

**Interim Policy Notice  
Apprenticeship  
Assessment Regulatory  
Policy Addendum  
Effective 1 August 2026**

**Document status:** Active Regulatory Addendum Effective from 1 August 2026

**Applies to** all Apprenticeship Assessment Centres, Employers and NCFE Operational Policies

**Approved by:** Leanne Poole, Head of EPA Operations

Version 1 (interim Governance and Regulatory Alignment Addendum)

## 1. Purpose and governance authority

This Addendum is issued to ensure immediate operational and regulatory alignment across all published NCFE policies following updated regulatory requirements issued by Ofqual and Skills England, effective from 1 August 2026.

This Addendum provides specific arrangements for apprenticeship assessments. In the event of any inconsistency between this Addendum and existing published policies (including, but not limited to, the Reasonable Adjustments Policy, Cancellation, Resit and Retake Policy, Appeals Policy, and Malpractice and Maladministration Policies), the provisions of this Addendum will take precedence only in relation to apprenticeship assessment activities. The published policies remain otherwise unchanged and in effect.

## 2. Standardised terminology updates

To align with national regulatory updates across the technical and vocational education sector, the following terminology replaces legacy terms across all existing NCFE documentation, contracts, assessment specifications and handbooks:

| Legacy term                              | Updated standard term (effective 1 Aug 2026)        | Operational context                                           |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| End-Point Assessment (EPA)               | Apprenticeship Assessment                           | The final holistic assessment of occupational competence      |
| End-Point Assessment Organisation (EPAO) | Awarding Organisation (AO)/ Assessment Organisation | The regulated body delivering the assessment                  |
| Gateway                                  | Gateway to Completion                               | The formal sign-off point confirming readiness for assessment |
| Independent End-Point Assessor (IEPA)    | Apprenticeship Assessor/Independent Assessor        | The qualified assessor conducting the evaluation              |

## 3. Key policy overrides and operational adjustments

### 3.1. Reasonable Adjustments Policy

Compressed assessment windows: following the reductions of the practical minimum apprenticeship duration to 8 months training providers must submit reasonable adjustments applications at the earliest opportunity and before the first assessment takes place.

#### Regulatory hierarchy:

In accordance with Ofqual's Apprenticeship Assessment Qualification Level Conditions, where a conflict arises between a specific constraint in an Assessment Plan and NCFE statutory duty to provide a reasonable adjustment under the Equality Act 2010, the

requirement to provide the adjustment takes priority, provided the underlying occupational competence is maintained.

### **3.2. Cancellation, Resit, and Retake Policy**

**No Apprentice fee guarantee:** In strict compliance with Department for Education (DfE) funding rules, under no circumstances will any assessment fee, cancellation charge, resit fee or retake charge be levied directly against an apprentice.

**Short notice cancellation:** any assessment cancelled by a centre or employer with less than two working days' notice for remote assessments and will less than five working days' notice for face-to-face assessment without evidenced extenuating circumstances will be classed as a short-notice cancellation. This may forfeit the assessment attempt and incur a re-booking fee payable by the employer/centre as outlined in the commercial fee schedule.

### **3.3. Assessment and grading mechanics**

**Standalone behaviours:** for all updated standards, the employer will be responsible for validating behaviours and will no longer be assessed through Apprenticeship assessment.

## **4. Operational transition and next steps**

- 4.1. **Policy integration phase:** Full formal rewrites of individual policy documents are currently undergoing internal reviews and will replace any legacy documents held within NCFE website
  - 4.2. **Enquiries:** Questions regarding the interpretation or application of this Addendum should be directed to the Quality and Compliance team
  - 4.3. **Website update:** A new website for Apprenticeship Assessments is currently under development. Further information will be available once it goes live.
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