

GUIDANCE NOTE

Issued: 20th March 2020

Valid Until: 31st August 2021

GATEWAY AND SUPPLEMENTARY ON-PROGRAMME REQUIREMENTS

This guidance is limited to only those EPAOs working with NSAR on digital apprenticeships.

We are aware that the current Covid-19 pandemic is creating a range of unforeseen challenges for organisations throughout the apprenticeship landscape. We are aware that these challenges are having 'knock-on' effects for the timely production, dispatch and retrieval of various certificates of achievement or other evidence required for Gateway.

The break in learning option announced by the ESFA should be considered in the first instance and implemented if this is seen as providing the best option for the apprentice.

On meeting Gateway evidence of achievement requirements: EPAOs cannot claim final certification for the apprenticeship until all the correct Gateway evidence is in place and has been reviewed by the EPAO. However, EPAOs are able to accept suitable 'proxies' to meet Gateway requirements where there are delays in producing actual certificates of achievement. This allows the apprentice to proceed to end-point assessment should they wish. EPAOs need to be confident that what is presented as an indication that Gateway requirements have been met is both appropriate, authentic and convincing.

On completing additional on-programme requirements in a timely way: Apprenticeship certification cannot be claimed until all Gateway requirements are in place. However, where there are challenges around completing knowledge modules and/or vendor qualifications apprentices can still proceed to EPA if it is felt that this will not negatively impact the apprentice's EPA performance.

The inability to claim final apprenticeship certification until all evidence is in place, and has been correctly checked, must be communicated to the apprentice, training provider and employer if EPAOs choose to implement this guidance.

This guidance can be implemented as long as there is no disadvantage to the learner and on the understanding that all mandated requirements are in place before the EPAO claims the apprentice's apprenticeship certification.

For audit purposes, EPAOs must retain a record to prove they have seen and checked evidence that the apprentice has achieved all Gateway requirements. This is a condition for being on the Register of End Point Assessment Organisation.

The current situation is continually evolving, and you should take appropriate precautions to ensure that any actions taken remain appropriate, safeguards apprentices and reflects latest Government advice. This guidance is valid until 31st August 2021 unless superseded by further guidance. Continue to check www.nsar.co.uk/eqa for further information.