

Newsletter – September 2020



Webinar recordings

We've been hosting monthly 'check in' webinars to provide all our customers with regular updates throughout the year. If you missed these and would like to watch them, you can view all of the previous webinars [here](#).

Our next webinar is going to be hosted on 6 October and we're moving to a more consistent agenda, we'll be covering process changes, platform changes, new product and service developments and much more. Sign up [here](#) - we'll email out slides and recordings to everyone who signs up.



De-activating and withdrawing apprentices

If an apprentice is no longer continuing with their apprenticeship, they should be removed from the SEPA platform. This can be done by changing their status to withdrawn on the EPA details tab and then de-activating them using the appropriate button in the top right of the platform.

Secure client/Online assessments

Now that assessments can once again be invigilated in person more of our providers are opting for this option. Where this option is chosen, we recommend downloading the newest version of SecureClient to the device that the assessment will be taking place on. The software provider has issued a number of updates since March and older versions of the software can cause issues



Assessment attendance

Unless otherwise required by the assessment plan, no person(s) other than the apprentice and NCFE EPA Plus staff should be present during an assessment conducted by an IEPA. Should any unauthorised person be present, it may invalidate the assessment.

Ongoing standard dispensations

The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education have updated their [Covid-19 guidance](#). In this guidance, they highlight that for any standard with a flexibility applied, at least 12 weeks' notice will be given before removing a flexibility.

You can find the list of all standards that have had flexibilities applied on the IfATE [website](#).

All dispensation documentation should be uploaded to SEPA at the point of Gateway for all apprentices undertaking an impacted standard. This means that flexibility specific reflective accounts, witness testimonies and observation records need to be uploaded prior to Gateway.

Identification checks

Apprentices need to identify themselves with photo ID during assessment. Please ensure that apprentices are aware of and prepared for this requirement. Assessment results may be invalidated where apprentices are unable to produce identification. This includes both proctored and IEPA led assessments.

Gateway evidence - qualifications

Where qualifications are required for Gateway evidence, the upload must contain all the relevant information in a clear and legible format. This can include the full name of the apprentice, the full name of the qualification with qualifications code (not just the units achieved), date of achievement, awarding organisation and qualification level (where relevant). For details of relevant qualifications, check the [ESFA's guidance](#).

Gateway declarations forms

All standards have their own Gateway declaration documents that capture our regulatory requirements to conduct EPA, including confirmation from the apprentice that we can claim their apprenticeship certificate, upon completion.

EPA Plus have created these documents, available on SEPA and the new [resources platform](#) to satisfy these requirements, please ensure that you are using our Gateway declarations to minimise later delays. These declarations must be signed by the employer, provider, and apprentices.

Where these documents have a typed signature, please upload an email trail as confirmation of authenticity, from the typed signee.

Certification declarations

We no longer require certificate claims forms, signed by the apprentice to be sent to us after completion of EPA. Our Gateway declaration forms, submitted at gateway capture authorisation from the apprentice



Current versions

Please ensure that you are using the most up to date version of the guidance documents. All of the latest versions are available on the [EPA resources library](#).

Business Administrator

Following communication from Open Awards, any apprentices coming through EPA from 1 October 2021 will be assessed under the new version 3 of the assessment plan. Changes to the assessment plan include the way the Portfolio-based Interview and Project Presentation is graded and that all assessment methods are now weighted equally. EPA Plus will not be assessing to version 2 of the assessment plan which was only available for 6 weeks, however we will support customers in understanding the changes fully and an updated specification and guidance document will be released on 1 November 2020 to reflect these changes. The updated guidance document will sit

alongside the current specification and guidance which will still be valid for apprentices being assessed on the original version before 1 October 2021.

Customer Service Practitioner

From 1 December the assessment of the Showcase will be followed by a 'Showcase Interview', enabling the apprentice to present their showcase to the IEPA in line with the assessment plan. The updated specification and guidance will be updated on 1 October to reflect this.