

Working with government and employers to develop policies and deliver high quality, learner centred, employer focused, demand-led skills development, valued by all.

### Issue 976, 05 June 2020

It's late Thursday night and I still haven't written this – so you may all be lucky and get a shorter version!

Been busy today in particular drafting with the team the AELP submission to Treasury. With the promise of a budget at the start of July, suggestions that there might be a skills announcements at the end of June and a Prime Minister committing to an Apprenticeship Guarantee, there has never been a better time to set out broadly what is needed. In simple terms, an apprenticeship guarantee will only work with some form of wage guarantee - the skills training of the unemployed prior to employment or reskilling in work requires a substantial increase in funding (wrapping in the national skills fund before any more of it is wasted through NRS style initiatives), and let us not forget we were running out of levy funding and young people, SMEs and level 2s were significantly reduced and now decimated. And still no support for apprenticeship providers – who do they think is going to deliver this promise if they have all gone bust or significantly reduced capacity? You have got to hope that someone in No10 has the ability to add 2 plus 2 and realise they need to intervene and make sure there is support for all DfE contracts. (Meanwhile, support for Study Programmes is definitely not off the table and we are STILL getting reassurances...)



We do keep getting flexibilities and clarities – the latest being completion payment before functional skills results which is a real positive. The opening of centres is a minefield – but the latest guidance gives a small window of hope and I have certainly been sharing my view with members in meetings and will continue to do so in our webinars – interpretation and doing the right, the safe thing, while supporting as many learners and apprentices as possible.

The critical moment has arrived for furlough – anyone who wants to qualify for furlough needs to be furloughed in the final three weeks of June. But the scheme is changing and the support reducing. Employers, including training providers, will be considering redundancy over furlough now. From the conversations we have had, we will lose significant capacity in the apprenticeship sector and the wider skills sector over the next month. And it is not capacity the government can afford to lose if they are genuine about their ambition. The other twist that many of you will be aware of, is the small bits of provider support that have been granted to the end of June. What will happen to these providers from July and those that have now eaten up their cash reserves, so will now need support? How can anyone decide about furlough, how can anyone plan any sort of future without clarity about these fundamentals? We believe that there might be further Cabinet Office guidance on the way but that is nothing any of us can rely on at the moment. I have come close to begging the department that if there is going to be some sort of extension, even an indication that it is on the way, this would help providers look at the various options. I can't see it happening before the 10th June so I can imagine a lot of furloughing and redundancy notices appearing which may then be withdrawn if any support is forthcoming at some later date.

So let's recap:

- Massive support from the Prime Minister for skills and apprenticeships
- Massive support from the chancellor for skills and apprenticeships
- Massive support from the chair of the education select committee for skills and apprenticeships
- Massive support from the Labour Party for skills and apprenticeships
- .....but nothing from the Secretary of State for Education!

Have we even heard him comment on apprenticeships recently? Have we actually seen anything from the DfE press office or publications that does anything other than try to water down the Prime Minister's commitment while presiding over the dismantling the delivery infrastructure? How would you feel if you were the boss and the next day one of your senior managers tried to undermine one of your flagship public statements? Oh, and the Chair of the parliamentary committee that is there to scrutinise you, your department and its policies – undermining his idea and commitment as well – and you are in the same party! Let's see how it plays out after Robert Halfon wrote of his determination in FE Week yesterday that his committee will 'push the government to act'. Maybe the Secretary of State doesn't realise – what I hope is that if that is the case, he comes out publicly and puts his full weight behind the Prime Minister's clear and unambiguous commitment to young people.

An interesting week ahead.

*Mark Dawe | Chief Executive | AELP*

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# Policy

## Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme Deadline

Before the end of May, the Government provided further information on the future arrangements for the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS). Businesses will begin to "share the costs" of the scheme by paying around 20% of furloughed workers' wages as well as National Insurance Contributions from August 2020.

Providers and employers only have until 10 June to register employees for the CJRS before it closes to new registrations indefinitely.

[You can find more information about the CJRS here.](#)

## Latest DfE Apprenticeship Guidance

With the easing of lockdown, new guidance out from DfE says that apprenticeship training taking place in educational settings should be prioritised for 16 to 19 apprentices.

The DfE supports offering face-to-face contact to any 16 to 19 apprentice, but training providers may decide to offer face-to-face training to only certain groups of 16 to 19 apprentices such as those who:

- are on the first year of an apprenticeship
- require face-to-face training to help them complete their apprenticeship
- have upcoming key assessment dates and would therefore particularly benefit from face-to-face training

Despite the DfE's support for prioritising main face-to-face contact for 16 to 19 apprentices, there may be some apprenticeships that include apprentices within a classroom-based training environment that are over 19. Providers can allow apprentices over 19 to attend, but should continue to prioritise 16 to 19 apprentices. If older apprentices attend on site, the number of 16 to 19 year olds site at any one time must be reduced to ensure the setting remains within the overall limit.

Educational settings must adhere to the principles set out in the guidance on protective measures in educational settings.

[You can find more information here.](#)

## Temporary flexibility on Functional Skills in apprenticeships

ESFA are temporarily suspending the funding rule that states the apprentice must have the approved level of Functional Skills qualifications (FSQs) in English and maths before gateway.

Apprentices should be allowed to progress to sit their EPA once they:

- a. have finished all of their training
- b. are deemed by you to have the necessary functional skills and sufficient evidence to demonstrate this to receive an FSQ pass
- c. have reached gateway and are deemed to be occupationally competent by you and the employer, as outlined in the usual gateway process in the apprenticeship funding rules

It remains the case however that even if they pass their EPA, the apprentice will not be able to achieve their apprenticeship until there is confirmation that they have also passed their FSQ, and that they will need to do further training if they fail their FSQ.

Once the EPA has taken place, you should add a dated note to the apprentice's evidence pack explaining that the apprentice was able to take their EPA ahead of receiving their FSQ due to revised guidance during coronavirus (COVID-19). The outcome field on the individualised learner record (ILR) should then be completed as usual. You should mark the apprentice as 'learning activities are complete but the outcome is not yet known'. This will enable the completion payment to be paid to you. you are expected to issue payment to the EPAO for the EPA once it has taken place.

Once the FSQ result has been awarded, it is your responsibility to update the ILR field to 'completed' and to

notify the EPAO of the result as soon as possible. If an FSQ pass has been confirmed and the EPA has been passed, the EPAO can then start the process of requesting the apprenticeship certificate.

If the FSQ has been failed, you will need to:

- notify the apprentice, EPAO and employer
- provide further training to enable the apprentice to re-sit and pass the FSQ so that they can achieve their apprenticeship as soon as possible

[Full details are available here.](#)

## Critical workers who can access schools or educational settings

Since 23 March, nurseries, schools and colleges have remained open only to a priority group of children and young people, children who have a parent who is a critical worker and vulnerable children. Now that the Government has announced progress in reducing the transmission of coronavirus, all eligible individuals (where there are no shielding concerns for them or their household) should be able to resume attending nurseries, colleges and schools.

From 15 June, secondary schools, sixth-form colleges and further education colleges will begin to offer some face-to-face support for year 10 and year 12, and 16-19 learners in the first year of their course who are due to take key exams next year, alongside priority groups. Alternative provision settings should mirror the approach being taken for mainstream schools and, from 15 June, offer some face-to-face support for years 10 and 11 students (as they have no year 12). The Government is asking special post-16 institutions and hospital schools to follow an equivalent phased return without a focus on specific year groups.

[You can read the guidance in greater detail here.](#)

## We're delighted to announce that Training Qualifications UK has become a Patron of AELP

AELP is delighted to welcome Training Qualifications UK as a Patron of AELP.



Andrew Walker, Managing Director of Training Qualifications UK commented "The AELP is tireless in its efforts to enhance our industry. For years, we've seen the transformative impact the Association has had and we're incredibly proud to now be a Patron. We're looking forward to a hugely exciting partnership that helps benefit our customers and strengthen the sector as a whole."

### Profile

Since starting up in 2013, Training Qualifications UK has been changing the game in Awarding and End-Point Assessment. We don't settle for traditional methods; we're young and we've got the passion and energy to go with that youth and do things differently. Why do the same and be the same as everyone else when you can innovate with emerging technologies, break fresh ground with forward-thinking qualifications and devise new ways of working that put our centres at the heart of everything we do. We are the modern face of Awarding and Assessment. We are Training Qualifications UK.



## The Skills Toolkit

The DfE unveiled The Skills Toolkit – an online platform giving people easy access to free, high- quality digital and numeracy courses to help them build up their skills, progress in work and boost their job prospects. The platform offers a range of courses at all levels, which were chosen in consultation with top businesses and educational experts.

On 2 June, a further four courses were added to The Skills Toolkit: an introductory course on using Microsoft Outlook, an introduction to bookkeeping from the Open University, an introduction to finance from independent training provider Corndel, and an advanced course on how computer networks operate from the Open University in collaboration with Cisco.

[The Skills Toolkit is available to everyone here](#) and has a range of courses from introductory to more advanced levels. These are skills that are sought after for many types of jobs, with 82% of job vacancies requiring digital skills.

# Research and Consultations

## Member Survey for the call for evidence on the Shortage Occupation List

In March 2020, the Government tasked the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) to compile a Shortage Occupation List (SOL). As AELP prepares to respond to the call for evidence, we have drafted a survey for members to fill out. This survey will help us identify the key themes that will be central to our final submission.

The process of compiling the Shortage Occupation List is crucial because it allows employers to recruit non-UK workers for a job which is experiencing skills shortages, regardless of the average salary. The outbreak of Covid-19 will have important repercussions on the UK's workforce and skills training sector, as we approach the end of the Brexit transition period in little more than six months. We need your expertise in order to make sure that the Government's final decision on the SOL best reflects your interests and puts you in the best possible position to adapt your future business model.

[You can fill out the survey here until 15th June 2020.](#)

## Covid-19 impact on economy becoming apparent

[New data and indicators from the Office of National Statistics](#) (ONS) have shown the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on the UK economy which show that the UK economy shrank by 2.0%, the largest such fall since 2008. Although the statistics do not yet fully show the impact of the pandemic on employment and unemployment, the estimates of vacancies and hours worked already show sharp changes with the number of vacancies in the three months to April 2020 falling by 170,000 compared with the previous three months, to 637,000.

The ONS figures also show that accommodation and food services experienced the largest reduction in actual hours worked on the year in January to March 2020 (-11.8%), and the largest drop in vacancies (-87.9%), following government advice to “avoid” bars, restaurants and other indoor leisure venues on 16 March 2020 and a full lockdown from 20 March.

Although the full impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on the UK labour market will fully reveal itself in the coming months, these statistics suggest that the impact of the pandemic was felt to different extents across

industries and individuals with certain demographic characteristics. Labour market estimates covering the month of April 2020, which will be released later this month, will offer a more comprehensive picture of the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on UK workers, though the early indications are that the young and the self-employed have been disproportionately badly impacted.

## West Yorkshire Devolution Consultation

In March 2020, West Yorkshire's council leaders secured a £1.8 billion-plus devolution deal for West Yorkshire, which will see more decisions about the region taken here instead of London and more investment for the things that matter to local people.

A public consultation is being held from 25 May to 19 July on the devolution deal and proposals for a directly elected mayor. You can respond in the following ways:

- Through the online survey at [yourvoice.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/WYdevolution](https://yourvoice.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/WYdevolution)
- By email to [wyconsultation@ipsos-mori.com](mailto:wyconsultation@ipsos-mori.com)
- By calling the freephone telephone number 0800 141 3657
- By post using the freepost address: Freepost WY Devolution Consultation (no stamp needed)

[You can read more about devolution in West Yorkshire here.](#)

# Events

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**AELP Member Exclusive Meetings**

## Upcoming Sector Forums

All sector forum meetings are now being held on-line via GoTo Meeting or GoTo Webinar. See dates and booking info for future sector based webinars at the bottom of Countdown.

To register please email [memberevents@aelp.org.uk](mailto:memberevents@aelp.org.uk) or for any further information regarding any of our sector groups please email [cswales@aelp.org.uk](mailto:cswales@aelp.org.uk)

### **Fast track – assessor to Trainer – Key skills and strategies to getting started.**

Wednesday, 10 June 10.30 - 11.30 am BST

This webinar will look at the core components of EPA, needing to be taken into account when supporting learner skill development, throughout their programme; and the different approaches that will be needed to support learners in achieving successful EPA outcomes.

Content will cover what EPA means in terms of final assessment and how the information can be used to inform the required apprentice development; the different approaches and skills that will be needed when supporting learners on programme; and how to check when learners are ready for EPA.

[Register »](#)

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### **Covid-19 HR Surgery**

Wednesday, 10 June 2.00 - 3.00 pm BST

Updates and discussion on the latest developments relating to Coronavirus.

[Register »](#)

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### **In Conversation with Ofsted and Ask an Inspector**

Thursday, 11 June 2.00 - 3.00 pm BST

An opportunity for AELP members hear directly from Ofsted on their latest position during Covid-19 and latest thinking in regard to inspection and monitoring work along with the opportunity to ask questions about inspection and monitoring visit related topics.



[Register »](#)

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### **Positive approaches to teaching and learning**

Tuesday, 16 June 10.30 - 11.30 am BST

Post 16 programmes offer learners the opportunity for career development and progression that is often not aligned to the traditional academic methods of teaching. Different approaches are needed to engage and inspire learners in order to equip them with the appropriate skills, knowledge, behaviours and resilience needed to successfully progress and achieve.

This webinar will review methods of teaching and learning and look at some key emerging styles that offer a more engaging and positive focus and consider why a different approach is needed.

[Register »](#)

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### **Designing and delivering effective Virtual Classroom (Webinar) learning sessions Part 2**

Tuesday, 16 June 2.00 - 3.30 pm BST

This webinar is designed to help participants develop a clear understanding of the key aspects of planning and delivering interactive and engaging Virtual Classroom learning sessions.

[Register »](#)

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### **Blended Learning Strategy Part 2 – Online Content Strategy and Quality Assurance**

Wednesday, 17 June 10.30 - 11.45 am BST

This webinar is part 2 of a series of 3 based on a quality assurance framework for blended learning. In part 2 we look at the considerations for management when implementing an online learning content strategy, and how the framework can be used by IQAs to evaluate the quality of online content.

[Register »](#)

## Webinar Recordings on Demand

- Monthly CEO Member Updates
- Skills hidden in plain sight: An approach to engaging employers in productive work-based learning
- Preparing for closure of legacy Functional Skills qualifications
- Rapid tech deployment for remote apprenticeship delivery: part 1, your checklist
- Rapid tech deployment for remote apprenticeship delivery: part 2, deep dive follow up
- Managing the Mental Health of Your Home-Working Staff
- Visual Learning approaches
- Safeguarding in a Digital World
- Ofsted Nominee Training
- T Levels Update
- Subcontracting – all you need to know
- Reasonable adjustments and learners with SEND
- Monitoring and evaluating the learner journey
- The Education Inspection Framework and SEND learners - improving the quality of your provision
- Effective Corporate Governance in relation to the EIF
- Developing Life Skills and Mental Toughness and why that matters
- Managing Prior Learning
- Safeguarding and the preventing radicalisation
- The Initial Assessment All Teachers and Trainer should be doing
- Keeping Apprentices engaged
- Tendering 101 – How to identify and tender for the right opportunities
- Mental Health and developing Resilience
- Weekly CEO's COVID-19 Member Update
- Blended Learning Strategy – Part 1
- Adapt and future proof your apprenticeship delivery
- Learner Experience Design; virtual classrooms to creating content
- Effectively implementing the Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Creating a winning Study Programme offer and curriculum
- The F Word: Let's Talk About It
- Motivating yourself and others
- Covid 19 Webinar - Returning to work in the time of coronavirus
- Essential Digital Skills: Understanding the requirements for delivery
- How to make sure you are running great apprenticeship provision
- Covid-19 Assessment Support
- In Conversation with Ofsted and Ask an Inspector
- Understanding Ofsted's "deep dives"
- Making learner induction fun and inspiring

[Register for recordings »](#)

[Suggest a topic »»](#)

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## JUNE

- 10 June Webinar [Fast track – assessor to Trainer – Key skills and strategies to getting started](#) £49 Online »
- 10 June Webinar [Covid-19 HR Surgery](#) £49 Online »
- 11 June Webinar [In Conversation with Ofsted and Ask an Inspector](#) £0 Online »
- 12 June Webinar [Chief Executive Officer's COVID-19 Weekly Member Update](#) £0 Online »
- 16 June Webinar [Positive approaches to teaching and learning](#) £49 Online »
- 16 June Webinar [Designing & delivering effective Virtual Classroom \(Webinar\) learning sessions - Part 2](#) £49 Online »
- 17 June Webinar [Blended Learning Strategy Part 2 – Online Content Strategy and Quality Assurance](#) £49 Online »
- 17 June Webinar [The impact of Covid 19 on the UK jobs market](#) £0 Online »
- 18 June Webinar [Building personal resilience through change](#) £49 Online »
- 19 June Webinar [Chief Executive Officer's COVID-19 Weekly Member Update](#) £0 Online »
- 23 June Webinar [Functional Skills in Maths and English hints and tips and best practice](#) £49 Online »
- 24 June Webinar [Understanding data](#) £49 Online »
- 24 June Webinar [Keeping Apprentices Engaged...and Funded](#) £49 Online »
- 25 June Webinar [In Conversation with Ofsted and Ask an Inspector](#) £0 Online »
- 26 June Webinar [Chief Executive Officer's COVID-19 Weekly Member Update](#) £0 Online »
- 30 June Webinar [SMART target setting](#) £49 Online »

## JULY

- 02 July Webinar [Getting Tender Ready](#) £49 Online »
- 07 July Webinar [Support in the effective delivery of the new functional skills](#) - English £49 Online »
- 09 July Webinar [Creative Assessment Methods for Learning Sessions.](#) £49 Online »
- 14 July Webinar [Support in the effective delivery of the new functional skills](#) - Maths £49 Online »
- 15 July Webinar [Blended Learning Strategy - Part 3](#) £49 Online »
- 21 July Webinar [Developing Mentoring Skills](#) £49 Online »
- 28 July Webinar [OTL Strategy](#) £49 Online »

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## AELP Member Exclusive Meetings

## JUNE

The following groups were already scheduled to be held via webinar and will be going ahead as planned:

- 08 June [Logistics and Transport](#) Postponed »
- 17 June [Construction](#) Online »
- 24 June [Business Services and Management](#) Online »

## JULY

- 02 July [Land Based](#) Online »
- 06 July [Financial, Accountancy and Legal](#) Online »
- 08 July [Health, Social Care and Early Years](#) Online »
- 15 July [Digital and IT](#) Online »

## SEPTEMBER

These events are complimentary for AELP members to attend.

If any organisations are interested in Sponsorship of our SIG and Sector Forum groups please contact [gbuttironi@aelp.org.uk](mailto:gbuttironi@aelp.org.uk) (SIGs) and [cswales@aelp.org.uk](mailto:cswales@aelp.org.uk) (Sector Forums).

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