



## **Proposal for a temporary relaxation of apprenticeship rules in response to the Covid-19 health and economic crisis**

### **Context**

The Covid-19 health crisis has caused an economic crisis that will require imagination, flexibility, and resourcefulness to overcome.

The government has a number of initiatives designed to help support people including:

- the Furlough Scheme for workers who are not currently needed; and
- the Kickstarter Scheme for young people at risk of long-term unemployment.

Reskilling is vital for furloughed workers to gain the skills that the future economy will need. Upskilling is necessary for young people on the Kickstarter Scheme to gain skills that will help them secure paid work once their 6-month funded placement finishes.

Unfortunately, neither Furlough nor Kickstarter work with Apprenticeship Levy Funding. This is a lost opportunity that could be remedied with a simple temporary policy adjustment.

### **Temporary Relaxation of the Minimum Course Duration of Levy-Funded Training**

We propose that, in response to Covid-19, and for a temporary period, that Levy funds should be able to be spent on courses that are shorter than 12 months.

It is proposed that these courses are:

- Funded through an organisation's Apprenticeship Levy;
- A subset of existing Apprenticeship Standards;
- Paid at the existing rate for that Apprenticeship Standard but reduced to reflect the percentage of the Standard that is being delivered on the reduced length course;
- Available to furloughed workers and Kickstarter Participants as well as existing and new staff;
- Accredited through existing EPAOs;
- Able to be used as part credit towards a full apprenticeship if the learner goes on to complete the rest of the Standard.

### **Example**

An organisation chooses to train 20 staff in Data Analytics preparing them for a return to a different type of work after furlough ends. They want to do a 3 month course. The Data Analytics Apprenticeship is 24 months. The training provider delivers 1/8 of the Apprenticeship Standard in that 3 months carefully curating appropriate content in consultation with the employer. For example they might teach:

- performing database queries across multiple tables to extract data for analysis;
- performing routine statistical analyses and ad-hoc queries;
- using a range of analytical techniques such as data mining, time series forecasting and modelling techniques to identify and predict trends and patterns in data;
- the data life cycle;
- the different types of data, including open and public data, administrative data, and research data.



The course is funded at 1/8<sup>th</sup> of the £15,000 price band minus the EPA cost.  $(15,000 \times 0.8) / 8 = £1,500$ . This is paid for out of the employer's Levy pot in the usual monthly way.

### **Advantages**

- Meets the need for short-focussed vocational training in response to the Covid-crisis;
- Enables Levy funds to be used for Kickstarter participants and more flexibly for furloughed workers enabling these key groups to access vital training;
- Ensures that Levy funds can continue to be deployed at this vital time to meet employer's rapidly changing training needs.

### **Background - the BSA**

The proposal has been produced by members of the Business Services Association's (BSA) Apprenticeships, Skills and Training Group. The group consists of those members of the BSA who are interested in the provision and delivery of apprenticeships, skills and training from both a provider and employer perspective.

A list of the BSA's members is included as an Annex below. The group includes large and small employers as well as training providers and is therefore well positioned to offer unique insights and proposals such as the one included in this paper.

The BSA is the industry body for all those delivering service and infrastructure projects across the private and public sectors.

The business services sector employs over 10% of the workforce and contributes 9.3% of all economic output, supporting every region and community as a driver of economic growth and productivity. 70% of such services are delivered business-to-business, underlying the vital importance the sector makes to the day to day running UK plc.

BSA members have been playing a vital role in keeping the economy going, delivering services and projects, throughout the Covid-19 crisis. Now, our sector has a crucial role to play in rebuilding Britain's economy and supporting Britain's workforce.



## Annex 1. - BSA Members July 2020

3C3 Ltd	IBM
3SC	Incentive FM
Accenture	Ingeus
AECOM	Interserve
Amey Plc	ISS UK Ltd
Aramark	KBR
Atkins	KPMG
Atos	Kier Group Plc
Baachu	Maximus UK Ltd
Balfour Beatty Plc	Mears Group
BAE Systems	Mitie
Barclays Corporate	MTC
Bellrock Ltd	NatWest
Bevan Brittan LLP	NCG
Bouygues Energies and Services	OCS Group UK Ltd
Bright Network	P3
Browne Jacobson LLP	Pinsent Masons LLP
BT Group Plc	Polar Insight
Capita Plc	Purpose Led Performance
Catch 22	PricewaterhouseCoopers UK
CBRE Ltd	Robertson FM
CGI	Salisbury Group
CH & Co Group	Seetec Group Ltd
Chillblast	Serco Group Plc
Clyde & Co LLP	Sharpe Pritchard LLP
CMS Cameron McKenna Nabarro Olswang LLP	Shaw Trust
Community Models	Sodexo Ltd
Compass Group Plc	Sopra Steria Ltd
Connect Assist	Space Solutions
Corndel Ltd	Spend Network
CSG	Strictly Education
Deloitte	TerraQuest Solutions Ltd
DWF LLP	The Gap Partnership
Elior UK Ltd	The Grichan Partnership
ENGIE UK & Ireland	The Palladium Group
Eric Wright FM	The Sustainability Group
Fujitsu UK	Trowers & Hamblins LLP
G3 Systems Ltd	Veolia
G4S Plc	VINCI Facilities
GoodPeople	VPS Group
Grant Thornton UK LLP	Wand Consulting
Hinduja Global Solutions	Wates Group
HP	Willmott Dixon