

General Election 2017 AELP Manifesto for Skills and Employment

The Ongoing Importance of Skills, Magnified Post Brexit

Brexit and the Industrial Strategy underline the need for taking bold steps towards a new future skills landscape for our country. This requires investment in Apprenticeships, other work based training and technical education to achieve not just increased productivity, but also social mobility.

About AELP

Members of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) support employers in the delivery of over 75% of apprenticeships in England and they deliver other publicly funded skills and employment programmes. The majority of AELP's 800 members are independent private, not-for-profit and voluntary sector training and employment services organisations with employers, universities, FE colleges, schools and end point assessment organisations joining AELP in increasing numbers.

The AELP Manifesto at a glance

AELP is seeking commitment from a new government over the next Parliament to:

1. Deliver 4 million quality Apprenticeship starts
2. Retain the recently launched Apprenticeship Levy with its proceeds being used to fund Apprenticeships only
3. A firm long term commitment to Apprenticeships being available at levels 2 and 3 to support social mobility
4. Guaranteed funding of at least £1bn a year for non-levy paying SMEs for their Apprenticeship needs
5. Ensure that the whole Apprenticeship system is underpinned by quality but allows innovation and evolution and is backed up by rigorous end assessment to ensure that national standards are achieved by all
6. A fully demand-led skills funding system, driven by and reflecting the needs of employers and learners
7. Traineeships and employment programmes that reduce the benefits bill and create opportunities for people of all ages
8. Good *applied* English, Maths and Digital Skills across learners of all ages and ending the failed GCSE resits policy
9. Embracing the expertise and experience of independent training providers in the implementation of the Technical and Professional Education reforms
10. Suspension of current Adult Education Budget procurement until ready to re-procure the entire £1.5bn budget to avoid disruption and deliver consistency.

Ensuring Apprenticeships are the heartbeat of tackling our country's skills needs

AELP believes we need party manifesto pledges that secure and clearly support:

1. Level 2 Apprenticeships that provide a vital starting point for many learners to get on the ladder of opportunity valued by many employers as often their main form of training
2. SMEs joining large employers on The Apprenticeship Service funding system from 1 January 2018, thereby freeing the programme of government funding agency control of the provider supply market and putting employers fully in the driving seat
3. Apprenticeship funding rates that make taking on 16 to 18 year old apprentices attractive to employers and training providers through additional funding to reflect the additional effort required
4. Quality Apprenticeships up to and including level 7 backed by good assessment and a single inspection framework.

