

Multiverse Break in Learning Policy

This policy document is aimed to provide comprehensive guidelines for a Break in Learning (BIL) during the course of an apprenticeship. It has been developed in line with the funding rules provided by the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) for our UK governance and using their funding and rules document [here](#). This is a global policy and unless otherwise stated applies to both UK and US guidance.

What is a Break in Learning?

A Break in Learning (BIL) is an authorised period of pause in an apprentice's training where there is no plan for any active learning to take place within a calendar month. This break is typically allowed when an apprentice is experiencing personal or medical challenges that hinder their ability to engage with their apprenticeship effectively.

Initiating a Break in Learning

1. Multiverse will use a break in learning where there is no plan for any active learning to take place within a calendar month.
2. Multiverse will initiate a break in learning if an apprentice does not log off-the-job hours or attend scheduled delivery sessions. This will be categorised as an unauthorised break in learning referred as a 'Provisional Break in Learning'
 - 2.1. Multiverse will make interventions before initiating the break in learning to re-engage the apprentice and employer to avoid the provisional break in learning.
 - 2.2. If a learner has not-re-engaged with their learning, or provided a break in learning reason aligned with Multiverse's Break in Learning Policy within 2 calendar months of the break in learning start date, Multiverse will initiate a withdrawal for the learner.
 - 2.3. Depending on the length of disengagement, the learner may not be able to return to their original cohort.
3. It must be the apprentice's decision to take a break in learning and they can only request to take a break in learning from their apprenticeship if they plan to return to the same programme at a later date alongside a realistic plan in place for successful return agreed by Multiverse, employer and the apprentice.
 - 3.1. (UK ONLY) In most instances, a break can only be taken alongside a break in employment, however, some limited exceptions to this may be applied at Multiverse's discretion as detailed below.
 - 3.2. Multiverse will provide a list of reasons captured during the processing of the break in learning and update these as necessary. The reason for the break and its expected duration must be discussed with the apprentice's employer and must fit into the following categories:

Reason	Explanation	Conditions
2.3.1. Physical Health Issues	This refers to any physical health issues that relate to the apprentice. These might include illnesses, injuries, chronic health conditions, surgeries, or other health-related circumstances that impact the apprentice's ability to participate in their training program effectively.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical health reasons can only be used if the apprentice is also taking a break from their employer. • It must be accompanied by confirmation from the employer they are taking medical leave with written confirmation from the employer. • The length of this break will be informed by the details provided by the employer. • Check Ins to occur on a monthly basis during break unless otherwise advised.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upon return from a Break in Learning due to medical circumstances, the employer will be required to confirm that the apprentice is medically fit to return to learning.
2.3.2. Mental Health Issues		<p>This pertains to any conditions that may affect an apprentice's mental well-being and ability to engage with their training. Examples could include conditions such as depression, anxiety, stress disorders, or other mental health challenges that require the apprentice to take a break from their training program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (UK ONLY) Breaks taken for mental health reasons can be taken with or without a break in employment Mental health reasons can be used where a mental health issue has a substantial effect on an apprentice's ability to carry out day-to-day activities (as defined below by the Equalities Act 2010). This must be confirmed by the employer. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Day-to-day activities' means walking, driving, using public transport, cooking, eating, lifting, carrying, typing and writing. 'Substantial' is more than minor or trivial, e.g. it takes much longer than it usually would to complete a daily task A break-in-learning will not be approved for exam/assessment related anxiety, or where insufficient study time has been given; this should be discussed with the apprentice's coach who will provide additional support.
2.3.3. Personal Issues	Bereavement	In the event of the loss of a loved one, we acknowledge the emotional and mental challenges that can necessitate a temporary break from learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (UK ONLY) Breaks taken for personal reasons can be taken with or without a break in employment The length of this break is determined by the circumstances and must be agreed prior to approval. Check Ins to occur on a monthly basis during break unless otherwise advised. For any personal reasons not listed please contact Compliance and HoP to discuss suitability of BIL.
	Family Obligations	This includes situations of significant familial commitments or crises, such as caring for a seriously ill family member, which can require considerable time and attention.	
	Relocation/Housing Instability	If you are in the process of changing residences, particularly under stressful conditions or circumstances of housing instability, this can justify a temporary break in learning.	
	Visa Issues	If the apprentice is experiencing legal complexities involving their visa or immigration status that require significant time and attention, this can warrant a break in learning	
	Jury Duty	We recognise that certain civic responsibilities, such as jury duty, which require an extensive time commitment over	

		a concentrated period, may necessitate a temporary pause in learning.	
	Personal Safety	If the apprentice is dealing with situations that pose a serious risk to their personal safety or well-being, this can merit a break from learning to allow them to address and resolve these issues.	
	Work-based investigation	Multiverse may encourage an apprentice to go on a BIL whilst an investigation of misconduct is occurring, if the apprentice does not consent to this break, Multiverse has the right to suspend or terminate the apprenticeship	
2.3.4. Maternity, Paternity and Adoption Leave	Maternity and Paternity leave are periods of approved absence for parents around the time of birth or adoption of their child.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This reason can only be used if the apprentice is also taking a break from their employer. • Length determined by the apprentice and employer policy prior to being approved. • Check Ins only required for the last 2 months of the break. 	
2.3.5. Change of Employer	<p>This term is used when an apprentice switches from one employer to another during their apprenticeship.</p> <p>When to use this reason:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A change of employer may necessitate a break in learning if there is a gap of more than 30 days between the end of employment with the old employer and the start of employment with the new one. • To allow time for an apprentice to find a new role if they have been unsuccessful in the first 30 days since their employment ended. • If Multiverse needs more time to process the change of employment details during the transition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The transfer should take place within one month of leaving the former employer. • If not completed in time, place the apprentice on a break for up to 8 weeks. • The new employer must give explicit approval for the apprenticeship to continue. • A new job description is required to confirm learning can still be applied. • A triage meeting must be held with the apprentice, coach, and new line manager. • The Head of Admissions must approve the transfer for role fit and alignment. • Monthly check-ins must continue during the break. • New employment must begin within 12 weeks of the last day with the previous employer. • Apprentices can stay on programme for up to 30 days without an employer; after that, a break must be recorded. • A coaching session or OTJ log must be recorded by day 30 to support the break. • If no new employment has started after 12 weeks, the apprentice must be withdrawn. 	

<p>2.3.6. Temporary Role Fit / Workload Issues</p>	<p>This refers to scenarios such as a temporary secondment or team downsizing, where an apprentice's role is significantly altered or their capacity is required elsewhere for a temporary period, necessitating a break in their learning. A change in circumstance within the business must have occurred in order to use this as a BIL.</p>	<p>This reason will only be approved under specific circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to its temporary nature, the maximum duration of such a break cannot exceed 3 months. • A significant shift in the apprentice's role and/or the team's workload due to downsizing or restructuring, resulting in the apprentice's role not being aligned with the apprenticeship standard. • This condition is not applicable for situations where the apprentice's role is gradually becoming more demanding, and they're struggling to balance the workload. • The client must have already agreed upon a plan for the apprentice's return to the program, substantiated with written confirmation. • Monthly check ins will be scheduled during the break to monitor the situation. • The employer must demonstrate a compelling need for the apprentice's skills elsewhere in the organisation during the BIL. • The apprentice must express a clear intention to return to their original role and apprenticeship program post the temporary period.
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Restrictions on Break in Learning

4. Multiverse will not record a break in learning:
 - 4.1. (UK ONLY) Within the apprentice's first 42 days on programme. The non-start process should be followed in this case. When/if they return they can join an upcoming cohort from the beginning of the programme.
 - 4.2. For annual leave, public holidays and short-term absence (including strikes) (where the apprentice is able to continue actively learning each calendar month).
 - 4.3. (UK ONLY) For those apprentices with a term-time only contract, where we do not require a break in learning for the month of August.
 - 4.4. Where there is no plan to return to the apprenticeship or where the apprentice is showing low intent and not sure if they want to continue on programme
 - 4.5. When employment or an apprenticeship agreement has ended (redundancy, resignation, dismissal or any other action by the apprentice or the employer that results in the apprenticeship agreement ending)
 - 4.5.1. Where an apprentice has been made redundant please follow the Multiverse Redundancy process.
 - 4.5.2. If new employment has commenced within 30 days of the previous employment or apprenticeship agreement ending, the apprentice can continue as normal provided we have followed the Change of Employer process.
 - 4.5.3. In circumstances where an apprentice changes employer and there is a break in employment of more than 30 days and up to 12 weeks, Multiverse must place

- the apprentice on a break in learning, provided we have followed the Change of Employer process.
- 4.5.4. An exclusion to this is where new employment has not commenced or been found, Multiverse will, after 30 days, record the apprentice as on a break in learning. Where the apprentice does not re-start with a new employer after 12 weeks, Multiverse will withdraw the apprentice.
 - 4.6. Where the employer is not supportive of the apprenticeship and is not releasing them for OTJ/Coaching/Delivery or providing the tools/data they need for their apprenticeship.
 - 4.7. If an apprentice is on a fixed term contract, Multiverse will only approve the break if the apprentice's contract is also extended by the same duration allowing them to complete their programme successfully.
 - 4.8. If at the point of break request, the programme would cease to exist on the return date or it would not be practical for them to complete the programme by the required completion date.
 - 4.9. For degree level programmes the apprentice must complete the programme within the length of the programme plus two years.
5. For apprentices who have been on a break in Learning for over 300 days then:
- 5.1.1. If the apprentice is on break due to their health (where they are also not working) or maternity they can remain on BIL provided:
 - 5.1.1.1. Multiverse can conclude the apprentice has been actively engaging in the plan during their break and attended all scheduled check ins or provided sufficient notice/reason for missing a check in.
 - 5.1.1.2. There is a realistic plan in place for successful return agreed upon by Multiverse, the employer and the apprentice
 - 5.1.1.3. A previous extension has not already taken place (no multiple extensions)
 - 5.1.2. If an apprentice is on a 300+ day break due to any other reason than their health or maternity then Multiverse will:
 - 5.1.2.1. Re-onboard the apprentice on programme and gather evidence of learning as soon as possible.
 - 5.1.2.2. If not possible to re-onboard then Multiverse will withdraw the apprentice from programme
 - 5.1.3. All other categories of Break In Learning apprentices:
 - 5.1.3.1. Multiverse can conclude the apprentice has been actively engaging in the plan during their break and attended all scheduled check ins or provided sufficient notice/reason for missing a check in.
 - 5.1.3.2. If apprentices do not engage with the plan put in place and miss two consecutive scheduled check-in sessions without notice or reason, Multiverse will initiate the withdrawal process and complete a withdrawal request. Withdrawal will require CSM/client approval so unsure as to whether we can complete a withdrawal.

Extension and Multiple Break in Learnings

6. In exceptional circumstances, an apprentice may have more than one Break in Learning during their time on programme, provided all other interventions have been exhausted before proposing a second break in learning and we adhere to this policy.
7. In exceptional circumstances Multiverse will extend a Break in Learning based on the following criteria:
 - 7.1.1. Multiverse can conclude the apprentice has been actively engaging in the plan during their break and attended all scheduled check-ins or provided sufficient notice/reason for missing a check in.
 - 7.1.2. There is a plan in place for successful return upon extension.
 - 7.1.3. A previous extension has not already taken place (no multiple extensions) unless for a reason deemed suitable by Multiverse such as a medical issue.

- 7.1.4. If the apprentice is still able to complete the programme within the 'maximum period of registration' for degree-level programmes, as outlined in the Academic Regulations paragraph 20.3.

Resuming Apprenticeship Post Break

8. (UK ONLY) Where the apprentice takes a break in learning and then returns to the same apprenticeship, they will return to the same funding rules they were following prior to their break. The employer must revise the apprenticeship agreement and Multiverse must revise the dates on the training plan, to account for the duration of the break. It must be clear that there have been multiple episodes of learning. The overall duration of the apprenticeship and the required volume of off-the-job training should remain the same (as though there had been no break in learning).
9. One month before the intended return date, Multiverse will conduct a return check-in meeting where the apprentice must confirm their return and ensure all conditions of return are met. Conditions can include but are not limited to:
 - 9.1. A fit to study confirmation if the break is related to a medical issue
 - 9.2. Agreement to potentially move cohort and coach to ensure learning can continue where it left off.
 - 9.3. For degree programmes, an assessment plan for anything missed over the period of the break.
10. If no response is received, Multiverse will reach out to the employer to ensure the apprentice is aware of the need to confirm their return. If no response is received we will follow up with our Customer Success team and take adequate action which may result in a withdrawal if there is a continued lack of engagement in returning.

Recording and Payment During Breaks

11. (UK ONLY) Multiverse will record break in learning on the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) and re-plan the delivery of any remaining training and / or assessment following a break, if required. Employers may temporarily pause payments through their apprenticeship service account until the provider's ILR has been updated.
 - 11.1. ESFA will stop making payments from funds in an employer's apprenticeship service account or government-employer co-investment if an apprentice has a break in learning.
 - 11.2. If an apprentice is on a break in learning when an additional payment is due, the payment will be delayed until the apprentice resumes their apprenticeship and has reached an overall total of 90 or 365 days in learning.
 - 11.3. If an apprentice is on a break in learning when a care leaver bursary payment is due, the payment will be delayed until the apprentice resumes their apprenticeship and has reached an overall total of 60, 120 or 300 days in learning.