

Correspondence

Business Update - Issue 66 (January 2021)

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In this edition of Business Update, our round-up of business-critical news and information from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA):

1. Skills for Jobs White Paper and interim response to Augar Review
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4. Brexit Transitioning
5. Reset, Restart – Support for SMEs

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For more information about apprenticeships, you can visit [apprenticeships.gov.uk](#) or call 08000 150 600.

1. Skills for Jobs White Paper and interim response to Augar Review

On Thursday 21 January, the Education Secretary Gavin Williamson launched the [Skills for Jobs White Paper](#) that sets out reforms for post-16 education in England, reshaping the training landscape and helping the nation to build back better.

These measures include:

- business groups, including Chambers of Commerce, working alongside colleges to develop tailored skills plans to meet local training needs; supported by a £65 million Strategic Development Fund to put the plans into action and establish new College Business Centres to drive innovation and enhanced collaboration with employers.
- giving employers a central role in designing almost all technical courses by 2030, to ensure that the education and training people receive is directly linked to the skills needed for real jobs.
- boosting the quality and uptake of Higher Technical Qualifications - that provide the skills that many employers say they need and that can lead to higher wages – by introducing newly approved qualifications from September 2022 supported by a government-backed brand and quality mark.
- launching a nationwide recruitment campaign to get more talented individuals to teach in further education and investing in high quality professional development including a new Workforce Industry Exchange Programme.

It enshrines the Prime Minister’s new Lifetime Skills Guarantee, setting out a blueprint for a post-16 education system that will ensure everyone, no matter where they live or their background, can gain the skills they need to progress in work at any stage of their lives.

To coincide with the publication of the White Paper, the government has also published its [interim response to the review of Post-18 Education and Funding](#) (Augar review). The interim response details immediate plans to rebalance technical and academic education and future reforms with the higher education Teaching Grant.

2. Apprenticeship workforce development programme – new training offer

As announced in the [Skills for Jobs White Paper](#), a new comprehensive package of professional development, fully-funded by the Department for Education, will be available to all apprenticeship providers and their workforce.

Apprenticeship Workforce Development programme, offered by the Education and Training Foundation (ETF), provides trainers and leaders with the teaching skills, subject knowledge and confidence needed to deliver successful apprenticeships for the benefit of learners. It is available free of charge and you can access the training when it is suitable for you.

The first four training courses will be available through the ETF’s [Professional Development Platform \(PDP\)](#) from Friday 22 January:

- Assessor to Teacher; Understanding How We Learn
- Assessor to Teacher; Deciding How to Teach
- Effective Technical Teaching; Enhancing Pedagogy and Professional Practice
- Apprenticeship Leadership; Developing Your Team

The final four training courses will be made available in February.

For further information please visit the [ETF website](#).

3. Apprenticeship Programme response to COVID-19

Following the Prime Minister’s announcement on 4 January confirming a new national lockdown, an updated version of the Apprenticeship Programme response to COVID-19 has been published. [The guidance is available on GOV.UK](#).

Updates include:

- training providers, employers and end-point assessment organisations (EPAOs) must ensure that training and assessment takes place remotely wherever possible.
- face-to-face training and assessment can continue in colleges and training providers’ premises for vulnerable young apprentices and the children of key workers who need it.
- face-to-face training and assessment can also continue in employers’ Covid-secure settings where it is essential for workers to attend their workplace, and where it is safe and practical to do so.
- end-point assessment (EPA) and Functional Skills (FSQ) assessments can continue in colleges, training providers’ premises, assessment venues and workplaces where it cannot be conducted remotely and where providers and EPAOs judge it right to do so.

The guidance will continue to be updated regularly.

4. Brexit Transitioning

The transition period has ended, and new rules are here. Act now to keep your business moving.

The transition period has ended, and the UK has left the EU customs union and single market and now enjoys a zero tariffs, zero quotas relationship with the EU as an independent trading nation.

Following the signing of the UK – EU Free Trade Agreement, there are new rules for businesses which came into force on 1 January which require immediate action. Your business needs to act now to comply with these new rules. If you do not take action, there is a risk your business operations will be interrupted.

These documents cover actions that businesses must take to ensure they are compliant with the new rules which have come into force. Part A provides an overview of key actions for businesses as well as supporting guidance, helpline numbers and FAQs. Part B lists the top five actions for businesses in each of the following sectors: Aerospace, automotive, chemicals, construction, consumer goods, electronics and machinery, life sciences, metals and materials, professional business services and retail.

You should visit [gov.uk/transition](#) where you can use the checker tool to quickly identify the actions that your business needs to take. The checker tool will ask you questions about your business and provide all the information you need to be aware of as new rules on:

- [importing and exporting](#)
- [moving goods to and from Northern Ireland](#) including [Trader Support Service](#)
- [travelling abroad for work](#)
- [hiring staff from the EU](#)

You can help prepare your businesses for the new rules by using a number of support mechanisms provided by the government:

- sign up to receive updates on the specific actions you need to take once you have used the checker tool at [gov.uk/transition](#)
- sign up to receive the regular [Business Readiness Transition Bulletin](#) – an email newsletter providing information on major announcements and recently published guidance
- BEIS Webinars across a range of topics will be available. They will provide specific advice on how businesses can ensure they comply with the new rules.

We understand that this is a challenging time and encourage you to take action to avoid interruption to your business operations.

5. Reset, Restart – Support for SMEs

The British Library’s Business & IP Centre has developed a dedicated programme, Reset, Restart, to support SMEs across the country through the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

Join one or more of the series of ten monthly webinars, which can be accessed remotely, for practical, jargon-free training and advice.

More information can be found on the [British Library website](#).

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