

Chartered Institution of Railway Operators Apprenticeship Continuation Policy

Purpose

Chartered Institution of Railway Operators (CIRO) Apprenticeship Continuation Policy has been developed to reflect the Institution's guiding principles of the "Apprentice needs first" and to ensure throughout that public confidence in the apprenticeship service remain high. CIRO is committed to ensuring the highest standards of apprenticeship experience, and this policy is designed to provide assurance that we have considered a wide range of risks that could impact apprentices' ability to successfully undertake or complete their programmes, and that we have contingency plans in place to eliminate, mitigate or manage these risks.

Aim

CIRO's overarching aim is that apprentices should start our programmes in the expectation of completing their apprenticeship successfully.

Policy Statement

CIRO will take all reasonable steps to minimise disruptions to apprentices' studies and ensuring business continuity is a key part of this. Decision-making will therefore prioritise effective dialogue with apprentices and employers and clear communications between stakeholders.

Contingency Arrangements

CIRO will take all reasonable steps to minimise disruptions to apprentices' studies and has considered the key risks outlined below that could affect the continuity of apprenticeship training which include how we will manage:

- 1) alternative communication channels
- 2) alternative modes of transport
- 3) alternative site of operations
- 4) back-up of business-critical systems
- 5) back-up and restore of data
- 6) cessation of Main Provider registration / CIRO has a change of control resulting in a cessation of learning provision

Emergency contacts in the event of a significant incident including DfE are included at the end of this document.

1) Communication Channels

CIRO recognises the importance of the provision of alternative communication channels,

especially relating to the welfare and safeguarding of apprentices.

Through our training systems and available communication channels we have the following options to communicate with CIRO staff and associates, our apprentices and employers: our learning platform, e-mail, conference calling and by telephone.

CIRO hold both the work and personal contact details of apprentices on our secure information systems. In addition, we hold contact details for the apprentices' employer organisations including the teams responsible for overseeing apprenticeship programmes and the line managers of apprentices who can enact their internal emergency contact procedures.

We use SharePoint for internal, organisational collaboration and storing of relevant programme data which is also backed up every 24-hours and can be accessed remotely as well as on-site.

2) Alternative Modes of Transport

Apprentices are required to make their own arrangements to attend their place of work and study. Where a change of location of study is required for contingency reasons, CIRO would seek to provide an alternate location that is as close as practicable to the original place of study. Where alternate arrangements have to be made that could not easily be accessed by the usual forms of transport, CIRO will work with the employer to consider the nature and impact of alternate transport arrangements on individual apprentices and agree an appropriate solution.

3) Alternative Site of Operations

CIRO is committed to providing the most suitable environment for learning and usually delivers apprenticeships at training locations across the country for its face-to-face teaching /workshop elements of its provision.

CIRO will take all reasonable steps to minimise disruptions to apprentice's studies by:

- re-scheduling any affected components of study in agreement with apprentices and employers
- delivering a modified version of the same course or access to the same course via a different mode of study if required and an appropriate solution to the disruption (e.g. distance learning, video conferencing)
- providing affected apprentices with a new training location for sessions or relocating sessions to employers' premises when appropriate
- where training sessions were scheduled to be onsite at the employer's premises, arranging to move trainers to alternate locations provided by the employer

4) Back-up of Business-Critical Systems

CIRO maintains its IT infrastructure and has in place processes and protocols for the ongoing monitoring and management of risks to our systems such as malicious attacks or hacking but remains as vulnerable to these and new threats as other organisations. CIRO manages these risks to business-critical systems and the back-up and restoration of data by having in place:

- Full database and system back-up for the online learning platform
- Use SharePoint for internal, organisational collaboration and storing of relevant programme data which is also backed up every 24-hours and can be accessed

- remotely as well as on-site
- Firewall protection and IT support services who monitor system risks and maintenance

CIRO will implement its business continuity plans to reinstate IT services as soon as possible. Remote classes or workshops that were scheduled during a system outage will be rescheduled and recordings and/or additional support material provided for apprentices who were unable to attend sessions due to an CIRO IT system issue.

5) Back-up and Restore of Data

Daily back-up of our business-critical systems occurs ensuring restoration of data can be achieved. SharePoint is used for organisational collaboration and storing of relevant programme data which is also backed up every 24-hours.

6) Back-up cessation of Main Provider registration / CIRO has a change of control resulting in a cessation of learning provision

If Ofsted finds that CIRO is not maintaining the standards required, and receives notice of a sanction, then discussions employer providers in rail and other rail-based providers (e.g. National Training Academy for Rail- NTAR) will begin to create readiness for the CIRO Apprentices to be transferred to them.

CIRO would co-operate fully with Skills England and DfE the in the event of closure of the programme and facilitate transfer to learners to another Provider and/or make all learner work and related assessment material available to the Apprentices, the employers and other related agencies. A GDPR compliant move of learner data, portfolio material etc would also take place under the management of CIRO's Quality Assurance Manager.

Where appropriate CIRO transfer over any income that has been deferred against Apprentice completion to ensure there are funds available for another Centre to continue with the apprenticeship and there is no interruption in good support in any transfer activity to the alternative Centre.

In order to carry out the necessary moves CIRO will at the time of sanction, loss of approval or change of organisation control:

- Approach NTAR or other related rail body for a Memorandum of Understanding on the potential transfer and financial cover available for any apprentices likely to be affected under the sanction.
- Calculate the pathway for each student and prepare a full data record of their progress and needs in accordance with data protection requirements
- Set up weekly communication with DfE and Skills England to keep informed and gain agreement to future actions.
- Prepare communication for stakeholders including the Apprentices, their employers, the CIRO Board and staff

7) Termination of funding from the DfE

Should the DfE for any reason terminate access to funds as a training provider CIRO will work with the DfE to ensure there is a plan in place to continue all apprentices currently on programme. Activity to ensure learning continues includes liaising with DfE account manager to discuss options, maintaining relationships with other training providers and ensuring that all learner data can be transferred to a new training provider.

8) The team responsible for managing serious incidents and supporting this plan are listed below.

Name	Title	Area of responsibility	Contact details
Adam Fenton	COO	Overall responsibility for Apprenticeship Team	adam@railwayoperators.co.uk
Sarah Vernon	Head of apprenticeships	Overall responsibility for Apprenticeship Team	sarah@railwayoperators.co.uk
Frankie Bradley	Quality and compliance manager	DfE Funding & compliance	frankie@railwayoperators.co.uk
Shirley McGrory	Apprenticeship Delivery Manager	Apprenticeship Programme Delivery	shirley@railwayoperators.co.uk
Diane	DfE account manager	DfE related issues	Diane.JONES@education.gov.uk
Adam	OneFile account manager	OneFile MIS issues	
Zoe Bull	Head of IT	Issues with CIRO systems	Zoe@railwayoperators.co.uk

Monitoring

Incidents that have triggered the use of this plan are monitored to ensure there is a full log of events. The Apprenticeship Programme Manager is responsible for working with the Chief Operating Officer in recording any incident in the critical incident log. The log will review trends, timeframes for resolution and impact to ensure further preventative actions are implemented wherever possible.

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