

PUTTING APPRENTICES ON FURLOUGH

If your business is severely affected by the Covid19 crisis, you may be worrying about how to pay staff salaries. Rather than making redundancies, you have the option of putting staff and apprentices, who were on your payroll on **March 19th 2020**, on **furlough**. This means putting them on temporary leave and claiming a Government grant towards their salaries and on-costs.

How does furloughing work for apprentices?

- Apprentices stay at home
- They don't undertake any work for your business
- You can claim a grant of 80% (up to £2,500pm) of their salaries backdated to March 1st 2020
- The grant is for up to 4 months in the first instance
- You can also claim associated employer NI and pension contributions.

What about furloughed apprentices' training?

- Furloughed apprentices continue their off-the-job training with their provider **virtually**
- Some providers are able to offer intensive training timetables so apprentices can complete more of their planned off-the-job training whilst in furlough
- Furloughed apprentices must be paid at least the National Minimum Wage or Apprenticeship Minimum wage for any hours they spend **training**. Almost always, the furlough payment will be enough to cover an apprentice's training hours.

Why is furloughing apprentices a good option?

For businesses negatively impacted by COVID-19, furloughing apprentices is a good option because:

- Apprentices keep their jobs and you don't have to make redundancies
- Apprentices can continue their training **virtually**

and a break in learning is avoided *

- Apprentices receive ongoing personal support from providers during a difficult time
- Retained apprentices will help your business recover after the crisis

* It can be difficult getting back on track with a training programme after a long break. Also, a **break in learning** can lead to a break in funding, creating cash flow issues for the apprenticeship provider.

Business unaffected by COVID?

If your business is functioning quite normally, your apprentices can probably continue with work as usual, either in the workplace (with social distancing) or from home. Their apprenticeship training provider will continue to train and support them virtually. Most apprenticeship providers are now well-positioned to provide remote services.

Still confused?

Please contact your apprenticeship provider before making any decision. They can offer advice based on latest government information. You can also email ian@gmlpf.net

"High-quality apprenticeships will be a vital contributor to the economic recovery that will follow the pandemic." Department For Education

**DON'T WASH
YOUR HANDS
OF YOUR APPRENTICES**

**Greater Merseyside
Learning Providers
Federation**

The Government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme is now open for applications at:
www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-for-wage-costs-through-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme