



The value of Independent Training Providers (ITPs) and the critical role they play in the delivery of adult education and skills training.

Summary

AELP supports all AEB provision, whether it is set in colleges, community centres or taken to businesses. It is critical to emphasise the role that Independent Training Providers (ITPs) play in the overall skills delivery system across England and the quantitative and qualitative value they deliver for learners, employers and the wider economy.

We are aware that for 2017/18 ITPs directly delivered £249,266,308 of the AEB, with a vast amount more under subcontracting arrangements. It should be noted that ITP's direct delivery of AEB has been low due to only 10% of the total AEB available to them, with the rest (90%) allocated out under grant arrangements to colleges and community learning providers. ITPs have delivered some AEB through strong collaborative partnerships with Further Education (FE) colleges which we need to ensure continues to deliver a high quality, value for money offer, and some of this is delivered independently providing innovative solutions for businesses and learners in the workplace and the community.

AEB devolution and the unintended consequences for ITPs

With AEB devolution underway, it should not be overlooked that ITPs bring flexible and specialist provision which meets the needs of businesses that are seeking to develop their workforce and bring in new talent at all levels. ITPs are pivotal to enabling progression to higher level education and training for learners and businesses who look for flexible delivery models.

AEB devolution so far has seen most of the MCAs and the GLA take a grant-based approach with in-area colleges, providers and local authorities, with varying proportions of the devolved AEB out to tender in various ways. AELP seeks to highlight the following unintended consequences which have had a significant impact specifically on ITPs under the current devolved approach to AEB:

- ITPs with historical delivery are not guaranteed future contracts or subcontracts, which could lead to market destabilisation and a loss of flexible, niche and specialist provision. Where ITPs can demonstrate a successful track record for significant AEB delivery within areas we recommend that this part of the process is reviewed to take track record into account and fast track ITPs to ensure there is no loss of relevant high-quality specialist provision. There have been concerns regarding different scoring criteria across multiple authorities which has resulted in unsuccessful bids in some areas without sound justification for the outcome. AELP is supporting challenges.
- Some ITPs have been negatively impacted by Minimum Contract Values (MCVs) set within tenders which rules them out of gaining direct contracts. This MCVs vary across the authorities and this has led to concerns for some ITPs now having to manage employer and learner expectations around continuity of provision should they no longer form part of the delivery in any given area. This will inevitably impact ITPs as employers and their workforces, with the risk of job losses.

- Where ITPs have strong established relationships with learners and businesses within the MCAs/ GLA, there is an inherent risk of a negative impact on learner progress if employers have to start again, potentially with new provider(s) if their existing provider is not an option in the region under devolved AEB

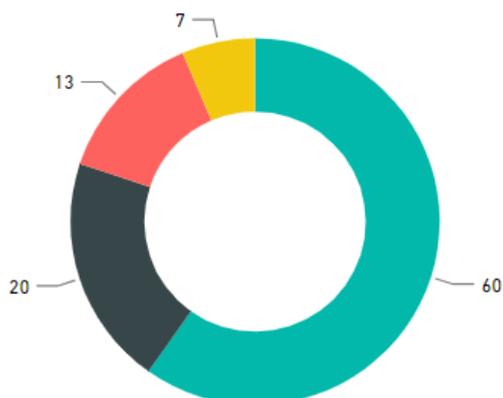
Independent Training Providers Key Facts Report (AELP Mar2018)¹ highlighted the following:

ITPs are by far the most numerous types of organisations in the Further Education sector and provide vocational education and training to young people and adults in and out of employment. They 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 significant employers, since the Key Facts Report, the number of ITPs have grown significantly from 491 to 986, with an estimated total workforce now of 50,000 staff across the UK. They vary hugely in size with the average ITP employing an estimated 60 employees (full time equivalent).
- The Chief Inspector’s Annual report 2017/18 (accessible [here](#)) and highlights the following:

Number of Provider Type (%)

● ITPs ● Colleges ● Adult & Community Learning ● Other



The report confirms that as at 31st August 2018, there are 1700 FE & Skills providers, of these 60% are ITPs

Number of ITPs



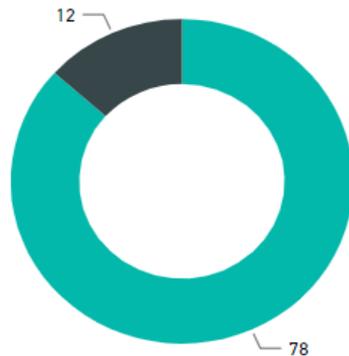
The number of ITPs have increased by 101% amongst the sector.

This means more high-quality, flexible training is available to meet the local and national needs of learners and employers.

¹ <https://www.aelp.org.uk/media/1999/key-facts-2017-2018.pdf>

ITPs Ofsted result at most recent inspection (%)

Rating ● Good or Outstanding ● Other



Of the 440 ITPs inspected, 78% of ITPs were rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' at their last Ofsted inspection

Overall effectiveness of provision for ITPs average at 80% from 2015 to 2018

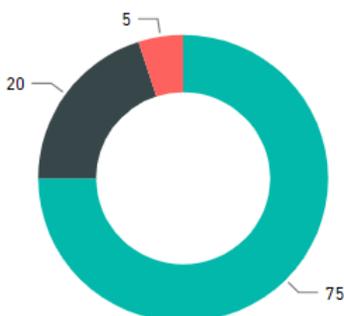
ITPs are critical to the skills delivery system as they are distinct from other types of Further Education provider such as Colleges in that they are not run or directly controlled by the state – they are 'independent'. However, much of their work is funded and regulated by government agencies including 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. A total of 599 ITPs were awarded public funding totalling around £1.8 billion to deliver vocational education and training programmes in 2017/18:

| Adult Apprenticeships | 16-19 Apprenticeships and Traineeships | European Social Fund | Adult Education Budget | Advanced Learner Loans |
|-----------------------|--|----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| £569,961,654 | £500,113,049 | £322,512,880 | £249,266,308 | £128,697,293 |

- Approximately 3.3 million adults in education and training in England, annually and of these 21% go to an ITP
- ITPs are diverse, they are conveniently located in high streets and 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 allowing for greater flexibility for in-work learners.
- 90% of learners are satisfied with the teaching or training at ITPs

Share of Apprenticeship delivery (%)

Provider ● ITPs ● Colleges ● Adult & Community Learning



50% of the apprenticeships that have been delivered by ITPs have used funding direct from government with 25% delivered through subcontracting arrangements.

FE Colleges subcontract 39% of their Apprenticeships to ITPs

ITPs offer flexible, innovative and specialist provision for local and national delivery and operate both independently and through strong collaborative partnerships with employers, colleges and Local authorities.

AELP's ITP members welcome closer working relationships stakeholders such as the combined authorities and invite them to on-site familiarisation visits to enhance their understanding of ITPs' delivery models and gain a detailed insight into how ITPs plan and deliver adult education for all target groups.

ITPs complement and enhance traditional AEB delivered in a college setting and would like to showcase the great achievements of the individuals and the businesses they serve, as well as their organisations outstanding practices.

ITPs have worked well through engaging in collaborative partnerships with FE colleges, local authorities and employers and strive to continue to do so where the ultimate benefit is for the learner. AELP fully encourages this to enhance the local offer, through high-quality strategic partnerships whereby ITPs bring in flexible, specialist provision and often innovative approaches.

Please refer to Appendix 1 for case studies that illustrate the great the impact that ITPs have made to learners, enabling them to build confidence and skill and gain employment and strive for better opportunities in their lives.

Appendix 1 – ITP Case Studies

The Learning Curve Group - Level 2 Health and Social Care (Learner Testimony)

"I have been unemployed since 24/03/2017. This was due to a divorce and the sale of my previous home as well as the closure of my business of room rental through Airbnb. My experience in employment consisted of home and service management within the adults with learning/physical disabilities (Retts syndrome, Autism, Acquired Brain Injury etc). The last time I was employed in this field was in 2007.

Whilst signing on at the job centre I was given a leaflet about the NCFE, Level 2 course in Health and Social Care and was very interested in applying as it is the area of employment I wish to return to after completion of my Professional Project Management, Level 6 course. I contacted Lola who was so helpful, positive and engaging then attended the Induction on 12/09/2017 after she informed me of the identification required, start date (18/09/2017), time of class and the requirement of a small maths and English exercise; inclusive of a learning style questionnaire. At the end of the Induction I was given a timetable of all class dates and times, as well as the mid-term break dates. Lola then sent reminders of the start date, time and venue of the class at least twice before the commencement day, of which I was very happy to receive and could plan my personal life around.

On my first day Lola discussed the Learning Curve Groups policies, legislation applicable to the company, data protection, confidentiality, threats of potential bombs or explosions, complaints procedure (contact details given), the fire evacuation procedure, equality and diversity, and the whistle blowing procedure. It was good to see that these areas were also what we were to learn about in the context of working in adult social care. Lola also informed us that we would need to decide amongst ourselves what the break times were and the 'housekeeping'/agreements we would make relational to how we would study together as adults. This was a very informative lesson as we all had a connection regarding the conditions under which we would study and gained a very good insight into the organisation's requirements from the student and its legal responsibilities towards each student.

Throughout this course, I have learnt that I was not ready academically to return to work in health and social care as so much had changed. Lola's teaching style is formal, informal, interesting and engaging. Lola presents to us in a calm and welcoming manner that includes her personal work experience in the field, (all done with confidentiality being highly present), is inclusive of class and group work/videos/activities/ handouts and explanations we can take notes on. Lola also gave book titles to enable us to read more on the subject, use our phones to research and download articles etc., encourages us to help each other and enables us to embed knowledge by reviewing the previous lesson with review tests, questions, and group discussions. Lola is very professional, beautifully presented, calm, responsive, observant, helpful, easy to talk to, gives plenty of varied examples, checks regularly that we understand, excellent at describing things, very patient and so easy to like.

Having obtained a degree in health and social care in 2011, I can honestly say that Lola has a teaching style that outweighs those who are deemed better than her. Lola inspires us to be great workers, honest, empathetic, knowledgeable, to seek help and guidance, strive to do the best daily, reflect daily, work in a non-discriminatory manner, keep confidentiality to a premium, follow policies and procedures and attend all training. This course has completely been presented in my learning style (visual, group activities and written).

All my needs have been met, I'm treated with dignity, empathy and respect whilst also being treated as a valued member of the class. Lola has also very kindly given me a reference for a job I applied for and successfully obtained. She has been a formidable example of how I wish to present the remainder of my working life. If I can obtain her standard, I know I'm doing very well indeed. Lola can only be revered as an asset to the Learning Curve Group: As that is what she is to me whilst investing in my future. "

- Paulette

The London Learning Consortium - Tom Lisi, aged 19 (Learner Case Study)

Summary:

We first met Tom through the Job Centre, at that time he wasn't participating in any positive activities and although he was not keen on a Media themed Traineeship, he was keen to hear more. Tom came to visit us and was interested in joining the programme, he also wanted to achieve his Functional Skills Maths qualification and do something positive with his time instead of staying at home all the time.

Tom initially started the programme lacking self-confidence, feeling really low about himself, with no motivation and no direction in where and what he wanted to achieve. He warned us that he wasn't sure, if he could commit to completing the course as he found it hard sticking to any goals.

Barriers That Tom Faced during the Course:

Tom tends to get distracted; this sometimes affected his work and he needed support during lessons to stay on task. Another barrier was his lack of motivation which at times led to him not coming in. This was then dealt with by having specialised mentoring sessions where he would set himself goals and consequences if they were not achieved, this gave Tom a sense of ownership and responsibility which he was lacking before.

Tom's attendance and punctuality was also a constant issue and we made morning calls every day to motivate him to come in. This has worked as Tom's attendance improved and as the programme progressed we no longer had to call him in the mornings. Tom is aware of his barriers and he is now more self-confident about how he can manage them, as well as overcome them in a positive way.

Outcomes and Impact:

Tom has really opened up and has grown in confidence, he often talks with members of staff and has said that his personal life and choices have improved and that he now has a set routine and has something to do, where for so long he wasn't doing anything at all. Tom is aware that his progress is ongoing, his improved confidence has allowed him to think about his lifestyle, social groups and environments he places himself in. Overall, Tom's journey has been a successful one as he has not dropped out of the course, which is what he feared might happen.

More recently, Tom has just completed a work placement at a Film production company in Central London, his role was a runner and he took part in research studies as well as urgent and priority tasks for the company. Tom was present and on time every day, he presented himself in a professional manner and received very good and positive feedback from the employers. Tom now feels a lot more confident about looking for a job, going for interviews as he had a really positive work experience, and this has boosted his desire to carry on working to reach his goals and objectives.

Next Steps:

Tom is due to take his Maths exam soon and has completed his portfolio work for his Arts Award and Employability Award. Tom has expressed an interest in applying for jobs within the fashion industry and will be working on this with his mentor during his progression support sessions. In addition to this he is also planning ahead to September 2019 where he wants to be at University studying fashion.

The Babington Group - Marks and Spencer (Employer Collaboration)

There has been successful collaboration between Babington and Marks and Spencer's including their staff delivering question and answer sessions and workshops to embed staff training into the work prep aspect of the traineeship programme.

Six out of 10 learners have successfully secured employment with Marks and Spencer. All successful learners attended their very own prize evening and received certificates of attendance for the Traineeship. We are awaiting results for their functional skills. Notable achievements for our trainees have included their standards being used as an example for training new staff and excellent customer service recognition via the Marks and Spencer's instore customer feedback system.

The trainees have been able to reflect and recognise the barriers broken down whilst on programme, some of the feedback has included;

Josh Martin [24] – "Maths and English used to make me feel anxious because I have been out of school so long. Now I am proud to say I passed my writing with 88% and I rise to the challenge functional skills brings"

Evan Thorpe [20] – "I feel happy and relieved to get my first job, my confidence has grown, and the review system allowed me to make the change needed to get the job"

Zeba Khan [17] - "Babington have helped me to realise my dreams and what I truly want for the future"

Mateusz Wesolowski [23] – "It's hard to put into a few words how much I appreciate the support from Babington Group, including my improvement in English, Maths and retail experience. I have met some beautiful people that I will never forget, especially my tutor, Kate, who gave me a lot of motivation in my life"

Jess has successfully completed the programme and has acted as a representative for the learners, supporting her peers to progress. Jess was out of work and referred by her local Job centre at the start of the programme, Jess was feeling low and was very keen to gain full time employment. Throughout the programme she has given 100% to all aspects and has been commended by Marks and Spencer management for her 'can-do' approach to work with exceptional customer service skills. Jess gave a speech at the presentation evening, she said, "The people at Babington have been so helpful and the level of support that they offer is unreal. Even after the course. I would also like to thank Kate and Terence for their perseverance with all of us. Kate has been amazing, and I don't think I would had persevered without her and the group of people that I had. The people in my group are all amazing and this experience wouldn't have been the same without them! It's strange to think how close we have got within such a small amount of time!"

Mateus was out of work and attended an open day at Normanton Job centre in Derby. Mateus was successful on the Marks and Spencer selection day, mainly due to his huge personality and enthusiasm during team tasks. Unfortunately, over the twelve-week traineeship, Mateus suffered a number of setbacks in his personal life, including becoming homeless and estranged from his sister, his only family member in the UK. This led to a dip in attendance and, sadly, his work experience placement ended. Incredibly, Mateus wanted to continue with his studies and has continued to show enthusiasm and a can-do attitude to his functional skills. Mateus even sat a Maths exam the morning he had been declared homeless! Mateus' strength against adversity makes his story extraordinary and the reason Babington staff and his fellow trainees are delighted to hear that he has now secured a full-time job at the Boots warehouse in Burton -on-Trent, we all wish him the very best of luck.

Qube Learning – Laura Franklin (Learner Case Study)

Laura first engaged with Qube Learning in May 2018 when she enrolled to undertake her CSCS Skills Course at Seetec in Kings Lynn. From the beginning, Laura admitted to having confidence issues as well as suffering from a painful medical condition which unfortunately flared up during the course programme. However, Laura persevered and throughout the programme worked extremely diligently, displaying determination to succeed and a desire to improve both her own employability and the circumstances of her family.

She showed highly commendable courage in overcoming her personal discomfort and set her course peers an outstanding example of diligence and commitment, easily holding her own as the only female in a male dominated group and with little experience of both health and safety or the construction industry. Laura was always the first to attend the sessions, her work was extremely well presented and she carried out significant self-study, as a result of which she not only achieved the overall course qualification, she also achieved 100% in both exams for the BSC Level 1 Health and Safety in a Construction Environment and the CITB Operatives Test (which enable her to achieve her 'Green Card').

Because of her efforts, Laura was the first PFU student to achieve the Qube PFU Learner of the Month Award. Furthermore, not only did Laura achieve her own qualifications she was also highly team spirited in helping others on the course who were less able than herself and as a result Laura's self-confidence improved noticeably to the point where she was sufficiently relaxed to apply to participate in both her level 2 Health and Safety in the Workplace and the Level 3 Emergency First Aid at Work qualifications – both of which she passed with ease.

At the end of her CSCS course journey with Qube, Laura's confidence had improved to the extent that she approached both Peter Warren and her Seetec advisor, Laura Wilson, to ask if there was any way she could further study to enable her to seek employment within the Health and Safety specialisation. As a result of discussions, both Qube and Seetec management team agreed that because of Laura's aptitude and efforts, we would co-sponsor her to undertake her Nebosh National General Certificate in Occupational Safety and Health and the associated examinations. This qualification is nationally accepted as the baseline qualification for individuals wishing to undertake a career as workplace health and safety representatives, supervisors or junior managers and involves 3 – 6 months intensive online study, followed by two written examination papers and a 1500-word sample audit by the candidate. Laura was enrolled on this programme with British Safety Council on 21 December 2018 and her mentor for the process will be her tutor for CSCS, Peter Warren.

About AELP:

Members of the Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP) support employers in the delivery of over two-thirds of apprenticeships in England and they deliver other publicly funded skills and employment programmes. The majority of AELP's 900 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.

Association of Employment and Learning Providers (AELP)

A: 9 Apex Court, Bradley Stoke, Bristol, BS32 4JT

T: 0117 986 5389

E: enquiries@aelp.org.uk

W: www.aelp.org.uk