



Apprenticeship Delivery Update

As part of Connect2Care's commitment to all our employer partners, we've developed our training programmes to continue to support learners, whilst remaining compliant with statutory requirements. We're fully equipped to continue delivering high-quality, interactive training to our apprentices on a one-to-one basis online – giving you one less thing to worry about during these difficult times.

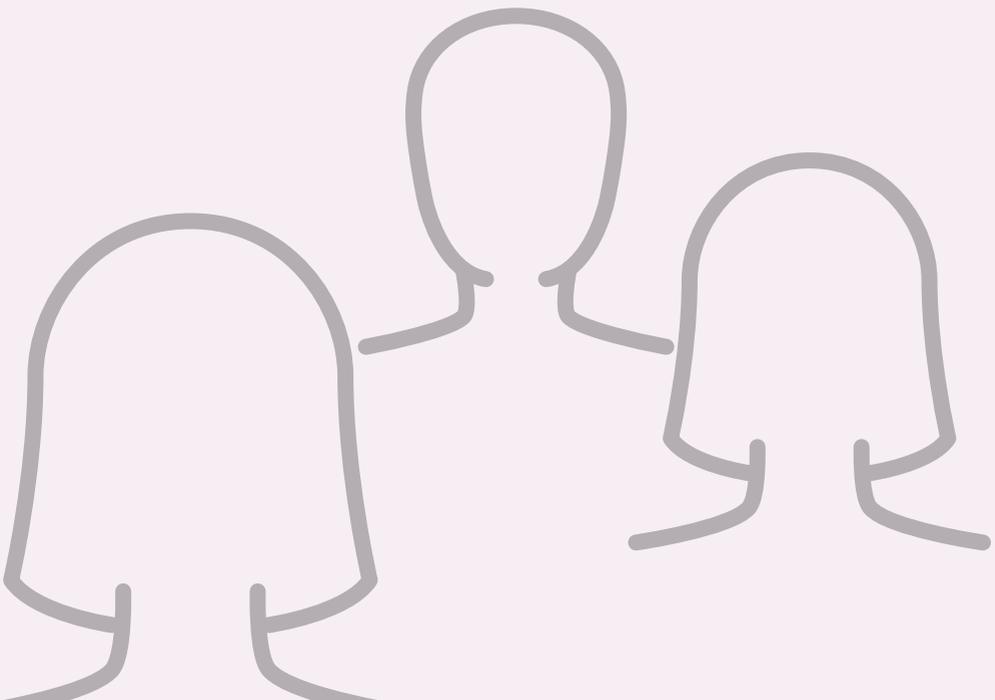
Starting and continuing an apprenticeship

Rest assured, there's nothing preventing your new and existing apprentices from advancing with their apprenticeship – even if staff are still on furlough.

At Connect2Care, we have an online application process to make sign-ups easy and contact-free. Please get in touch with your Relationship Manager or local team if you'd like more information about signing up a new apprentice.

Current apprentices who've been furloughed can continue working towards their apprenticeship, as long as they continue to hold a contract of employment, apprenticeship agreement, and commitment statement. There is no need to apply for a break in learning. We'll work with you to evaluate each apprentice's position to make sure they're in a position to continue with their studies.

If you would like more information about furloughing an apprentice, please read the Government's guidance, here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-for-wage-costs-through-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme>.



Supporting employers during the economic recovery

Apprenticeships

Incentives have been confirmed for employers of new apprentices in England. A £2,000 payment will be made to employers of new apprentices aged under 25, and reducing to £1,500 if the apprentice is aged 25 or over. This is in addition to the existing £1,000 incentive already claimed by providers on behalf of employers for 16-18-year-old apprentices, or those under 25s with an Education and Health Care Plan.

The [policy document](#) contains further details about incentive payments as summarised below:

- ▶ It is payable direct to employers hiring an apprentice between the 1st August 2020 and the 31st January 2021 via the Digital Apprenticeship Service
- ▶ The apprentice must be a new employee to the business, have a contract of employment starting between the 1st August 2020 and the 31st January 2021, and not have been employed by the same employer in the six months prior to the start date
- ▶ Claims may be made by the employer from the 1st September 2020
- ▶ The incentive will be paid in two equal instalments at day 90 and day 365 (for example for the £2,000 incentive £1,000 will be paid at day 90 and £1,000 at day 365) provided the apprentice is still on programme at those points
- ▶ There will be no limit on the number of eligible apprentices for whom the employer may claim the incentive during the six month period between 1st August 2020 and 31st January 2021.

The policy document also confirms that until 31st July 2021 the number of 'active' or 'used' reservations available to non-levy paying employers on the Digital Apprenticeship Service at any given time will increase from 3 to 10, enabling non-levy paying employers to reserve government funding through the apprenticeship service. This policy will come into effect from 15 July and will continue to be kept under review as we further assess how the new system is working.

Supporting employers during the economic recovery

Traineeships

The Traineeship programme is intended for:

- ▶ Universal credit claimants who are not currently in employment and have little work experience, but who are focused on work or the prospect of it
- ▶ Those aged 16 to 24 and qualified below level 4
- ▶ People who providers and employers believe have a reasonable chance of being ready for employment or an apprenticeship within six months of engaging in a traineeship.

Traineeship opportunities will be tripled with an additional £111m of funding made available by the government this year, including a new employer incentive payment of £1,000 per trainee.

We are already planning a 6 week traineeships course that would act as a pre-apprenticeship programme, giving employers the opportunity to provide work experience and to try out new staff through a three day a week work experience programme supported by 2 days a week of "virtual college" classroom skills and knowledge building. Details of how and when the employer incentive will be paid are expected soon. If an employer enables a Trainee to complete their work experience and virtual college and then move onto an apprenticeship they would receive the Traineeship bonus of £1,000 and the £2,000 apprenticeship bonus (and a further £1,000 if the apprentice is aged 16-18) when the trainee moves into a permanent apprenticeship position with the employer.



Supporting employers during the economic recovery

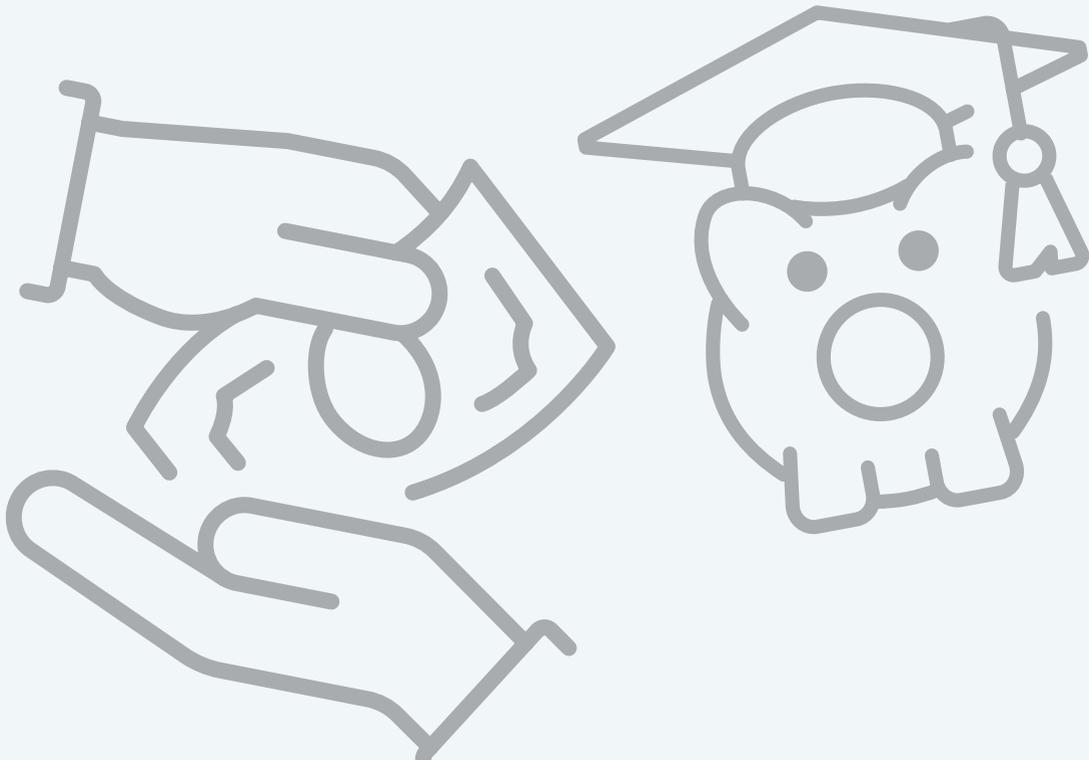
Kickstart

Across Britain, the government will fund work placements for 16 to 24-year-olds receiving Universal Credit and deemed to be at risk of long-term unemployment. The scheme will provide £2.1bn to meet the entire National Minimum Wage for 25 hours per week plus National Insurance contributions and employer minimum automatic enrolment contributions. Details are as yet unavailable, but it is expected that job seekers will be referred to the Kickstart scheme by Job Centre Plus work coaches. The work placement must be a new role and not replacing an existing job.



Don't forget you are not required to pay Class 1 (employer) National Insurance Contributions (NIC) on earnings up to £50,000 for an apprentice you employ aged under 25.

That's a 13.8% saving on everything your apprentice earns over £8,788 a year for the employers of apprentices.



National Minimum Wage

If furloughed apprentices are being paid 80% of their normal pay as part of the Government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, employers must ensure they receive at least the apprenticeship minimum wage (where applicable) for time they spend studying for their apprenticeship. The current rate is £4.15 per hour. This may mean you need to top up your apprentices' wages.

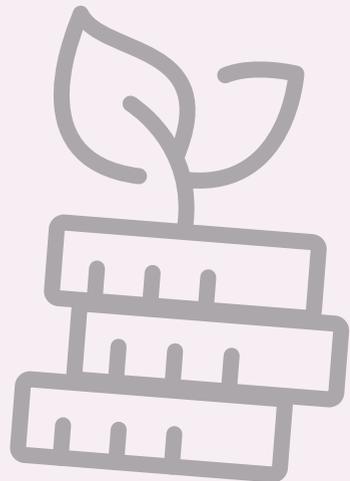
Apprentices who are under the age of 19, or who are in the first year of their apprenticeship, are subject to a different minimum wage to other staff. The table below is taken from the government website and shows the current minimum wage rates:

Year	25+	21 to 24	18 to 20	Under 18	Apprentice
April 2020 (current rate)	£8.72	£8.20	£6.45	£4.55	£4.15

Apprentices are entitled to the apprentice rate if they're either:

- ▶ Aged under 19
- ▶ Aged 19 or over and in the first year of their apprenticeship.

The ESFA have informed C2C that the requirement to pay the minimum wage for apprentices who are continuing their apprenticeship studies whilst furloughed only applies to those hours when the apprentice is working on their apprenticeship.



How to work out your apprentice's wages

1. Calculate your apprentice's furlough payment using the [Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme calculator](#).
2. Work out the amount your apprentice should receive for the off-the-job training they do. You must multiply the appropriate National Minimum Wage for your apprentice by the number of off-the-job training hours they will do over the furlough period.
3. If your apprentice's furlough payment is more than the amount they should receive for their off-the-job training, you do not need to top up their pay.

If the furlough payment is less than the amount they should receive for their off-the-job training, you will need to pay the apprentice the difference.

Example without employer top-up

You've put an 18 year old apprentice who is contracted to work 37 hours per week on furlough. They continue to train one day (7.5 hours) per week.

The National Minimum Wage for this apprentice is £4.15 per hour, which they must get for every hour they spend doing off-the-job training. You do not have to pay your apprentice the National Minimum Wage for the hours they are not working or training.

Working out

£4.15 (hourly pay) x 7.5 (hours) = £31.13

£31.13 x 3 (weeks) = £93.38

Over 3 weeks, the apprentice must get at least £93.38.

You receive £368 from the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (this is 80% of the apprentice's current wages over a 3-week furlough period). This is above the National Minimum Wage for the hours they spent doing off-the-job training, so the employer does not need to pay any extra.

Example with employer top-up

You've furloughed a 22-year-old who is in the second year of their apprenticeship. They're contracted to work 37 hours per week, but you've agreed with the apprentice and their training provider that they'll train for 4 days per week (7.5 hours per day). This is to cover as much off-the-job training as possible whilst the apprentice is on furlough.

The National Minimum Wage for this apprentice is £8.20, which they must get for every hour they spend on off-the-job training. You do not have to pay your apprentice the National Minimum Wage for the hours they are not working or training.

Working out

£8.20 (hourly pay) x 7.5 (hours) = £61.50

£61.50 x 4 (days) x 3 (weeks) = £738

Over 3 weeks, this means the apprentice must get at least £738.

You receive £728.16 from the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (this is 80% of the apprentice's current wages over a 3 week furlough period) This is less than the National Minimum Wage for the time the apprentice spent on off-the-job training, so the employer must pay the remaining £9.84.



Delivering your apprenticeship training

Our Training Consultants are working hard to continue offering your apprentices the same high quality, one-to-one support they're used to. We've developed a suite of interactive, online platforms which are available across all of our apprenticeship programmes:



Bringing Face-to-Face Online

During the time where we can't visit apprentices in person, we'll look to deliver our face-to-face visits online. We'll be using interactive technology to ensure apprentices are still supported on a one-to-one basis by their C2C Trainer.



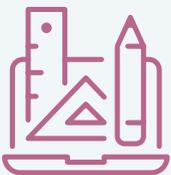
STAR

Apprentices have access to our e-learning platform STAR. Here they'll find lots of interactive resources and training activities to boost and develop the knowledge element of their apprenticeship.



Interactive Online Workshops

Our interactive online workshops are a great way to engage with the C2C Trainer and other apprentices to learn, ask questions and share experiences. These workshops will include fun, interactive activities that everyone can get involved in.



Functional Skills

Apprentices studying towards their Functional Skills exams will have access to our Skills Forward Platform. From here, they can revise and work on any of the areas they're finding challenging. They will also be able to book extra one-to-one lessons with our dedicated Functional Skills Tutors and access our new Google Classrooms.



EPA Preparation

If apprentices are preparing projects or presentations for their end point assessment (EPA), now is the perfect time to start brainstorming and planning ideas. They can share these ideas and plan with their C2C Trainer during their next virtual catch-up.

All this hard work will count toward the apprentices 20% off-the-job training. Just the same as the time they usually take off to study for an hour or two at work.

Any apprentices who have been furloughed can continue their off-the-job training. The time an apprentice spends participating in off-the-job training must be recorded for any apprenticeship who started their apprenticeship after 1 August 2019. Connect2Care gathers this information directly from your apprentice via our online E-Track system.

The minimum duration of an apprenticeship must still be followed during this unprecedented time. We'll continue to work towards our apprentices' planned end date of their programme or its components, such as maths and English, but there is the flexibility to exceed these planned end dates if necessary.

Face-to-Face onsite visits

There are elements of an apprenticeship that require us to visit and observe an apprentice at their place of work. We will only do this once it is safe to do so. We'll contact you to identify the risk-mitigating measures you have in place to safeguard your staff and customers before visiting your business.

All our staff have received training in the Principles of Infection Control and Safe Working. They'll also be provided with the correct personal protective equipment (PPE) to adhere to current Government recommendations.

So you can be confident in our ability to work with you and maintain the standards expected of your business.

End Point Assessment (EPA)

Furloughed apprentices may still take part in End Point Assessment after their practical period in training, to complete their apprenticeship.

At this time, assessment substitutions have been approved for a range of standards where observation of the apprentice in their workplace is an essential aspect of the end-point assessment. Assessment substitutions offer alternatives to observations, so apprentices currently in assessment, or about to enter gateway have the opportunity to complete their apprenticeship.

The substitutions are interim measures and as such the measures will be removed once it is safe and practical for observed assessments to take place.

Importantly, apprentices must have completed their training and met the minimum apprenticeship programme duration to commence EPA.

Additional learning support

The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) rules for learning support remain unchanged. Where an apprentice has a need for additional learning support, and where this can be delivered remotely, it can and should continue. Connect2Care will continue to evidence and provide extra assistance to all of our learners who need additional learning support.

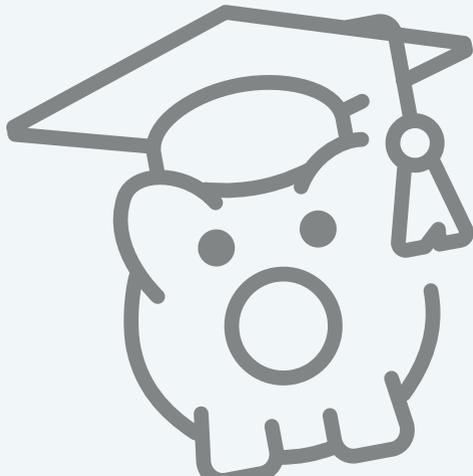
Redundancy

The ESFA Funding Rules allow for any apprentices who have been made redundant to continue with their apprenticeship programme without being employed under a new apprenticeship agreement. The level of ESFA funding will depend on how far into the apprenticeship an apprentice has reached.

If an apprentice is made redundant within six months of the final day of the practical period stated in their apprenticeship agreement, Connect2Care will continue delivering their apprenticeship training as long as the remaining elements and end-point assessment can be successfully delivered. The ESFA will fund 100% of the remaining costs of the price negotiated up to the maximum funding band.

Apprentices who are made redundant with more than six months before their final day may also continue their apprenticeship training with Connect2Care. In this situation, we'll continue to deliver their training for up to 12 weeks, while the apprentice finds a new employer. The 12 week maximum period is an ESFA requirement and we cannot extend this if the apprentice does not find new employment in a job role relevant to the apprenticeship within 12 weeks.

As part of our package of support, Connect2Care helps all apprentices who are made redundant to search for a new employer.



Breaks in learning

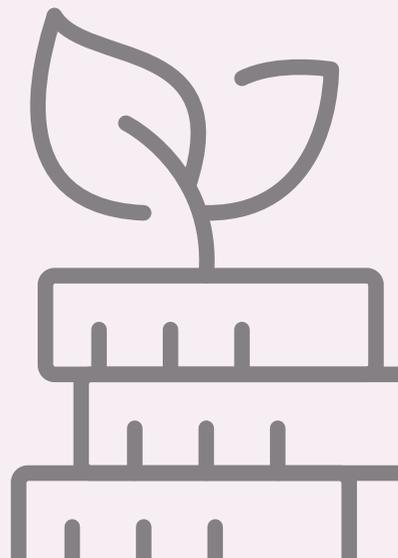
The 'break in learning' rules from the ESFA are largely unchanged. This rule allows an apprentice to pause their apprenticeship and return to it at a later date, rather than having to permanently leave their programme.

The need to report a break in learning only applies to apprentices that can't continue their programme for a period of more than four weeks. A break in learning may be the best course of action if gateway and/or end-point-assessment are delayed due to current Coronavirus measures. To simplify this process, breaks can now be initiated by Connect2Care or the apprentice's employer, where previously only the apprentice could trigger a break in learning.

For breaks in learning that were initiated during March 2020, employers cannot pause or stop payment to their training provider if training had been delivered (wholly or partly) in March. If a break in learning is initiated after 1st April 2020, employers should pause, not stop, the apprenticeship via the Apprenticeship Service. This ensures the apprenticeship can be resumed in future.

Reserving apprenticeship funding

Employers who do not pay the apprenticeship levy (companies with a payroll of less than £3m) remain able to reserve their apprenticeship funding via the Apprenticeship Service. This allows employers to reserve funding for an apprenticeship in advance of recruitment or an offer of an apprenticeship being made to an existing employee. You will still be required to turn this commitment into a reservation once you've confirmed your training provider and apprentice.



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