

The Institute has published the flexibilities framework that sets out how the 10 flexibilities that were introduced to support continued delivery of apprenticeship end-point assessments (EPA) through COVID-19 will be applied after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022.

Seven of the 10 flexibilities will be retained as options to use beyond **1 April 2022**. These are:

- 1. Observations taking place in simulated environments**
- 2. Remote delivery of assessment (including invigilation)**
- 3. Pauses being allowed between assessment methods during end-point assessment period**
- 4. Assessments taking place outside of usual venues**
- 5. Delivery of assessment methods in any order (when a specified order is in the assessment plan)**
- 6. Exams/tests being online instead of on paper (where originally specified as paper based only)**
- 7. Gateway sign off being done remotely (where originally specified as having to be face to face)**

Three of the 10 flexibilities will be switched off as of **31<sup>st</sup> March 2022**. These are:

8. Changes being made to who sits on the EPA interview/discussion panel (when someone in addition to the independent assessor is specified)
9. Allowing other suitable evidence of achievements being used in replacement of functional skills qualifications at gateway (other mandated qualifications are covered under temporary discretions)
10. Extension to the length of the end-point assessment period (where specified)

#### **For assessment plans published prior to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022\***

Marshall will ensure that, where possible, apprentices should continue with scheduled EPAs, that are in line with requirements set out in the assessment plan. However, if circumstances arise that may lead to an assessment process being compromised or an apprentice being disadvantaged Marshall Assessment may use one or more of the seven retained flexibilities set out above.

Marshall will first communicate their intended use of any flexibility and the rationale for doing so with the employer and apprentice. Marshall Assessment and the employer should consider, and mitigate against, any potential adverse impacts of the flexibility on other stakeholders within any assessment environment under their control (for example they should consider whether the use of video technology or a change of venue could compromise client or patient confidentiality and take appropriate steps to avoid this).

The need for flexibilities should be considered at the earliest possible opportunity to allow adequate time for any additional preparation required by the flexibility (for example new technology and training to use it).

**\* End-point assessment plans published on or after 1 April 2022 should have these flexibilities considered during their development and be built into the published version where applicable.**

Requests for flexibilities should be made to [helpdesk@marshall-assessment.com](mailto:helpdesk@marshall-assessment.com) and should have the subject heading “**flexibility request**” This will be evaluated by the Assessment Quality Manager. You will receive a response within 5 working days.

In order to use the following three flexibilities, Marshall will seek and gain permission from the External Quality Assurance Provider (**EQAP**) prior to adopting them.

**1. Observations taking place in simulated environments**

**2. Remote delivery of observation or practical assessment** (If the employer and the apprentice agree, then remote delivery other than observation or practical assessment can be administered without permission from the EQAP).

**4. Project specified to be completed under controlled conditions taking place outside of usual venues**

Flexibilities 1, 2 and 4 need further consideration as these, if administered without diligence, could affect the validity of that particular assessment method for that apprenticeship standard. Marshall will outline to the EQAP how it intends to administer the assessment, the rationale for doing so, along with a conflict-of-interest declaration.

**According to IfATE:** Where responsibility for EQA is transferred from one EQAP to another we expect the new EQAP to honour any flexibility in place previously agreed by the Institute or former EQAP.