



CCATF Apprenticeship COVID-19 guide for employers

At this extraordinarily difficult time having a clear understanding of what it is possible to do in respect of employed apprentices, or those that have until recently been employed, within your business is essential.

The information provided below is a combination of elements aimed at ensuring you are as informed as possible about all aspects of your relationship with your (former) apprentices.

1. Apprentices can be furloughed just like other members of staff. The official name of this scheme is the Job Retention Scheme.

- The scheme pays 80% of an employee's wages whilst they are furloughed, up to the value of £2,500 per month.
- This is for a minimum period of 3 consecutive weeks.
- The scheme can be used for employees who are not required to work due to the impact of Covid-19 on their employer or who are unable to work due to caring responsibilities e.g. for children due to the closure of schools and nurseries.
- Furlough claims can be backdated to 1 March and the scheme currently lasts until the end of June (last updated on 17 April).
- If permitted in their contract with you, furloughed employees including apprentices can undertake work for other organisations, or can undertake voluntary work.
- **Read the government guidance [here](#).**
- **Online service to make a claim is now open - check what you need to make a claim and find a link to the system [here](#).**

2. Apprentices who are furloughed can continue their training, as long as they do not provide services or generate revenue for their employer.

- This means that apprentices CAN continue undertaking 'off-the-job' training whilst furloughed.
- An employee CANNOT undertake work for, or on behalf, of the organisation. This includes providing services or generating revenue.
- The 20% rule is across the duration of the apprenticeship, so more can be undertaken during a furlough period if this is feasible and can be supported by your provider.
- You must pay your apprentices at least the Apprenticeship Minimum Wage, National Living Wage or National Minimum Wage (AMW/NLW/NMW) as appropriate for all the time they spend training (i.e. this number of hours). This



means you must cover any shortfall between the amount you can claim for their wages through this scheme and their appropriate minimum wage.

- **Read the government guidance here.**

3. Both training and assessment can take place remotely for apprentices working from home and for furloughed apprentices.

- Check with your training provider whether they are able to deliver apprenticeship training remotely - this is being strongly encouraged by government.
- If they can, it is recommended that they continue to deliver training to your apprentices, as this will help to keep them engaged and may contribute positively to their wellbeing over this period.
- Your apprentices' off-the-job training hours will accumulate, giving greater flexibility for them to work when you return to business as usual.
- The 20% rule is across the duration of the apprenticeship, so more can be undertaken during a furlough period if this is feasible and can be supported by your provider.
- If you have apprentices who are ready for assessment, check with your End Point Assessment provider as to whether they can assess remotely; if they are unable to, extensions can be granted to the timetable for assessments.
- **Read more about End Point Assessment here.**

4. Apprentices who cannot continue with their learning can take a break in learning, after which they can resume their apprenticeship.

- You might need to redeploy your apprentices into an area of your business which is not directly related to their apprenticeship, or they might be unable to continue their learning whilst furloughed. This is covered by changes to the regulations about breaks in learning, allowing you to initiate a break where needed.
- Speak to your provider if you think your apprentice/s need to take a break in learning.
- If the break is under 4 weeks, it is likely that nothing further needs to happen. A break of this duration doesn't change the end date of the apprenticeship or the payment arrangements.
- If the break is more than 4 weeks, this is a formal break in learning and needs to be recorded on the digital Apprenticeship Service. Speak to your provider and ensure this is recorded correctly as a 'pause'.



- Read the government guidance [here](#).

5. Re-employing COVID-19 affected terminations of Apprentices

- It is possible to re-employ former apprentices if they were on the payroll up until 28th February
- Any apprentice that has since been laid off may still qualify for furlough support
- The scheme pays 80% of an employee's wages whilst they are furloughed, up to the value of £2,500 per month.
- This is for a minimum period of 3 consecutive weeks.
- Furlough claims can be backdated to 1 March and the scheme currently lasts until the end of June (last updated on 17 April).
- Re-employment and thereafter furloughing an apprentice, could help provide the skills need to support business recovery post COVID-19.
- Read the government guidance [here](#).

6. Additional support

- [Here](#) is the **current government information about support for businesses** - it includes information about the job retention scheme, tax deferrals, sector-specific relief in the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors and business loans.
- For CITB registered employers for further information on CITB's support services and apprenticeship grants please visit <https://www.citb.co.uk/urgent-messages/>