

Hair and Beauty apprenticeship discretion FAQ's:

Q1. What is the point of publishing the discretion now when salons will be able to reopen on April 12?

A1. The view among our employer stakeholders, who assessed different options, was that they are needed because there are numerous apprentices delayed in or at gateway. There are commercial constraints still applicable in our sector workplaces in relation the movement and numbers permitted on site, which will still be restricted after they reopen on 12 April.

The intention is still for the EPA plan to be delivered in the usual way where possible and COVID 19 safe.

But this new discretion will provide flexibility for assessment to be delivered in a different way for as long as it is needed due to COVID-19, which will give apprentices a fair chance to complete.

Q2. What changes have been made to the flexibilities for these apprenticeships and which apprenticeships now qualify for these changes?

A2. Apprentices completing the following standards will now be able to complete their EPA without close contact assessment:

ST0213-Hair professional

ST0630-Beauty Therapist

ST0636-Beauty and make up consultant

These new measures, introduced in addition to special measures previously introduced last year, will support more apprentices to finish their apprenticeships and progress into successful careers or higher-level apprenticeships.

Q3. Who was involved in the decision-making process?

A3. The trailblazer steering groups, route panel representatives, EPAOs, and regulators were consulted.

Q4. What grades can apprentices using this new route expect to receive?

A4. Apprentices will be allocated a maximum pass grade if this new EPA discretion is applied.

Re-sits and re-takes are not offered to apprentices wishing to move from pass to a higher grade.

Q5. But surely it wouldn't be fair to apprentices going down this route? Why can't they receive a higher grade?

A5. These are extraordinary measures which we are taking to give apprentices an opportunity to complete.

We are confident that apprentices completing in this way will have developed the skills, knowledge and behaviours needed by employers to pass their apprenticeships.

However, employers felt strongly that s to be graded effectively and given the practical nature of their job, the assessment would need to be observed fully to achieve a higher grade.

Q6. Who will be eligible for the new discretion?

A6. The intention is still for the EPA plan to be delivered in the usual way where possible and COVID 19 safe.

This additional discretion has been provided for circumstances where that is not possible.

The broad principles for eligibility are:

- Where close contact/personal services are not available (due to national or regional lockdowns, other restrictions, or Government COVID-19 guidance) and the apprentice does not wish to delay their EPA
- Where it is not safe for the apprentice to do close contact work and there are commercial constraints in relation the movement and numbers permitted on site after they reopen on 12 April
- Difficulties in accessing appropriate venues
- Where the employment situation of the apprentice has changed, or is changing, in a way which makes use of this this discretion necessary.

Q7. How can we find out more detail about how it will be implemented?

A7. You can ask your EPAO in the first instance as they will administer all EPAs and make all grading decisions in accordance with Ofqual issued parameters. You can also view supplementary guidance from the relevant employer steering group

[Hair Professional Apprenticeship](#) webpage

[Beauty Professional Apprenticeship](#) webpage

Q8. Why did it take so long to reach this decision?

A8. We appreciate the patience shown with the work of the taskforce and the Institute.

It was important to make sure that views were gathered from everyone who wanted to give them and reached a consensus, which took time. We hope the result of this thorough process is a change that is accessible and works for everyone.

Q9. Why was this decision not taken at the start of the pandemic?

A9. The Institute and our network of employers have monitored and reviewed the situation closely throughout the pandemic and now overseen two taskforces looking at how best to support continued EPA as the pandemic unfolded. Our priority throughout has been to ensure the safety of apprentices and employers while maintaining quality.