

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

### Issue 979, 26 June 2020

It's hot, I know we shouldn't complain, but when you're stuck in a boiling room looking at the sun beaming down outside it is difficult.

So, this week has been quite a rollercoaster – in a positive way. Having spent the last few months making sure we get whatever coverage we can on challenges the providers, their employers and their apprentices and learners are facing in one week we get the Select Committee, press coverage, Newsnight and the Sunday Times wanting to interview us. The reality is that everyone is starting to realise that much of what we have been saying is true. The Prime Minister and the Chancellor realise the critical importance of apprenticeships and skills and those that deliver them, which is what we want to hear when the Chancellor makes his announcement in a week or two.

The Education Select Committee was an excellent opportunity to share the concerns and the opportunities and it was great to share the panel with Dave Marsh AELP board member. A summary of the session is below and you can torture yourself with the whole lot using [this link](#). As an aside, I was given the perfect opportunity to mention Plymouth Argyle, my grandma and cream teas in a sentence – that doesn't come around often – just after 11.38 on the video!

Anyway, at the end of the session the Chair and all the members said a big thank you to all the independent training providers for the work and hard effort in such difficult times. There really has been a massive shift in attitude towards FE and also ITPs – in fact all the committee members made it a point to talk about ITPs or colleges and ITPs.

In our weekly meeting with senior officials and the minister there is much greater recognition of a genuine desire for providers to do the right thing for employers and learners – not just self-interest.

We raised the following key issues this week:

- Study programmes - thanks for the support but we need to know that next year's budget won't be adjusted for underperformance.
- Provider relief – thank you for extending it to October, but we are a little flummoxed by the 25% for the whole period. It will impact those that need the most support throughout the 7 months.
- We must extend the funding for apprenticeships in learning otherwise they are likely to go out of funding without completing and that will have a devastating effect for the apprentices, employers and the success of the programme
- Any more on apprenticeship guarantee/wage subsidy - and what is the DWP Youth Hubs thing that is starting to spear around the Country? - one they will get back to us on.



- Traineeships could be a really good thing and what is this DWP youth hubs thing that is starting to appear around the country – one they will get back to us on

Newsnight ran a piece with a very brief clip of an interview with me – really focussing on the impact on the young people in this country if there isn't proper support put in place – again continuing to apply the pressure for the need for substantial investment to prevent significant economic and social impact on a generation of young people. And by the way £3k per new apprentice is not going to do it like others are suggesting. It needs to be a wage subsidy of at least 50% for those on an apprenticeship but also to create apprenticeship opportunities

There is so much I could draw on this week – for example some great quotes from the chancellor here <https://www.yorkshirepost.co.uk/news/politics/rishi-sunak-education-and-apprenticeships-hold-key-recovery-2890785>

The fact that the levy is failing the disadvantaged from the social mobility commission - <https://www.tes.com/news/report-apprenticeship-levy-fails-disadvantaged>

The report is here (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apprenticeships-and-social-mobility-fulfilling-potential>) but also a great statement at the beginning about the benefits for the disadvantaged if they do get on an apprenticeship (even a level 2 business admin):

*“Individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds completing an apprenticeship receive a larger boost in their earnings than non-disadvantaged individuals. This is particularly true at intermediate level – the first step on the apprenticeship journey. The earnings gap also closes as you move further up the apprenticeship levels. The gap in annual earnings for disadvantaged men declines from £2,000 per year to £1,400 to £1,200 on moving from Level 1 vocational qualifications to intermediate and advanced apprenticeships.”*

Finally, we were really excited to have Peter Mucklow on the CEO webinar earlier today talking about the importance of providers and collaboration between the ESFA, AELP, its members and the networks. We have also agreed that there should be a monthly “in conversation” with the ESFA which will fit nicely with the monthly in conversation with Ofsted that we have agreed.

Combined with the monthly policy update we just have one more Friday to fill each month – and don't worry I am working on it. The willingness of all the agencies to work with AELP so collaboratively is a fantastic reflection of the respect that the ITPs have from the civil servants and the understanding of how important they will be in the months going forward. A shame that the support hasn't quite followed the words in all cases, but there is genuine change afoot. Let's make sure we all build on that.

And let's make sure that the independent sector's role and contribution is recognised and enhanced in the up and coming FE review/white paper – been through a few of them in my time – get it right and then get it to stick!

Mark Dawe | Chief Executive | AELP

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# Policy

## Education Select Committee Hearing

On 24 June 2020, Mark Dawe spoke at a meeting of the Education Select Committee on behalf of AELP on the impact of Covid-19 on apprenticeships.

On the impact of Covid-19 on the sector, Mark Dawe said that – despite the Government’s furlough scheme and apprenticeship guarantee – we are likely to see mass unemployment and plummeting starts in the coming months.

When Robert Halfon MP asked witnesses their suggestions for engraving an apprenticeship guarantee in policy, Mark Dawe mentioned that AELP’s proposals entailed:

- a wage subsidy of at least 50% (costing circa £3.6bn per year)
- greater support for levy-paying providers
- a funding guarantee of funding for SMEs (costing circa £1.5bn per year)

On the first point, Mark pointed out that a minimum 50% wage subsidy to back up a guarantee would make the difference in convincing employers to take on more apprentices, but agreed with fellow AELP board member David Marsh that more may be needed.

On the last point, Mark explained that we are in danger of losing a lot of apprentices before they can complete their programmes because there is no funding left.

Mark criticised the lack of catch-up funding and levy support available to the FE and skills sector, as well as pointing out that some providers will be unable to reopen under the new government guidance.

Mark stated that the AEB needs to be trebled to £3bn per year and cover adults from 19 years of age, rather than 25, as well as calling for removing the 3-apprentice cap for SMEs on the digital apprenticeship service.

Mark emphasized that we need first-step apprenticeships especially at Level 2 and traineeships could be a good first step for acquiring essential and basic skills.

After Jonathan Gullis MP explained how crucial apprenticeships are to Stoke-on-Trent, Mark agreed and pointed out that the Government has not given adequate financial backing to the forgotten 50% that could potentially form so-called lower level apprenticeships. Labour members of the committee also expressed concern about local independent training providers being placed at risk because of the limited financial support being offered by the government.

At the end of the session, Robert Halfon MP thanked Mark Dawe for his work on behalf of AELP over the last years. Halfon paid thanks and recognition from himself and the committee to the sterling work of independent training providers in supporting apprentices during the Covid-19 pandemic.

## Latest apprenticeship data shows continued impact of the pandemic on the programme

There were 26,090 apprenticeship starts reported between 23 March and 31 May 2020, fewer than the 50,050 reported for this period at this point last year, a decrease of 47.9%. Intermediate apprenticeships (L2) accounted for 26.9 per cent of starts; this was 37.1 per cent in 2018/19. Vacancies also slumped with the numbers for April

and May 2020 (the first two full months for which data are available since the coronavirus restrictions were implemented on 23 March) being 2,020 and 1,850, which compares to 10,400 and 12,580 in April and May 2019 respectively. Apprentice starts for 16 to 18 year olds were just 2,020 (7.7 per cent) of the total 26,090 starts.

Association of Employment and Learning Providers chief executive Mark Dawe said: “With youth unemployment having doubled, we need an urgent policy response that protects both existing apprentices coming off furlough and stimulates new apprenticeship opportunities for other young people while also providing an option for unemployed adults. The Department for Education should finally recognise too that both levy and non-levy apprenticeships need to be protected by its provider relief scheme. Apprenticeships are jobs and most observers agree that a significant wage subsidy is required to encourage employers, especially SMEs, to offer new opportunities. AELP’s recommended injection of £5.1bn into apprenticeships, including the cost of the subsidy, is a relatively modest investment for the Treasury when the benefits are considered against the current £30bn cost of the government’s coronavirus job support schemes.”

[Link to data can be found here.](#)

## AskAshworth Blog

The newly redesigned AskAshworth blog will now be accessible only to AELP members, who will need just the email address of the main contact and membership number to access its content, additional email addresses from member organisations can be authorised on request.

Members can continue to enjoy the regularly-updated blog at

<http://www.aelpaskashworth.org.uk/>



A trusted resource to get practical advice and support on Further Education issues, brought to you by AELP

## ESFA Update

### *Subcontracting Declarations Final Deadline – including nil returns*

In accordance with the funding rules, providers are required to make a revised declaration through Manage Your Education Skills Funding (MYESF) as and when any of their subcontracting relationships or values change. Providers who have not made a return since 23 October should submit their outstanding declarations by Friday 3 July 2020.

The current declarations relate to the following periods:

- 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 for the delivery of any apprenticeship non-levy and levy funded provision and for;
- 1 August 2019 to 31 July 2020 for all other adult education;
- 16 to 19 programme for the year from 1 August 2019 to 31 July 2020 (noting schools and academies are exempt) funded delivery

Please note that if you do not subcontract but receive direct funding from the ESFA, you are still required to make a nil return. This can be done on the MYESF service.

### *Providing external assurance on subcontracting controls – return of assurance certificate for 2019-2020*

In accordance with the funding rules, providers are required to obtain an annual report from an external auditor

that provides assurance on their arrangements to manage and control their delivery subcontractors. Providers are in scope if they have entered into subcontracts to deliver provision with:

- an aggregate value of more than £100,000 each financial year for new apprenticeship starts from 1 May 2017.
- an aggregate value of more than £100,000 for the delivery of all other adult provision each funding year, including apprenticeship starts before 1 May 2017.

If a provider is in scope to obtain an external audit report for both a and b above, a single combined report is required. Providers must send a certificate to the ESFA each year to confirm this report has been received.

The current returns relate to 2019 to 2020 and are due by 31 July 2020. Those who have not yet sent their completed certificates to send these to [CF1718.SUBCONTRACTING@education.gov.uk](mailto:CF1718.SUBCONTRACTING@education.gov.uk).

## ESFA post-16 provider relief scheme

In line with the latest Cabinet Office PPN04/20, the ESFA are now extending the Provider Relief Scheme (PRS) through until October 2020 for both non-levy and AEB ESFA procured contracts.

The scheme initially covered non-levy and procured AEB contracts between March and May 2020 and FE Week reported in May that 162 providers had applied for ESFA provider supplier relief.

One of the requirements of PPN04/20 is a new requirement for contracting authorities to ensure a transitional plan is in place to help wean suppliers off artificial income relief and back to actual income earning activity. This is a key requirement in the application for phase two.

Providers will be able to submit applications until 11.59pm on 9 July 2020.

The Agency have told us that they expect to have notified all applicants of the outcomes by 6 August 2020.

## ETF advanced teacher status bursaries

The Education and Training Foundation is making 100 bursaries available to those applying to join the next cohort of teachers and trainers to work towards achieving Advanced Teacher Status.

The bursaries are each worth £500, meaning that applicants or their employers will pay £250. People can apply until 13 September 2020. The eligibility criteria for applicants have also been amended so that holding Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills status or Qualified Teacher Status is no longer a prerequisite for experienced practitioners who have more than five years' experience since qualifying.

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



## ESFA guidance for independent training providers: 16 to 19 education

As a result of COVID-19, independent training providers (ITPs) may be recruiting fewer part-time students than they would normally recruit between March to July.

This will impact on the level of funding that these students would usually attract and will result in a clawback of

funds for 2019 to 2020.

The ESFA have announced support for ITPs whose recruitment of 16 to 19 students has been limited due to the lockdown situation and who have faced clawback for underperformance. Providers in this category will need to apply by submitting a business case requesting that clawback is adjusted for 2019 to 2020.

[Full eligibility details, including a business case template that must be submitted, are available here.](#)

# Events



Business Recovery  
Conference

Headline sponsors

A graphic illustration of a virtual conference with multiple video call windows showing various participants. The background is a vibrant purple and blue gradient with abstract shapes.

The AELP Autumn Conference  
**9 - 10 September 2020**  
**The 'Business Recovery Conference'**

REGISTER YOUR INTEREST NOW!

Covid-19 means there will be a 'new normal'. We may not know what exactly what that 'normal' looks like yet, but we know that the skills sector will need to change and adapt to support business recovery.

We have therefore taken the decision, in these unprecedented circumstances, to re-brand our autumn conference as the **Business Recovery Conference**.

### Throughout the Business Recovery Conference, we will:

- Focus on training providers, colleges and any other provider that is working to support employers to get back on track through the recruitment and training of new staff, or of retraining their existing workforce.
- Focus on making sure we can help young people and unemployed adults into apprenticeships, traineeships and pre-employment programmes to maximise their chance of securing and sustaining employment.
- Focus on how all skills and employment providers can optimise their delivery model.
- Focus on ensuring providers have the very latest government guidance updating providers on a safe and effective return to work, giving the best chance of business recovery and success

Our conference will look to the future. We will examine the latest sector, economic and provider data, so we can understand and confidently plan a path forward with reference to recent developments, and emerging changes to funding and operational guidance. Our aim will be to create a shared understanding of how employers, learners, government and devolved authorities can work together to support business recovery.

### Where?

The Business Recovery Conference will be hosted entirely online. This format recognises the probability that large gatherings will still not be allowed at the time of the conference.

We also recognise that the autumn will be a busy time for sector organisations and are committed to delivering a flexible conference for our delegates. Our online format will enable delegates to select and register for specific sessions that they feel are of particular relevance. This conference will appeal to provider staff members at all levels and the online ticketing arrangements will allow delegates from the same member provider to attend different sessions.

### When?

The Business Recovery Conference will take place on Wednesday 9th and Thursday 10th September.

We have taken the decision to schedule our conference at this time so that we will have access to robust sector and economic data that will help us plan for the future. We are also hopeful that the conference will follow the lifting of lockdown, at a time when organisations have had time to re-establish their working patterns.

REGISTER YOUR  
INTEREST NOW!



aelp | member events



**AELP Member Exclusive Meetings**

**Upcoming Sector Forums**

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All sector forum meetings are now being held on-line via GoTo Meeting or GoTo Webinar.

To register please email [memberevents@aelp.org.uk](mailto:memberevents@aelp.org.uk)

For any further information regarding any of our sector groups please email [cswales@aelp.org.uk](mailto:cswales@aelp.org.uk)

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#### **Land-based Industries – 02 July, 10:30am – 12:00pm**

This is an informal meeting being held via Go To Meeting. It is an opportunity for members offering provision in the land-based sector to discuss how the current situation is impacting on provision. The group have formed good links with IfATE and the trailblazer lead so it's a really good opportunity to feed in to discussions and be kept up to date in between meetings. Richard Pemble from Ofsted will be attending to provide a general update and Robin Jackson from Open Awards will be giving an update on an update on what flexibilities they have supported for CV-19, how they are continuing to input into this process and general themes found across the Land-based standards.

#### **Financial, Accountancy and Legal – 06 July, 10:30am – 12:00pm**

This meeting will be held via Go To Meeting. We will be hearing an AELP update from Mark Dawe, a NOCN update from Tom Burton and Neil Williams of Babington Group will be talking through a provider's perspective on how the current circumstances have impacted on provision at Babington and how they are now looking forward into the recovery phase. There will also be lot of opportunity for input and questions from other members.

#### **Health, Social Care and Early Years – 08 July, 10:30am – 12:00pm**

At this webinar, we'll be hearing an AELP update from Simon Ashworth, Chief Policy Officer and provider updates from Early Years (Ali Barford-Drew, Connect2Care) and Adult Care (Mary Holmes). Hear how the current situation is affecting delivery in both of these sectors (positive changes and challenges) and you will also have the opportunity to ask questions through a facilitated Q&A/Panel Discussion.

#### **Creative and Design – 08 July, 2:00pm – 3:30pm**

This sector has been hit particularly hard during Covid-19 therefore this is an additional meeting to have a very informal discussion with members on what the current issues and challenges are. This is small sector group but would certainly be of interest to any members currently offering provision in this sector!

#### **Digital and IT – 15 July, 10:30am – 12:00pm**

We have an exciting agenda lined up for this meeting with an AELP update along with input from Becky King (Microsoft) with their employer view of Post Covid-19 priorities and what they believe will be the priority roles, how they plan to address skills gaps and what this may mean for the sector. We'll also be hearing an IfATE/Trailblazer update from Helen Dalton. One not to miss for members working in this sector!

#### **Logistics and Transport – 30 July, 10:30am – 12:00pm**

This meeting was originally due to be held on 8th June but was postponed. Agenda/speaker details will be announced shortly.

## **Upcoming #aelpwebinars**

aelp | webinars 

### **Chief Executive's COVID-19 Member Update in conversation with Peter Mucklow, ESFA**

Friday, 26 June 10.00 - 11.00 am BST

A weekly update from AELP's Chief Executive, Mark Dawe during the COVID-19 crisis.

Guest Speaker: Peter Mucklow, Director, Apprenticeships, ESFA.



[Register »](#)

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## SMART target setting

Tuesday, 30 June 10.30 - 11.30 am BST

This webinar will look at the core aspects of setting SMART targets and consider the relevance and real value of each stage.

Content will cover what SMART targets are and why they are important, and look at the different approaches that can ensure that target setting is effective and has real value in achieving successful outcomes.

[Register »](#)

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## Using data to ensure quality training and be Ofsted ready!

Tuesday, 30 June 2.00 - 3.00 pm BST

Dr Chris Jones will provide an overview of the key points within the inspection handbook that apply to data and discuss how it can be used to improve teaching delivery.

He will use examples from Bud to show how data can be collated and how it can inform changes to improve the teaching and delivery of apprenticeships.

Sponsored by [Bud](#)



[Register »](#)

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## Governance for training and employer providers

Wednesday, 1 July 10.00 - 11.00 am BST

This webinar will look at the background and context of why governance is now an important consideration for training and employer providers.

[Register »](#)

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## Using Labour market data to help recovery from the COVID crisis

Wednesday, 1 July 2.00 - 3.00 pm BST

This webinar will dig into the detail of the impact of Covid-19 on local economies, discussing ideas on how to support the recovery by identifying the areas of risk and opportunity.



[Register »](#)

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## DWP's New - Commercial Agreement for the provision of Employment and Health Related Services

Thursday, 2 July 10.00 - 11.00 am BST

On the 29th June the Department of Work and Pensions is opening its framework agreement for its non-dynamic purchasing system procured provision. Join the webinar to find out more about the new process, hints and tips of what you need to do and the next steps.

Complementary for AELP members

[Register »](#)

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## Planning an Effective Curriculum

Thursday, 2 July 2.00 - 3.00 pm BST

The session will explore the key components of what an effective curriculum might look like particularly for apprenticeship and adult provision.



[Register »](#)

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## 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
- Understanding Ofsted's "deep dives"
- The Role of the Nominee
- Understanding the different forms of assessment involved in EPA
- Understanding Quality of Education
- Covid HR Surgery
- Fast track – assessor to Trainer – Key skills and strategies to getting started
- Building personal resilience through change
- Blended Learning Strategy Part 2 – Online Content Strategy and Quality Assurance

[Register for recordings »](#)

[Suggest a topic »»](#)

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## JULY

- 07 July Webinar [Supporting the effective delivery of Functional Skills in English – Level 1 and 2](#) £49 Online »
- 08 July Webinar [What responses the govt might have to rising unemployment](#) £0 Online »
- 08 July Webinar [Understanding unconscious bias](#) £49 Online »
- 09 July Webinar [Creative Assessment Methods for Learning Sessions](#) £49 Online »
- 09 July Webinar [In Conversation with Ofsted and Ask an Inspector](#) £0 Online »
- 10 July Webinar [Chief Executive Officer's COVID-19 Weekly Member Update](#) £0 Online »
- 14 July Webinar [Supporting the effective delivery of Functional Skills in mathematics – Level 1 and 2](#) £49 Online »
- 14 July Webinar [Abuse linked to faith and belief](#) £49 Online »
- 15 July Webinar [Blended Learning Strategy Part 3 – Digital Staff Skills Strategy & Quality Assurance of Blended Learning Delivery & Compliance](#) £49 Online »
- 15 July Webinar [Comeback from Covid](#) £49 Online »
- 21 July Webinar [Developing Mentoring Skills](#) £49 Online »
- 23 July Webinar [Chief Executive Officer's COVID-19 Weekly Member Update](#) £0 Online »
- 28 July Webinar [OTL Strategy](#) £49 Online »
- 29 July Webinar [Understanding Emotional Intelligence](#) £49 Online »

## SEPTEMBER

- 09-10 September Conference [The Business Recovery Conference](#) £TBC Online »



## AELP Member Exclusive Meetings

## JULY

- 02 July [Land Based](#) Online »
- 02 July [Third Sector Special Interest Group](#) Online (noon) »
- 06 July [Financial, Accountancy and Legal](#) Online »
- 08 July [Health, Social Care and Early Years](#) Online »
- 08 July [Creative and Design](#) Online »
- 15 July [Digital and IT](#) Online »
- 30 July [Logistics and Transport](#) Online »

## SEPTEMBER

- 16 September [Hospitality and Catering](#) Online »

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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