What are Independent Training Providers?

Independent Training Providers (ITPs) provide vocational education and training to young people and adults. They are also sometimes referred to as ‘independent learning providers’ (ILPs) or ‘private training providers’.

As this document shows, ITPs are an important part of the Further Education (FE) sector, training, teaching and developing the skills of individuals in every corner of the UK to support social mobility and economic productivity.

ITPs are distinct from other types of Further Education provider such as Colleges in that they are not run or directly controlled by the state – they are ‘independent’. However, much of their work is funded and regulated by government agencies including Ofsted inspections in the same ways as the rest of the Further Education sector. Most ITPs are companies (not for profit and for profit) and some are in the third sector.

ITPs are diverse. You can find ITPs located behind or above high streets or in business parks in most towns and cities right across the country. Learning and training is done in classrooms on the ITP’s premises, in workplaces or usually a mix of both.

What do ITPs do?

- Apprenticeships
- Vocational qualifications
- English and maths
- Study Programmes for 16-19 year olds
- Traineeships
- Employability skills
- Work and Health Programme
- Support for NEETs
- Offender learning
- Prevent (anti-terrorism education)

*young people Not in Education, Training or Employment
How many ITPs are there?

There are 1097 active Independent Training Providers on the Government’s register.¹

Of these, Ofsted inspects 491 main Government funding contract holders and indirectly inspects many more sub-contractors.

ITPs are by far the most numerous type of organisation in the Further Education sector:²
Learners

3.3 million adults in education and training in England, annually. Of these, 21% go to an ITP. iii

- Approximately one fifth of 16-19 year olds choose to go to an ITP
- Approximately one quarter of older adults choose an ITP.

Approximately 20% of learners aged 19 and above and 10% of Apprentices at ITPs have a learning difficulty and/or disability.

90% of learners are satisfied with the teaching or training at ITPs iv

Quality

80% of ITPs were judged good or outstanding at their latest inspection by Ofsted. v

83% of employers are satisfied with the overall quality of training and assessment by ITPs. vi

“Independent learning providers (including employer providers) play an important role in delivering post-16 education.”

Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector, December 2017 vii
Apprenticeships

75% of all apprenticeships are delivered by ITPs (50% using funding direct from government and 25% subcontracted). Colleges deliver 20% and Adult and Community Learning organisations 5%. viii

FE Colleges subcontract 39% of their Apprenticeships to ITPs.

The top 10 most popular sectors for Apprenticeships are:

- Business, Administration & Law
- Information & Communication Technology
- Health, Public Services & Care
- Education & Training
- Retail & Commercial Enterprise
- Construction, Planning & the Built Environment
- Engineering & Manufacturing Technologies
- Agriculture, Horticulture & Animal Care
- Leisure, Travel & Tourism
- Arts, Media & Publishing

79% of all 2184 organisations on the official Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers are ITPs (1726). 10% are Colleges, 4% Universities, 4% local government, 3% NHS Trusts.

At ITPs, six out of every ten learners do Apprenticeships (59%). xi

Almost every ITP around the country does Apprenticeships, and over 9 in 10 AELP provider members deliver Apprenticeships.
Working with employers

Over 8 in every 10 employers are satisfied with their Apprenticeships programme. xii

In total, ITPs work with an astonishing 256,760 employers.

Workforce

Approximately 23,500 people work in for ITPs in England.

ITPs vary hugely in size but the average ITP employs 79 people (full time equivalent). xiii

The ITP workforce is significantly different from that in other parts of the Further Education sector. ITP staff are younger and more likely to be full time. Within ITPs, 74% of staff work full time compared to 46% in FE Colleges, for example.
Funding

A total of 599 ITPs were awarded public funding to deliver vocational education and training programmes in 2017/18.¹⁵

- Adult Apprenticeships £569,961,654
- Apprenticeships and Traineeships for 16-19 year olds £500,113,049
- Apprenticeship Grant for Employers (AGE) £27,841,500
- European Social Fund £322,512,880
- Adult Education Budget £249,266,308
- Advanced Learner Loans £128,697,293

The Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) is the national membership body for providers of vocational education and training.

Our members deliver the majority of Britain’s apprenticeships, traineeships and programmes for the unemployed, as well as vocational qualifications and skills development courses.

Find out more at AELP.org.uk
References


iii. Data based on lower figure of 491 ITPs (categorised as Independent Learning Providers by Ofsted); the percentage of ITPs calculated by AELP from ESFA funding allocations data for 2017/18 is 58%.


xv. Funding allocations to training providers 2017/18, https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/funding-allocations-to-training-providers-2017-to-2018 November 2017. AGE is a scheme for employers new to apprenticeships for use with 16-24 year old apprentices. Advanced Learner Loans are for individual learners aged 19 or over to use towards the costs of doing a Level 3 or 4 programme of learning.