

SUMMARY OF RECENT CHANGES TO APPRENTICESHIPS

Overview

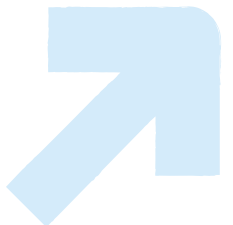
In February 2025, the government announced a number of changes to apprenticeships. These impact four key areas, and have varying implementation dates:

- English and maths (February 2025)
- Shortened apprenticeships (August 2025)
- End Point Assessment (August 2025)
- Apprenticeship funding payments (August 2026)

Stakeholders impacted

Some of the changes made impact a wide range of stakeholders; whilst others are designed to support efficiency in delivery and are therefore of less interest to some. The table below highlights different stakeholders and the importance of understanding these changes.

Change	Employers	Training Providers	Current Apprentices	Careers Advisors	Supporting Organisations
1. English and maths	High	High	High (*those over 19 yrs of age)	High	High
2. Shortened Apprenticeships	High	High	Low	Medium	Medium
3. End Point Assessment	Medium	High	Medium	Low	Low
4. Apprenticeship Funding Payments	Low	High	Low	Low	Low



English and maths requirements

The changes to English and maths Functional Skills Qualifications (FSQs) requirements have a significant impact across all areas and are applied with immediate effect.

Learners aged 19 and above

- If you hold maths and English GCSE's at Grade 4 or C and above or FSQs Level 2, and have evidence of this, you are not required to complete FSQs
- If you don't have the above grades, the requirements for FSQs are now **optional** for adult apprentices at the start of their apprenticeship
- You will have a discussion with your employer and training provider as part of your initial assessment to decide whether or not you will study towards maths and/or Englishs FSQs
- If it is decided that you will study FSQs, you will receive the necessary training to prepare you for the assessments
- You must attempt the assessment, but you are not required to pass them in order to take your End Point Assessment
- If you are currently on programme, you should discuss with your employer and training provider whether or not you will continue with your FSQ assessment(s)

Learners aged 16-18 on Level 2 apprenticeships

- If you don't hold Level 1 (Functional Skills Level 1 or GCSE D to G or 3 -1) or Level 2 (Functional Skills Level 2 or GCSE A* to C or 9-4):
 1. You must study towards and achieve maths and English qualifications of at least Level 1
 2. Once Level 1 is achieved, you must work towards Level 2 maths and/or English where there is sufficient time left within your apprenticeship
 3. You do not need to attempt the Level 2 assessment unless your training provider is satisfied that you are ready to sit an assessment
- If you do already hold Level 1 qualifications:
 4. You must start, continue to study and pass the assessment for a Level 2 maths and/or English qualification. This must be completed enabling you to pass through Gateway and progress to End Point Assessment

Learners aged 16-18 on Level 3 or higher apprenticeships

- It is a requirement that apprentices on Level 3 or higher apprenticeships hold or achieve Level 2 qualifications in maths and English before they take their End Point Assessment
- If you hold maths and English GCSE's at Grade 4 or C and above or FSQs Level 2, and have evidence of this, you are not required to complete FSQs
- You will start your learning at one level above that which you have been assessed at

Adjustments are available for those with an EHCP, legacy statement or those whose primary language is BSL



English and maths requirements - impact and actions

- If you have an apprentice who is over 19 and currently on programme then a discussion between employer, training provider and apprentice should take place to agree if they are to continue with their FSQs and assessment. This is at the discretion of the employer who should ensure the apprentice has the capability to perform their role in these areas. The training providers are required to update each apprentices training plan by 1st April 2025
- When recruiting future apprentices, employers should be aware of the new rules and adapt their recruitment requirements (should they desire) accordingly
- Training providers need to update their processes and make provision to support employers in making informed decisions on each apprentice over the age of 19 years who is currently on programme by 1st April 2025. Updated ESFA Apprentice Funding rules are **now available**

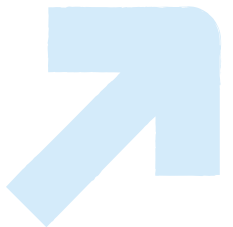
Shortened apprenticeships

The government announced that some apprenticeships may now be shorter than the previous minimum 1 year (or 366 days) duration. Three standards are being developed for delivery from August 2025:

- Level 2 Dual fuel smart meter installers
- Level 2 Healthcare support workers
- Level 3 Production assistants screen and audio

Should you be interested in any of the above please contact the South Yorkshire Apprenticeship Hub.

It is likely further standards may be shortened in duration in the near future and the South Yorkshire Apprenticeship Hub will share details on these as they are developed.



End Point Assessment (EPA) changes

- EPA is the final part of the apprenticeship and an independent measurement of competence against the apprenticeship standard
- The DfE have announced that some elements of the apprenticeship will be assessed whilst on programme. This will differ dependent on the standard
- The review process of the standards will commence in April 2025 and further guidance will be available, including which elements of each apprenticeship is assessed by whom. Revised documentation will be published after the completion of each review by the End Point Assessment organisation

End Point Assessment (EPA) changes - impact and actions

- Our current understanding is that the new assessment methodology will only apply to apprentices starting on the revised standards
- All current apprentices (and their employers) will not be impacted by these changes and should continue to work to their current training plan

Apprenticeship funding payments

- The DfE are changing the system that training providers use to evidence learners are on an apprenticeship programme, enabling them to draw down funding (payment) for the training delivered to date. This will significantly improve the process, reducing errors and saving significant time. The system will be updated and aims to launch in August 2026

Apprenticeship funding payments - impact and actions

- These changes will not impact employers or apprentices and will be managed (behind the scenes) by training providers. Training providers will receive further guidance in due course and will need to update their processes

- Information correct at the date of publication (February 2025)

