

Impact of COVID-19 on Apprenticeship FAQs

Changes to learning and employment

This section covers anything that affects how learning will be conducted, and breaks in learning activity.

1. My Apprentice is in self-isolation, what will happen to the Apprenticeship?

Apprenticeships have been designed to be responsive to changes in Apprentices' circumstances, for example during a period of illness. If your Apprentice needs to self-isolate, please talk to your training provider about the best way to continue with the Apprenticeship.

The appropriate steps will be agreed based on the situation of the employer, Apprentice and training provider.

2. What happens to the Apprentice during a period of unpaid leave in terms of monies. Do they have access to Universal Credit?

Universal Credit may be available for both workers and the unemployed alike, as long as they meet the other conditions of entitlement (including that the applicant and their partner have savings of under £16,000 between them). Apprentices may be entitled to access Universal Credit during a period of unpaid leave. They may also have access to Universal Credit even if they were working and being paid. Being laid off or on a lesser number of hours could increase the rate of Universal Credit entitlement.

Apprentices on unpaid leave may also [be eligible for other benefits](#).

Through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, all UK employers will be able to access support to continue paying part of their employees' salary for those employees that would otherwise have been laid off during this crisis. HMRC will reimburse 80% of furloughed workers wage costs, up to a cap of £2,500 per month.

3. How does my Apprentice record progress towards their Apprenticeship whilst they work from home?

Apprentice's will already be recording your off-the-job training activity using an approach agreed with your training provider - Peterborough Regional College use One-file. Please encourage your Apprentice to continue to use this in the coming weeks. If their work circumstances change because of COVID-19, so that the minimum 20% off the job cannot be met, you will need to liaise with your training provider on the best way to progress the Apprenticeship.

4. I need to make my Apprentice redundant. What happens to their Apprenticeship?

Please speak to your training provider, if you are making an Apprentice redundant as your Apprenticeship training may be able to continue. The training provider may still be able to offer training, based on their circumstances, in the short term. They may even be able to support them to find a new employer.

5. If my Apprentice can't work/attend training, are they entitled to be paid?

An Apprenticeship is a job with training, so even when they are not able to do their training they are still employed. Apprentices should be paid in line with the details in their contract of employment. The government is providing a range of support to employers to help them retain and pay the wages of employees (including Apprentices) during the coming months.

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

<https://www.acas.org.uk/coronavirus>

6. Due to business continuity measures all staff are required to be available at their usual place of work. How can my Apprentices continue their learning?

If your Apprentices are unable to attend their scheduled learning events, please speak with your training provider to assess the best way to progress the Apprenticeship.

Option could include:

- Apprentices could engage in digital or distance learning at a convenient time within their agreed working hours
- they could be offered additional on-site mentor support

7. I am having to move staff into different and/or business critical roles that aren't related to their Apprenticeship. What happens to their Apprenticeship?

It is our goal that Apprentices can promptly resume their Apprenticeship and continue to successful completion of end-point assessment. Please speak with your training provider about the options available in these circumstances.

If that move becomes permanent, you could look to see which alternative Apprenticeship your Apprentice can transfer to at [Find Apprenticeship Training](#) and liaise with your training provider in the usual way.

8. What do I do if I think an Apprentice is not well enough to work?

Employers should follow the [government's guidance for employers and businesses on coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).

9. I am a non-levy paying employer recruiting for/having Apprentices due to start. Can I still go ahead and reserve funds on the system?

Employers who do not pay the Apprenticeship levy are able to reserve Apprenticeship funding through the Apprenticeship service in line with the [published guidance](#).

10. What happens to my funding reservation as a non-levy employer, if my Apprentice can't start?

Reservations will expire if they are not turned into a commitment within 3 months of the Apprenticeship start date, detailed in the reservation. Where a commitment is needed, and a previous reservation has expired, a new reservation must first be made.

11. Should employers use the 'Stop' or 'Pause' Apprentice facility in the Apprenticeship service?

This only applies to employers that use the Digital Apprenticeship Service. As your Apprentice is continuing to learn remotely towards the Apprenticeship you should not 'Stop' or 'Pause' as we as a training provider will not receive any funding for your Apprentice. You should only use 'Pause' if your Apprentice is on a break in learning, as agreed with your training provider. This allows the employer and Apprentice to resume the Apprenticeship at a later date. Employers must only use the 'Stop' function when they are certain that training will not resume at any point.

Changes to assessment

This section covers all questions related to completion of the apprenticeship.

12. My Apprentice is on a fixed-term contract, which would ordinarily have given them enough time to complete the training and the end-point assessment. If the training is delayed, and they have not completed their EPA before they leave employment, can they do the end-point assessment afterwards?

Your Apprentice should be employed when they are taking their end-point assessment so. If there is a delay in their training towards the EPA then please speak to your training provider who will inform you what is in place as this will be assessed on a case by case basis. If agreed a break in learning is necessary, and the planned end-date for their Apprenticeship will be moved back, which may also include reviewing your Apprenticeship agreement and commitment statement.

13. What will happen if my Apprentice is not well enough to take their end-point assessment?

If your Apprentice is unwell, or in a period of self-isolation, and unable to attend their end-point assessment, please contact your training provider as soon as you are able, to allow them maximum time to reschedule their assessment.

14. If the current situation continues for a long period of time, would ESFA consider awarding the Apprenticeship without the end-point assessment?

The ESFA would not consider this to be appropriate at the current time. Their intention is to safeguard the quality of Apprenticeships, and at this time the ESFA believe that the EPA is an important part of that.