

1. Home (<https://www.gov.uk/>)
2. ESFA: Business Update (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skills-funding-agency-business-update>)

1. Education & Skills

Funding Agency (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-and-skills-funding-agency>)

Correspondence

Business Update - Issue 55 (May 2020)

Updated 6 May 2020

Contents

1. Coronavirus (COVID-19): apprenticeship programme guidance update
2. New, free 'Skills Toolkit' to boost workplace skills
3. Recruiting Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education board members



© Crown copyright 2020

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated. To view this licence, visit [nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3](https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3) (<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3>) or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

This publication is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skills-funding-agency-business-update/business-update-issue-55-may-2020>

1. Coronavirus (COVID-19): apprenticeship programme guidance update

Guidance, for apprentices, employers, training providers, end-point assessment organisations and external quality assurance providers during COVID-19, available on GOV.UK

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-apprenticeship-programme-response/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-apprentices-employers-training-providers-end-point-assessment-organisations-and-external-quality-assurance-pro>), has been updated to include the following:

- more information on calculating wages for furloughed apprentices
- clarification that a furloughed employee can start an apprenticeship
- information on collecting signatures
- more information on flexibilities of end-point assessment
- flexibilities for English and maths functional skills for Intermediate (level 2) apprentices
- flexibilities on qualification certification

Our objective for these measures is to further support all employers, and apprenticeship training and assessment providers, to retain their apprentices and to help them plan with more certainty through this difficult period of disruption.

The guidance document (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-apprenticeship-programme-response/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-apprentices-employers-training-providers-end-point-assessment-organisations-and-external-quality-assurance-pro>) sets out the guidance and some temporary flexibilities that we are introducing to the programme during the pandemic and provides answers to questions related to these changes and other common questions. Our information should be read alongside government's COVID-19 guidance and support for businesses

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/covid-19-support-for-businesses>).

The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IFATE) has also published new guidance on the delivery of assessment (<https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/response-to-covid-19/>). This includes flexibilities around training and assessment and a number of options to ensure EPAs can continue, be modified or be rescheduled.

Apprenticeship training providers will continue to be paid retrospectively for the training they have delivered and can evidence. Data should continue to be submitted via monthly ILR submissions and records retained for compliance and audit checks. The ESFA reserves the right to recover funding which was claimed for, and paid to, the training provider, but for which the training provider was found not to be eligible.

Where learners take breaks in learning, training providers must report this in line with guidance (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-apprenticeship-programme-response/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-apprentices-employers-training-providers-end-point-assessment-organisations-and-external-quality-assurance-pro>). Training providers will not receive payments for learners who are on breaks in learning.

Where the COVID-19 outbreak results in loss of income due to ceased or reduced delivery of training, training providers should consider their eligibility and apply for the wide range of financial support that HM Treasury has already announced for businesses.

You can find the following guidance on GOV.UK:

- guidance and support for businesses can be found here (<http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/covid-19-support-for-businesses>)
- claim for wages through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (<http://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-for-wage-costs-through-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme>)
- new BEIS Bounce Back Loans (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/small-businesses-boosted-by-bounce-back-loans>)

DfE coronavirus helpline: 0800 046 8687

Read more on GOV.UK (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-apprenticeship-programme-response/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-apprentices-employers-training-providers-end-point-assessment-organisations-and-external-quality-assurance-pro>).

2. New, free ‘Skills Toolkit’ to boost workplace skills

A new online learning platform, ‘The Skills Toolkit’, has been launched to help boost the nation’s skills whilst people are staying at home.

With more people expected to be working and studying remotely, the platform gives access to free, high-quality digital and numeracy courses to build skills, progress in work and boost job prospects.

Courses are available through the new online platform, hosted on GOV.UK

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-free-online-learning-platform-to-boost-workplace-skills>). The Skills Toolkit offers employees, who have been furloughed, an opportunity to keep up their skills development, giving individuals the skills that are highly valued by employers and sought after in a wide range of jobs. Please do share the Skills Toolkit with your staff and network.

Read more on GOV.UK (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-free-online-learning-platform-to-boost-workplace-skills>).

3. Recruiting Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education board members

The Department for Education is seeking to recruit 2 non-executive members to the board of the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education. The Department is seeking applications from senior business or public sector figures whose organisations recruit through a range of entry routes, who employ a significant number of apprentices and who understand the challenges and opportunities faced by businesses following the technical education reforms.

The closing date for applications has been extended to 9am on Friday 15 May. Further information, including on how to apply can be found on the Public Appointments website (<https://bit.ly/IFATE>).

You can also watch a video message from Antony Jenkins, the chair of the Institute, about the role of board members:

