

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) Coronavirus (COVID 19)

- 1. Can we still register our learners with you to prepare them for End Point Assessment (EPA)?**
 Yes. Please go ACE360 to register your apprentices and put in their proposed end date. This way we will be able to work with you to support the preparation for Gateway.
- 2. If the Gateway is done remotely, how can we get signatures?**
 Hard copy signatures are not required. This can be done via an electronic signature, via email, or via scanning documents and emailing them.
- 3. Some awarding organisations are not printing certificates. What alternative evidence of achieving a mandated qualification can be accepted?**
 If an awarding organisation is unable to print certificates at this time as required for Gateway, an email confirming achievement is sufficient evidence to enter Gateway.
- 4. Can assessment methods be changed (i.e. can we swap an observation for a professional discussion)?**
 No. Assessment methods must be used as per the assessment plan.
- 5. Can on-programme projects be used as part of EPA, where it has not been possible to complete the project set for EPA?**
 No. On programme projects cannot be used as part of EPA.
- 6. Where the assessment plan states that a work-based project is undertaken in the last six months of the apprenticeships, is this still the case or does the work-based project have to be post gateway?**
 Where the assessment plan states that the work-based project should be gathered on-programme this should still be adhered to.
- 7. Can assessment methods be delivered outside of the order set in the assessment plan?**
 Yes. Where it is feasible to do so. On occasion, it will not be possible to alter the order of assessment methods where the latter is dependent on the outcome from an earlier assessment method (i.e. a professional discussion may always have to be after a work-based project, as it may pick up on elements covered in the work-based project).
- 8. Can I still complete the Gateway booking process?**
 Yes, please complete and return the completed Booking Request Form to the EPA Team (epa@iom3.org).

- 9. Are EPA assessments still going ahead if the employer is open?**
 We are not doing any EPA assessment visits at the current moment as per government guidance. We will review this and update our procedure in line with guidance from the government and the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IFATE).
- 10. If an apprentice is furloughed, can they still undertake their end point assessment?**
 Yes. Where an apprentice has passed gateway, EPA continues where it is possible to do so (in line with all guidance issued.)
- 11. Will I be charged for cancellations due to COVID-19?**
 No. At this time, cancellation fees will not be applied for cancellations unavoidably caused by COVID-19.
- 12. How much notice is required to cancel an assessment?**
 Our current service level agreement is 30 days from confirmed EPA date. However, we realise that in these changing times this might be difficult, so we are willing to work flexibly with you until the situation improves. Please contact the EPA Team (epa@iom3.org).
- 13. If I need to cancel an assessment who do I contact?**
 Please contact the EPA Team (epa@iom3.org).
- 14. Can professional discussions be undertaken remotely?**
 Yes, if the apprentice and Independent End Point Assessor (IEPA) both have access to remote platforms (such as Skype, Microsoft Teams, Zoom), then professional discussions can be conducted remotely. The full discussion will be recorded and retained for internal and external quality assurance purposes.
- 15. Can assessments take place away from the workplace (e.g. at home or with a training provider)?**
 Yes. Assessments such as the professional discussion with viva and work-based projects can be conducted remotely by your IEPA. If you want to discuss doing your EPA remotely, please contact the EPA Team (epa@iom3.org) who will go through the relevant procedure that need to be followed to be able to do this.
- 16. Is there any official guidance from IFATE on support for employers and customers on how to deal with this?**
 Official guidance has been released by them. Please follow this link to the IFATE guidance on dealing with Covid-19.
<https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/covid-19-information-regarding-apprenticeships/>
- 17. If remote assessment is interrupted by poor internet quality**
 If the interruption was minor and temporary, this will be noted by the IEPA. Where the interruption has created a possibility for external interference, the EPA will be stopped. Terms of our special considerations policy and processes will be applied, where appropriate.

18. What happens if an apprentice has failed and needs to re-sit – can this be delayed?

Yes - a 12-week break in learning can be applied.

19. What is the maximum delay in learning allowed for EPA?

Apprentices who are deemed ready for assessment and cannot be assessed due to assessor illness or Covid-19 related measures can have a break in learning, as per Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) rules, with an extension of up to 12 weeks.

20. Can an apprentice have more than one break in learning during EPA?

The maximum break in learning is 12 weeks. There could be a few shorter breaks if necessary due to IEPA illness or Covid-19 related measures, but they cannot exceed 12 weeks.

21. Who do I need to inform about breaks in learning?

For breaks in learning pre-gateway, exceeding four weeks, requests should be made to ESFA. For break in learning during EPA of 12 weeks or less – IOM Communications Ltd will need to keep a record of these.

22. If an apprentice has already completed one component of the EPA, for example the work-based project, but then cannot progress to the next stage, professional discussion - how long can the break be between each part?

Some EPA elements may have been completed but it is not possible to complete the remainder before the break in learning is required. A break in learning can be applied at any point but cannot last longer than 12 weeks.