



**Hampshire
Achieves**
Skills & Participation

Hampshire Achieves COVID 19 Remote Education Contingency Plan

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Hampshire
County Council

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1.0 Introduction

Hampshire Achieves (HA) COVID-19 Remote Education Contingency Plan is designed to ensure we have in place a clear plan and procedures that in the event of disruption to the delivery of education and training for our Apprenticeship and Young People's Learning (YPL) programmes, we can continue delivery with the minimum degree of disruption for learners, line managers/employers and staff.

From March 2020 when the national lockdown came into place, HA took action to enable remote delivery of its directly delivered curriculum. This work has put the team in a very good position to move from blended to remote learning as the COVID restrictions change throughout the coming months.

Hampshire County Council has in place a full Corporate Resilience Framework and a Corporate Response Plan, which includes departmental / service arrangements for dealing with a significant incident or emergency, or any other disruption to our business. This plan forms part of the wider Skills & Participation Service Recovery Plan, for use with all Service-related business continuity and emergency incidents.

In the event of a disruption or any anticipated incident likely to cause any disruption to the delivery of our learning programmes, the Head of Service for HA and members of the Senior management team would meet (either virtually or face to face) and make the necessary arrangements to ensure that, where possible, there was continuity of delivery, of all programmes.

To communicate decisions and/or arrangements Managers will convene a meeting of all staff at very short notice using Microsoft Teams. We will inform our key stakeholders of the emergency, and the outcomes of any extraordinary planning meeting would be communicated as soon as possible to all relevant stakeholders and staff. This includes our ESFA account manager, sub-contracted partners, learners, parents and line managers/internal employers of our apprentices.

2.0 Staff

Tutors in the YPL (Traineeships and Supported Internships) team can cover for each other in the event of short/medium term absence. This is also the case for the Apprenticeship delivery team apart from 2 programmes where the member of staff's skills, experience and knowledge are uniquely and directed related to the Apprenticeship Standards they support, namely the School Business Manager and the Children, Young People & Families Practitioner Standards. To mitigate against this, all tutors have developed and shared their teaching, learning and assessment resources for the 2020/21 academic year on the VLE. Tutors plan ahead and ensure they have uploaded at least 6 weeks' worth of online teaching resources which will be used by the Coordinator/Curriculum Manager to support learners to enable them to make progress in the event of tutor absence.

Tutor unavailable due to:

- Unplanned absence: Cover to be arranged by Manager or Coordinator. If this impacts on an apprentice observation the appointment will be cancelled and re-scheduled. The tutor will re-arrange appointment upon return.
- Long term absence: Manager to find suitable cover.
- Resignation: Manager to find suitable short-term cover. Manager to follow recruitment guidelines to find suitable permanent replacement.

Internal Quality Assurer unavailable: Manager to contact Quality Co-ordinator to find cover/replacement.

2.1 Staff training and support

To support the delivery of both blended and remote delivery models all staff have received:

- Group training on education learning platform software Adobe Connect, with additional 1:1 support, where needed, and access to online tutorials.
- Updated Safeguarding guidance (April 2020) which included Safeguarding principles; Importance of maintaining and recording contact; Peer on peer abuse; Mental Health; Online Safety including cyberbullying; Supporting parents and carers; and Supporting each other
- Weekly digital updates which provided access to a wealth of online resources, hints and tips to support online delivery, including online safety guidance/protocols for both themselves and their learners
- An invitation to attend Communities of Practice sessions. At these sessions experienced online tutors offered support, guidance, and shared good practice. Initially hosted weekly, these sessions now continue monthly as staff have become more confident and proficient in online delivery.
- Access to number of CPD sessions as individuals, with feedback and resources shared with colleagues, and where appropriate, the opportunities have been rolled out to the wider team, for example the Psychological 1ST Aid course.

HA has ensured that staff are able to use a variety of different communication methods to contact our learners, parents/carers, and employers. These include Land based phones; Mobile phones; Email; MS Teams; Through the e-portfolio system OneFile; and Post. If any one of these methods becomes unusable, then they will utilise one of the other methods of communication.

3.0 Learners and Parents/Carers

Following the national lockdown, plans are in place for the blended delivery of the directly delivered curriculum from October 2020. Induction plans include familiarising the learners with our e-portfolio OneFile, and our virtual learning environment (VLE), as well

as web-based learning platforms MS Teams and/or Adobe Connect. For learners studying Functional Skills they will also have an induction to the SkillsForward site.

Parents/carers of learners on Traineeships, Supported Internships and Apprenticeships (16-18yr old) have been made aware that programmes have adopted a blended delivery approach, and in the event of any future local or national lockdown we may deliver the whole programme remotely.

Additionally, parents/carers are sent the links to support them to keep their Young Person safe when online. Many of our learners are considered vulnerable and our communications with parents/carers is very important. In many cases through the initial lockdown they were getting weekly phone calls, we would expect to continue this if further local/national lockdowns are imposed.

4.0 Online Learning

4.1 Laptops/devices: Most HA staff and apprentices (as employees of the Council) use corporate IT managed Hybrid devices, laptops, or fixed workstations to access systems and software. Staff and apprentices have access to telephone/web-based IT support between 07:30 and 17:00 Monday to Friday. Outside of these hours service calls will be responded to on the next working day.

In the case of apprentices experiencing technical difficulties when accessing online learning in their workplace, Apprentices should speak to their Line Manager. If their Line Manager is unable to provide a solution, the Apprentice should contact their named tutor.

For learners HA has purchased a suite of laptops that are available as part of a laptop loan scheme. Therefore, should a learner not have their own device to access learning remotely, they can request a loan device for part of or the duration of the course. Support will be provided by the tutor, learning/skills coaches and HA digital learning advisor. If a device should fail, where possible it will be swapped over without delay.

4.2 IT Literacy: As there is an expectation for learners to use IT as part of their programme, and where identified at initial induction, IT training will be provided. If a learner experiences difficulty using online learning platforms, the e-portfolios. or the VLE, they will be contacted by their tutor so that further training and support can be arranged.

HA use the e-portfolio systems OneFile and SkillsForward for setting and storage of learner work; tutor marking and feedback; and both internal and external quality assurance activities. Alongside these our VLE is used for tutors to store delivery materials and learning resources, and for learner to access additional course information and learning resources.

These facilities enable all our learners to be able to access their work, and all relevant learning resources remotely 24/7 wherever they are learning with Internet access.

To ensure HA complies with data protection legislation all learners are requested to complete and sign a Multimedia Consent form. HA staff will ensure they have learners' permissions before we publish or share any photographs, audio, and/or video recording for promotional or educational purposes.

HA operates our e-portfolios and VLE directly from the vendors, all of which are external cloud-based hosted services, and any access difficulties outside of our administrative control will be dealt with remotely by the vendors. Therefore, in the event of a future lockdown all staff and learners would continue to have access to all teaching and learning materials and resources.

4.3 Paper-based data: All critical paper-based data is scanned and stored on either SharePoint or in the learners e-portfolio. Paper-based data is stored in a locked cabinet.

5.0 Delivery Venues

Venues used for delivery are local council offices including library premises; schools; community venues and sub-contracted provider/employer's own buildings. Where a training venue, event or meeting is disrupted learners will be given as much notice as possible as to the location of an alternative delivery site.

HA and sub-contracted providers staff will either:

- Find suitable alternative classroom.
- Find suitable alternative location in another HCC or other building.
- Find suitable alternative date.
- Switch to remote learning

6.0 Transport

We will inform all learners and staff members (unless at their own workplace), of the most effective transport methods to the alternative venues, and will, where possible, encourage staff and learners to walk or cycle. If having to use public transport staff and learners will be referred to the [safer travel guidance for passengers](#). Reminding them that during Covid-19 it is the law that they wear a face covering when travelling in England on a public bus, coach, train, tram, or other forms of public transport, unless they are [exempt](#).

We will work with local authority colleagues when considering the transport needs of learners with SEND and those with an EHC plan.

In the event that learners or members of staff are not able to access their main place of work or training facilities, we would inform them of the alternative arrangements which can include e.g. use of Microsoft Teams (primary), and Adobe Connect. We have tested these arrangements and learning can continue even when transport disruption prevents staff and learners from accessing a training location.

7.0 Disruption to Examinations

Contingency planning for exams administration is the responsibility of the individual Head of Centres. Exam Centres must prepare plans for any disruption to assessments as part of their general emergency planning to comply with the [Joint Council for Qualifications \(JCQ\) General Regulations for Approved Centres](#), which requires all exam centres to have a written examination contingency plan/examinations policy.

In the event that the Head of Centre decides the centre cannot be opened for scheduled assessments, the relevant Awarding Organisation (AO) must be informed as soon as possible. The AO will be able to offer advice regarding the alternative arrangements for conducting assessments that may be available, and the options for candidate(s) who have not been able to take scheduled assessments.

HA will ensure that relevant staff are familiar with this plan. All staff and invigilators involved in the centres' exams processes are responsible for; reading, understanding and implementing the contingency plan; and know how these arrangements will be communicated to candidates, parents, and staff should disruption to assessments occur.

In the event of a national disruption to a day of assessments HA will be guided by the relevant AO. The AO will liaise with the qualification regulators and government departments to agree the most appropriate option for managing the impact and will disseminate this information. As a last resort the affected assessments will be rescheduled. Although every effort would be taken to keep the impact to a minimum, it is possible that there could be more than one timetable date affected following the disruption.

8.0 Disruption to End Point Assessment

8.1 Rescheduling of End Point Assessments: In the event that an Apprentice is unable to attend EPA at short notice, HA will refer to the EPA Organisation guidance for such situations.

8.2 End Point Assessment Facilities: End Point Assessment facilities including accommodation are prioritised over other areas. If facilities required to facilitate End Point Assessment become unavailable HA will find a suitable alternative, wherever possible.

8.3 End Point Assessment Organisation Does Not Fulfil EPA: If the EPA provider is unable to fulfil end point assessment for any reason, HA will arrange a suitable alternative.

If the EPA provider ceases trading or is unable to fulfil EPA for the foreseeable future, HA will arrange EPA to be carried out by an alternative EPA provider on the Register of Apprentice Assessment Organisations.

9.0 Business Continuity of Sub-contracted Provision

Business Continuity Plans are in place with all sub-contracted providers, being a requirement under the legal terms and conditions of their contract.

At the start of the pandemic the move to remote learning for a number of sub-contracted providers was more problematic due to lack of infrastructure, and the inappropriateness of online delivery for some settings and subjects. However, Providers are now required to have Learning Contingency plans in place, details of which have been discussed and confirmed at contract compliance meetings held in September/October 2020. Where practicable, or appropriate to do so, sub-contracted partners are also now in a position to switch from face to face and/or blended to remote learning should the need arise due to further local or national lockdowns.