO of the Year.

While the last year our EPA business has focussed on ensuring all learners, no matter who they are or where they are can continue to progress despite the limitations placed upon them by the ongoing pandemic. Something that resonates with our purpose: *Helping people, organisations and economies develop skills for growth*.

We have a simple approach - progression for all not the few: *Every learner, every standard, every location*.

This could not be achieved without your involvement and working with our advice a guidance, providing us with feedback to improve our service and with the apprentices producing their best

FAB 2021 Awards Winners: https://awarding.org.uk/fab-2021-awards-winners-announced/?dm_i=1UVL,7MA7K,BEJIFE,V106Y,1

Dispensation, Mitigations and Adaptations

As you will be aware several dispensations, mitigations and adaptations for EPAs (end-point assessments) are being removed at the end of this year. On Monday, 6 December we received notification from IfATE on what they would be withdrawing and what would stay. This is the situation going into 2022.

3 dispensations being withdrawn

- Changes being made to who sits on the EPA interview/discussion panel (when someone in addition to the independent assessor is specified)
- Allowing other suitable evidence of achievements being used in replacement of functional skills qualifications at gateway (other mandated qualifications are covered under temporary discretions)
- Extension to the length of the EPA period (where specified)

ALL use of the three dispensations will be **switched off** on the 31 December 2021 regardless of where the apprentice is within the EPA.

The cut-off point for those flexibilities which are being withdrawn is the date at which the actual assessment occurs, not the date of gateway.

7 dispensations to remain in place

- Observations taking place in simulated environments
- Remote delivery of assessments (including invigilation)
- Pauses being allowed between assessment methods during EPA period
- Assessments taking place outside of usual venues
- Delivery of assessment methods in any order (when a specified order is in the assessment plan)
- Exams/tests being online instead of on paper (where originally specified as paper-based only)
- Gateway sign off being done remotely (where originally specified as having to be face to face

Any end-point assessments that **begin** prior to or on 31 December 2021 but are completed after 1 January 2022 can continue to make use of the flexibilities being withdrawn.

City & Guilds guidance for training providers

- Apprentices that complete their EPA before 31 December 2021, using a flexibility that is being withdrawn, but who require a resit/retake after 1 January 2022, are permitted to continue to use the withdrawn flexibility for their resit/retake.
- Apprentices that are due to complete their EPA before 31 December 2021 using the flexibility but, due to extenuating circumstances, are unable to do so prior to the flexibility being withdrawn should be given the opportunity to continue to be assessed using the flexibility, if that is still appropriate.

Synoptic Projects at home

Following conversations with NSAR, the Synoptic Project assessment dispensation - ***Assessments taking place outside of usual venues –*** looks set to continue for the foreseeable future (i.e. into 2022). **YOU MUST** check the NSAR website from Tuesday, 11 December for confirmation that this will be the case, before preparing any apprentice to take do their project at home.

Vendor qualifications for legacy Standards

As we are all aware, many of the Vendor qualifications have changed or been retired while the Standards and Assessment Plans have not been updated to reflect what has been happening. City & Guilds did produce an updated document to include some new offers and changes (CCNA for example), but it has been a plaster on a situation that is continually in flux.

We are pleased to announce that NSAR will introduce a quality process at EPAO (end-point assessment organisation) level that allows employers and providers to have some flexibility and continue to meet assessment plans in one of the following ways:

1. if no vendor quals are appropriate just do the knowledge modules
2. use an alternative vendor qualification that serves as a suitable proxy for the knowledge module

If you wish to use option (2), and it is not one of the products we have already recognised, you will need to provide a mapping document to show at least 80% coverage of the knowledge module that you wish to claim against. Before you submit this for Gateway we will need agreed that it does map as you have indicated with similar or the same learning objective.

This process offers a flexible, evidence based, sustainable and straightforward approach for the Standards that require a vendor qualification as part of the On-programme evidence and will allow NSAR clear sight of activity and administration.

It is important that you confirm your chosen action with us at earliest opportunity, checking that the vendors and products you intend to use are acceptable, as opposed to wait until going through Gateway, as delays may occur while the relevant checks are carried out.

As with the current situation, Certificates of Achievement signify summative vendor qualification attainment. Proof of attendance, practice assessment or other evidence related to taking the course **do not**.

NOTE: if the Standard requires a vendor qualification, there is no change in the acceptance of **one** and **one only.**

VRQ qualification news

IT Professional qualifications

We have mentioned several times that we are editing and introducing new units to the following qualifications: 7540 (Level 2 and 3), 7630 (Level 4) and 4520 (Levels 2 to 4) and we are still looking at having the full qualifications published during February 2022, with the Unit Route products (7540 and 7630 only) to be ready for the end of March.

This is what it means for you:

England: wider options for work in traineeships or adult education, with cyber options to develop short programmes as required
generic programming units will allow you to deliver any application language that fits in with *object oriented, procedural or event driven.*

Wales: Similar to above PLUS:
more options for delivery as part of apprenticeships, combined with the Vendor Alike units this allows for programmes that cover software, hardware, infrastructure, web development and cyber security

N Ireland: Similar to above PLUS:

more options for delivery as part of apprenticeships, combined with the Vendor Alike units this allows for programmes that cover software, hardware, infrastructure, web development and cyber security

R Ireland: Similar to above PLUS:

more options for delivery as part of apprenticeships, combined with the vendor-alike units this allows for programmes that cover software, hardware, infrastructure, web development and cyber security

To provide some insight around the new units to be included, here is a taster:

Level 2 Level 2 User Profile Administration (6 credits)
Level 2 System Management (6 credits)
Level 2 ICT System Operation (9 credits)

Level 3 Level 3 Carrying out Information Security Incident Management activities (9 credits)
Level 3 Carrying out Information Security forensic examinations (6 credits)
Level 3 Carrying out Information Security audits (6 credits)

Level 4 Level 4 Human Computer Interaction (15 credits)
Level 4 IT & Telecoms System Operation (15 credits)

Communications Cabling qualifications

We will also be publishing the new Communications Cabling qualifications in February 2022, with a brand-new Level 2 (3668-02) to replace the current product (3667-02). It has been brought up to date with current industry requirements as an entry into this job role, with new assessment and continuing to meet the requirements for JIB and their ECS Network Infrastructure Installation Assistant card (white with green stripe).

There will also be a brand-new Level 3 product that will go into greater depth and breadth than the Level 2 and be aimed at those working for commercial cable installers and includes new units to meet industry needs at the level of competence now being demanded. Again, we have worked with JIB to gain recognition of this qualification and it will meet the ECS Network Infrastructure Installer (Level 3) card (white with gold crosshatch).

The Design and Planning qualification at Level 3 (3667-03) will remain in place, this product will not be reviewed and updated at this time.

Other news

Cisco Networking Academy news

Are you a Cisco NetAcad or thinking of becoming one? To deliver Cisco programmes your staff need to be certified Cisco Instructors and there is now an offer that will allow you to upskill/reskill or gain these skills for the first time.

There is to be some free courses from February 2022 and early enrolment for the next free Cisco Instructor remote training course is now open. If you are interested in enrolling or learning more, please go to this announcement by Andrew Smith using the link below.

Also note that this is now a collaboration between 6 x ITCs including Anglia Ruskin University, Birmingham City University, Glasgow Caledonian University, Technological University Dublin, University of Wales - Trinity St David and The Open University.

https://www.linkedin.com/posts/teraknor_training-experience-share-activity-6871019421725429760-4tws

ESFA/DfE have announced an extension to the eligibility for accessing the Level 3 adult offer funded by the National Skills Funding (NSF).

Previously, only learners without a prior full Level 3 qualification were able to access full funding for the qualification on the NSF list. But at the AOC conference, the Secretary of State announced that the offer would now be extended. From April next year any adult in England who is earning under the National Living Wage or is unemployed will also be able to access these qualifications for **free**, regardless of their prior qualification level.

The following digital/ICT product has been added to this list

Qualification number	Qualification Title	Level	Funding
500/3476/5	City & Guilds Level 3 Certificate in ICT Systems and Principles	3	National Skills Fund – level 3 offer

Essential Digital Skills Qualifications (EDSQs)

City & Guilds is still in the process of developing its EDSQs and is currently waiting for feedback from Ofqual about the technical evaluation of the qualifications.

Once we have this feedback, we will be able to share with centres more information about our qualifications and a planned launch date.

In the meantime, a link to information about the National Digital Standards these qualifications are based on is available from this webpage and we will update the information here as we have more to share.

FE News launches new site

- **Things to consider on the new site:**
  - Login to your Newsroom to update your profile picture and check your Newsroom information.
  - Your logins should remain the same…. but now would be a good time to update your password if you haven't done this in a while.
  - If you have any problems logging in, or uploading content, please email Kelly on editor@fenews.co.uk and she will help you
- **New site changes**
  - It now has different tiers of membership on your newsroom. For anyone with a freemium account on the old system, this will be the same on the new FE News… but you can upgrade if you want to.
  - Giving users more control and autonomy, helping segment the content more.
- **Progressing solution led thought leadership into Collective Intelligence!**
  - FE News are also moving into collective intelligence
  - Progressing from solution led thought leadership into collective intelligence.
  - No one has all the answers to the sectors' challenges… but as a collective, we can have a crack at the challenges of today, but most importantly of the challenges of tomorrow!

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Sector	Activity	Title
Further Education	Action	coronavirus (COVID-19) 2021 qualifications funding claim form
	Reminder	claims form for mass testing exceptional premises cost to close soon
	Reminder	changes to payment history in Manage your education and skills funding
	Information	version 2 of the apprenticeship funding rules
Academies	Action	coronavirus (COVID-19) 2021 qualifications funding claim form
	Reminder	changes to payment history in Manage your education and skills funding
	Information	academy finance professionals event resources & feedback
	Information	new tendering 'jargon busting' good practice guide
	Information	school resource management webinars
Local authorities	Action	coronavirus (COVID-19) 2021 qualifications funding claim form
	Reminder	claims form for mass testing exceptional premises cost to close soon
	Reminder	changes to payment history in Manage your education and skills funding
	Information	academy finance professionals event resources & feedback
	Information	school resource management webinars

Note: the links are live in the Presentation document sent.

Supporting – literacy, maths and ESOL

We're committed to supporting your maths, English and ESOL delivery in the best way we can.

"Connect. Share. Network" is a place for teachers/ tutors and co-ordinators delivering any of our City & Guilds Bite-sized maths and English qualifications, ESOL, Employability, Essential Skills (Northern Ireland) and Essential Skills (Wales); to network, share insights and reflect on their experiences.

For more information, visit our maths and English resource hub:

https://email.cityandguilds.com/1LRT-7M7CK-8SBRNF-4MCMMW-1/c.aspx

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

11 January 2022 (14.00 – 15.00)	https://bit.ly/CGDigitalKiT11Jan22
1 February 2022 (09.30 – 10.30)	https://bit.ly/CGDigitalKIT1Feb22
22 February 2022 (09.30 – 10.30)	https://bit.ly/CGDigitalKIT22Feb22

We are looking to do some specific Standard "Teach Meets" in the New Year, to be able to discuss the specific differences and requirements of each. Also, having set up the Wales Forum, we would like to explore doing similar events for Northern Ireland and Ireland, if this would be of interest please get in touch.

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, we urge you to Stay Safe. Please make sure you check the Covid-19 webpage. www.cityandguilds.com/covid-19