



Temporary COVID-19 flexibilities: end-point assessment organisation (EPAO) payments process for registered nurse and nursing associate standards

Training provider guidance for updating the apprentice Individualised Learner Record (ILR) with a revised assessment price and the date it applies from

During the COVID-19 period some apprenticeship standards may have changes made to the assessment methods in the end-point assessment (EPA), which may result in the EPAO needing to amend the EPA cost. This has been the case as a result of the flexibilities to EPA that the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) and ESFA agreed for the registered nurse and nursing associate standards. The IfATE are keeping the situation constantly under review and will continue to communicate out any changes to flexibilities to the sector.

During the period when temporary COVID-19 flexibilities apply, for all qualifying [registered nurse](#) and [nursing associate](#) apprentices that finish their training, permanently meet the requirements for professional recognition by the Nursing and Midwifery Council and pass through the apprenticeship gateway - and so are ready to complete their EPA - a new assessment (TNP2) price and the date it is applicable from is required in the ILR. This is to ensure that the assessment price in the ILR for these apprentices reflects the newly reduced EPA price that will be agreed and paid to EPAOs.

You should confirm with the EPAO you are contracted or are contracting with for this assessment what their new EPA price is. The price EPAOs quote will be based on the following principles, which have been provided as guidance for how we expect EPA to be priced where changes are made to one or more assessment methods during Covid-19:

- EPAOs can only charge for eligible costs (5.7 of the conditions of acceptance onto the EPAO register) as they would usually when costing EPA;
- Where an assessment method is no longer taking place, EPAOs must remove any costs that will now not be incurred from their previous EPA quote to providers (e.g. assessor and travel costs); and
- Where an assessment method is being replaced, EPAOs must provide an updated price that removes the costs of delivering the previous assessment method that will no longer be incurred and is replaced with the costs of delivering the new assessment.

The date the new assessment price applies from is the date when your EPAO communicated the revised price to you.

After this, no further updates relating to the assessment price and date will be required in the ILR for these apprentices. However, as now, the ILR should continue to be updated as necessary for individual apprentices e.g. changes in personal details, and to reflect completion and achievement.



The new reduced assessment price (TNP2), combined with the existing training price (TNP1), will result in a lower total negotiated price overall. Consequently this will adjust any funding that you were expecting to receive in the future (based on the old total negotiated price). The funding adjustments will be calculated as normal after the ILR data is uploaded and the new total price has been approved by the employer.

The current process then continues to apply to updating the ILR to reflect end-point assessment and training completion, payment of the completion payment, issuing of certificates, etc.

This guidance covers:

1. Adding or amending an assessment price and its applicable from date into the ILR
2. Providing a new data file to the ESFA
3. Paying the EPAO for the EPA

1. Adding or amending an assessment price and its applicable from date into the ILR

At the start of each apprenticeship, you should have recorded the total negotiated price of the assessment (TNP2) as agreed between the employer and yourself as the provider.

The existing process should be followed for adding or amending a new assessment price, and the date it applies from, into the ILR. This is covered in the [2019-20 Provider Support Manual](#) (paragraph 579, on Pages 80-81).

For apprentices in scope of the revised assessment price, if the assessment price was not agreed at the start of the programme (for example, if the EPAO was not known), then this should be recorded now using the revised assessment price. You must also add the date the assessment price applies from.

The new assessment price to be used is the revised assessment price provided by your EPAO. The date the new assessment price applies from is the date when your EPAO communicated the revised price to you.

The new assessment price and date should be entered into the ILR of each apprentice in scope of the revised assessment price.

Please ensure that the financial amounts and dates recorded are correct as these will impact on funding. The ESFA will be auditing payments and incorrect ILR data may result in overpayment and the recovery of funds.

Paragraph 579, including an adapted example of adding a new price and date, is reproduced below.



Changes in negotiated price during the programme

579. If a new price for training and/or assessment is negotiated at any point during the apprenticeship programme, then this must be recorded in a new price record (AFinType = TNP). You must record the date that the new price applies from in the AFinDate field.

Example:

• An apprentice started an apprenticeship standard programme on 1 April 2017. A training price of £10,000 was agreed prior to the start of the programme. An end point assessment price of £2,000 is later agreed on 1 August 2017. This is recorded as:

AFinType	AFinCode	AFinDate	AFinAmount
TNP	1	01/04/2017	10000
TNP	2	01/08/2017	2000

• The assessment price is later re-negotiated (for example to reflect reduced costs or assessment). A new end point assessment price of £1,000 is agreed to apply from 1 May 2020. The financial details for the programme are updated to reflect this:

AFinType	AFinCode	AFinDate	AFinAmount
TNP	1	01/04/2017	10000
TNP	2	01/08/2017	2000
TNP	2	01/05/2020	1000

2. Providing a new data file to the ESFA

Once the new assessment price and date is entered into the ILRs for all apprentices in scope, a data file should be sent in the normal way to the ESFA for processing. The process and guidance for this can be found in section **3.3. How do I send data to the ESFA?** on Pages 19-25 of the [Provider Support Manual](#).

It is best practice to send data to the ESFA regularly and not wait until a return date to upload a file. You should upload an ILR file to Submit Learner Data early in a return period to allow enough time to resolve any validation errors and warnings.

Each new total apprenticeship price will need to be approved by the employer via the Apprenticeship Service before payments continue. Following the upload of a new ILR data file, employers will receive a notification via the Apprenticeship Service as normal of the approvals they need to make, but you may wish to notify them in advance.



3. Paying the EPAO for the EPA

You will be responsible for passing on payment for end-point assessment to the EPAO selected by the employer.

As happens now, the completion element is earned when you record an 'Achievement date' in the ILR and the 'Completion status' is recorded using code 2 ('The learner has completed the learning activities leading to the learning aim'). You will earn this funding for the month of the 'Achievement date', even if this month is different to the 'Learning planned end date' or the 'Learning actual end date' of the programme.

Payments should be made in line with the terms in your written contractual agreement with the EPAO.

If you have any questions or queries about this guidance, you can contact the service desk on 0370 2670001.



Temporary COVID-19 flexibilities: EPAO payments process

Levy paying employer guidance for approving the new total apprenticeship price on the Apprenticeship Service

During the COVID-19 period some apprenticeship standards may have changes made to the assessment methods in the end-point assessment (EPA), which may result in the EPAO needing to amend the EPA cost. This has been the case as a result of the flexibilities to EPA that the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) and ESFA agreed for the registered nurse and nursing associate standards. The IfATE are keeping the situation constantly under review and will continue to communicate out any changes to flexibilities to the sector.

During the period when temporary COVID-19 flexibilities apply, for all qualifying [registered nurse](#) and [nursing associate](#) apprentices that finish their training, permanently meet the requirements for professional recognition by the Nursing and Midwifery Council and pass through the apprenticeship gateway - and so are ready to complete their EPA - a new assessment (TNP2) price and the date it is applicable from is required in the ILR. This is to ensure that the assessment price in the ILR for these apprentices reflects the newly reduced EPA price that will be agreed and paid to EPAOs.

The new assessment price is the revised assessment price provided by your EPAO, which they will have communicated to your provider.

The provider will update the ILR with the new assessment price for each of your apprentices in scope, and this will result in a new total price for these apprenticeships. For each apprentice, you will receive a notification within the Apprenticeship Service as normal to approve the new total price.

You should check and approve the new total price for each apprentice, using the current Apprenticeship Service approval process. Your provider may already have made you aware of the details of which apprentices are affected.

The revised, lower amount will be debited from your levy account in line with current processes.

If you have any questions or queries about this guidance, you can contact the Apprenticeship Service helpdesk on 08000 150 600, or your ESFA Account Manager.