

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

Issue 985, 07 August 2020

Welcome to this week's Countdown.

This week the Institute for Apprenticeship and Technical Education published their response to the consultation on simplifying and strengthening external quality assurance of end point assessment. Since the introduction of the Apprenticeship Reforms, AELP has led from the front raising concerns about the fragmented approach to external quality assurance of the new end point assessment system. The move to strengthen and simplify EQA by having Ofqual, the regulator as the main body for EQA, supported by OfS on integrated degree apprenticeships is an extremely welcome move and something AELP is highly supportive of. However, the hard work starts now on the transition period, including supporting a large number of EPAOs to become Ofqual recognised. And of course ultimately, providers, apprentices and their employers need to be confident that the outcomes of end point assessment are robust, fair, comparable and consistent.



As mentioned last week, there is a lot of interest from members at the moment in finding out more about the various government incentives and initiatives being attached to vocational learning. We are focusing at the moment on clarifying as much as we can and getting updated information out to you. Next week we have a webinar "[In Conversation with the ESFA – Traineeships](#)" which may well tie in with an announcement about the procurement exercise for traineeships, and we are anticipating some senior officials will be joining us for that. A couple of days earlier, AELP's Paul Warner will be running a session which picks apart the various strands of incentives to allow us all to get a clearer view of the offers now on the table to employers. So do take a look at the events table below and sign up to get these dates in your diary.

We have also been working hard on shaping the agenda for our Business Recovery Conference on the 9th and 10th September, the agenda for which is now online. We have a range of really excellent top name speakers and a wide range of workshops to dip into over the two days, and to make sure that the sector gets full value you get ten log-ins for each booking you make! Have a look at the [full details below](#) and join us for what we are certain will be a must-attend event.

We are very proud this week to announce our collaboration with Ufi Voctech Trust to launch #SectorShare, a comprehensive facility of online resources for vocational teaching which we are confident will become an indispensable part of every provider's curriculum planning. The [beta version](#) is now running for testing purposes and we plan to have the full site up and running in September.

This week we were delighted to welcome more new members. We really appreciate your continuing engagement in helping us to shape our programmes and present your concerns accurately.

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Policy

Apprenticeships to get jobs boost

A new online and telephone support service for apprentices who have lost their jobs during the Covid-19 outbreak has been launched by Skills Minister Gillian Keegan MP.

The new Redundancy Support Service for Apprentices (ReSSA) will ensure apprentices can access local and national services that can provide financial, legal, health and wellbeing support, and help them to find a new job should they need it. Apprentices can also search and apply for other available apprenticeship opportunities across the country.

From 1 August, employers large and small are also being encouraged to take advantage of generous new cash incentives designed to create more high quality apprenticeship opportunities so more people, particularly young people, can kick start an exciting and rewarding career.

As part of the Government's Plan for Jobs, employers are being offered £2,000 for each new apprentice aged under 25 they hire, and £1,500 for each new apprentice they hire aged 25 and over, up to the 31 January 2021. This includes taking on an apprentice who has been made redundant.

AELP commented: "The new helpline is potentially a very helpful step forward in supporting apprentices because sadly we are going to see a lot of them lose their jobs as the furlough scheme unwinds. We also like the new service being put in place whereby an employer can specifically look to hire an apprentice that has been made redundant.

"Apprenticeship training providers are already very active in trying to find new opportunities for the apprentices

they have been training but the government could do more in reviewing how its funding arrangements for providers work in making this type of support sustainable over the next 12 months.”

IfATE announced next steps for a simplified EQA system

The [Institute has announced](#) it will move to a new simplified EQA system following a public consultation earlier this year.

The changes will see EQA delivered by Ofqual or, for integrated degree apprenticeships, the Office for Students (OfS), with the first step to the new system to be in October 2020. A consultation on the proposals was launched in February 2020, receiving a wide range of responses from stakeholders and the Institute has taken time to listen and take all views into account.

The Institute will retain oversight of the system, and EQA will still be delivered within the Institute’s framework. The Institute will continue to have a statutory responsibility to evaluate the quality of end-point assessments.

Liverpool Metro Mayor offers support for apprentices made redundant during the crisis

Steve Rotheram, Mayor of the Liverpool City Region, has launched a new scheme to help local apprentices made redundant or at risk because of Coronavirus find new employment or training opportunities.

Delivered through the Combined Authority’s apprenticeship portal, the initiative will help support redundant apprentices to find a new suitable apprenticeship or explore alternative study options.

With the Government furlough scheme now coming to an end, experts have warned about the threat of large-scale redundancies, with apprenticeships seen as being especially vulnerable. Back in June, AELP Chief Executive Mark Dawe told the House of Commons Education Select Committee that some of the country’s largest organisations were talking about massive reductions in the number of apprenticeships.

Apprentices can access support by visiting www.be-more.info or by contacting the Combined Authority on apprenticeshipsrecovery@liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk.

New apprenticeship agreement template for 2020/21

The ESFA has produced an updated apprenticeship agreement template. An apprenticeship agreement must be signed at the start of the apprenticeship for each apprentice. It is used to confirm individual employment arrangements between the apprentice and the employer and must be a separate document to the Commitment Statement as per the ESFA funding rules.

The new apprenticeships agreement includes the planned amount of off-the-job training (hours) the apprentice is expected to receive whilst undertaking their apprenticeship training.

[You can access the template here.](#)

ESFA publish version 1 of the Apprenticeship funding rules for 2020/21

The ESFA has published the [first version of the Apprenticeship Funding Rules for 2020/21](#), with a number of changes and clarifications on the following subjects:

- exception to the minimum duration requirements;
- change of circumstances (e.g. changing jobs or working hours);
- calculating off-the-job-training;
- recording planned off-the-job-training hours on the ILR;
- documenting the off-the-job-training time;
- planned off-the-job-training hours agreed vs. actually delivered off-the-job-training hours;
- eligible costs (e.g. consumables);
- subcontracting;
- brokerage;
- subcontracting audit assurance;
- commitment statement.

[You can access a detailed explanation of the changes here.](#)

Further details on the Job Retention Bonus

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak, presented his 'Plan for Jobs' to Parliament on 8 July 2020 outlining how the government will support the UK's economic recovery while continuing to prioritise people's health.

As part of this, the government is introducing a new Job Retention Bonus to provide additional support to employers who keep on their furloughed employees in meaningful employment, after the government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme ends on 31 October 2020.

The Job Retention Bonus is a one-off payment to employers of £1,000 for every employee who they previously claimed for under the scheme, and who remains continuously employed through to 31 January 2021.

Eligible employees must earn at least £520 a month on average between the 1 November 2020 and 31 January 2021. Employers will be able to claim the Job Retention Bonus after they have filed PAYE for January and payments will be made to employers from February 2021.

[You can access more information about the Job Retention Bonus here.](#)

Apprenticeship Service error messages

The Apprenticeships Service are aware of an issue whereby some employers are unable to access their 'My Training Providers' section of their Apprenticeship Service account. When attempting to click into it they are presented with an error message. Work is underway to resolve this as a matter of priority, but if affected by this issue it would be helpful to report it by ringing 08000 150 600 or emailing helpdesk@manage-apprenticeships.service.gov.uk

Research and Consultations

Complete our short survey and earn £1000 for the Trussell Trust!

Training providers have had to make many immediate and fundamental changes to their businesses and operations to adapt to the recent national emergency, and the sector has been widely praised for its response. Now the sector has to plan ahead as the pandemic recedes and lockdown is lifted, and we'd like to know – how did you get on? How did your staff and learners react to the changes? And what might you change going forward as a result?

This survey, run by AELP and kindly supported by Bud, should take no more than about ten minutes and your valuable contribution, along with the interim data already received, will enable us to set some benchmarks that you will be able to use to compare your experiences, performance and plans to others across the sector. What's more, we will be discussing the results in a free webinar scheduled for 16th September 2020 – please contact enquiries@aelp.org.uk for further details and to express an interest in attending and hearing what we have found out.

Help donate £1000 to the Trussell Trust*

As a gesture of goodwill, and to support this research project, Bud has set aside a pot of £1000 for donation to the Trussell Trust, a national charity that supports a nationwide network of foodbanks providing emergency food and support to those locked in poverty. For the first 200 completed surveys received from individual companies, Bud will donate £5 to the Trussell Trust.

Your contribution would be extremely welcome and will play an important part in enabling us all to be ready for what the “new normal” throws at us. The [survey](#) will stay open until close of business on 12th August.

Thank you in advance!



Start the Survey

ETF Workforce Survey

The Education and Training Foundation are keen to hear from further ITPs regards their current and future workforce development needs, including any challenges and opportunities. This short survey is open now and the anonymised data will form the basis of a report to inform their future planning – and AELP's as well!

A few minute of your time would be hugely appreciated, and [the survey can be found on this link](#).

Stability of the early years workforce in England report

Low pay, a high workload and a lack of career development for early years workers risk having a serious impact on the provision of care and education services for the under-fives, says the Social Mobility Commission in its report 'The stability of the early years workforce'.

The report reveals that as many as one in 8 of the early years workforce is paid under £5.00 an hour. The average wage is only £7.42 an hour, less than the minimum wage and much lower than for the average female workforce (£11.37). The research finds that staff turnover is high, at 15%, mainly due to low pay, a lack of training and career structure and excessive overtime.

Childcare professionals work longer hours than people in comparable occupations: 11% of full-time early years workers reported working more than 42 hours per week, compared to 3% of retail workers and 6% of female workers in general. There are few training opportunities once people enter the workforce. Only 17 % of early years workers receive job-related training. While a high proportion of workers are passionate about what they do, 37% leave their employer within 2 years.

There are signs that the workforce – which includes childminders, nursery assistants and early years teachers – is becoming increasingly unstable with too few new entrants replacing those leaving the sector.

[You can read the full research here.](#)

Events



Business Recovery
Conference



Headline sponsors



The AELP Autumn Conference
9 - 10 September 2020

The 'Business Recovery Conference'



Agenda Announced 

Facing the Future with Confidence

The AELP Business Recovery Conference on 9-10 September, sponsored by Learning Curve Group and Cognassist, has a fantastic line-up of funders and regulators to talk about the government's plans for skills provision as we emerge from the lockdown. A strong theme of the event will be partnership between government, the combined authorities and providers working together to re-engage as many employers and learners as possible to help get the economy quickly back on its feet.

But the conference is also about ensuring resilience within the provider base itself to deal with current challenges and ones likely to be faced over the next 12 months. The agenda includes a terrific set of best practice sessions and workshops on:

- Re-engaging employers and learners, especially getting young people out of the house
- Blended models of learning delivery for different skills programmes
- Opening a training centre safely after lockdown
- Provider risk management including HR and legal obligations
- Ensuring that a provider is financially resilient
- The role of leadership and management in ensuring post-lockdown regulatory compliance

Remember that up to 10 members of your team can watch these sessions for the basic ticket price. And all

sessions are being recorded for those who can't watch them live.

Visit the conference [website](#) today and book your place today!



Upcoming IfATE events for awarding organisations

The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) are planning a number of events for awarding organisations interested in bidding for Wave 4 of the T Level qualification. Details of the events are outlined below, including how to confirm your attendance:

1. **Live Q&A Panel session (3 September 2020).** The live Q&A session will provide an opportunity for potential suppliers to ask the Panel questions regarding Wave 4 T Levels, information given as part of the pre-recorded presentations and the procurement process.
2. Prior to attending the event, Awarding Organisations are encouraged to watch pre-recorded presentations on Wave 4 T-Levels and the procurement process. Links to the videos will be made available via the Virtual Data Room on ProContract procontract.due-north.com
3. **1:1 session (3 September 2020).** If a high demand for 1:1 session is received further slots will be available on 4 September 2020. The 1:1 session will give organisations an opportunity to discuss with the Institute more in-depth aspects of the Wave 4 T Level programme. This will also be an opportunity for any further feedback potential suppliers may wish to give to the Institute. These will be 30 minutes sessions and available to pre-book. Organisations will be notified of their allocated time slot.
4. **Consortia & sub-contracting workshop** will take place virtually on **9 September 2020**.
5. **'How to bid for public sector contract'** workshop will take place virtually on **30 September 2020** and **7 October 2020**.

These events will be virtual. To register your interest and receive a MS Teams invitation to any of the above events and/or to have access to the recorded presentations, please send an email to IFA.TLEVELPROCUREMENT@education.gov.uk with the following information:

- Organisation name
- Events attending (please tick):
 - Live Q&A session (3 September)
 - Access to recorded presentations
 - 1:1 session (3 September)
 - Consortia and sub-contracting workshop (9 September)
 - How to bid for a public procurement (30 September)
 - How to bid for a public procurement (7 October)
- Name of attendees
- Position within organisation
- Contact details – telephone/ email address

Exploring changes to Version 1 of ESFA Apprenticeship Funding Rules for FY20-21

Friday, 7 August 10:00 am - 11:00 am BST

Facilitator: Simon Ashworth, Chief Policy Officer, AELP

This webinar will allow delegates to understand the confirmed changes for the new academic year.

[Register »](#)

Support in the effective delivery of the new functional skills – English

Tuesday, 11 August 10:30 am - 11:30 am BST

Facilitator: Christine Edwards, QLTS, Creating Excellence

This webinar will help to understand some of the key challenges and different approaches that are needed to allow learners to be successful in the attainment of the necessary knowledge, skills and confidence needed to achieve a pass.

[Register »](#)

Traineeships Webinar

Wednesday, 12 August 10:00 am - 11:00 am BST

Facilitator: Paul Warner, Director of Research and Development, AELP

Government has recently been promoting Traineeships in a way that we have not seen for many years, with a raft of new money coming in to significantly expand levels of provision that will be allocated by a short, sharp procurement process in the very near future. This push will sit alongside a number of other government initiatives including incentivising the hiring of apprentices and incentivising high-value study. This webinar will look at the current state of Traineeships, detail what we know about the procurement process, and attempt to “disentangle the threads” of the various initiatives to better inform a coherent offer from the sector to employers and learners alike.

This webinar is **complimentary** to AELP members

[Register »](#)



In conversation with the ESFA – Traineeships

Friday, 14 August 10:00 am - 11:00 am BST

Guest Speaker: Louise Wright, Deputy Director Apprenticeships, ESFA

This “in conversation with” session facilitated by the ESFA will focus specifically on Traineeships, looking at how the programme for unemployed 16-24 years olds has been revised in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and the growing number of unemployed young people. The session will also look at how the government intends to make use of the recent £111m additional investment, including tripling the number of Traineeships places, a new incentive grant for employers who offer a Traineeship work placement and how training providers can play their part.

This webinar is **complimentary** to AELP members

[Register »](#)



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AELP Events & Webinars Calendar



Please [click here](#) to subscribe to the events mailing list

AUGUST

- 07 August** Webinar [Exploring changes to Version 1 of ESFA Apprenticeship Funding Rules for FY20-21](#) £49 Online »
- 11 August** Webinar [Supporting the effective delivery of Functional Skills in English – Level 1 and 2](#) £49 Online »
- 12 August** Webinar [Traineeships Webinar](#) £0 Online Member Exclusive »
- 14 August** Webinar [In Conversation with the ESFA - Traineeships](#) £0 Online Member Exclusive »
- 18 August** Webinar [Ofsted nominee training for those managers who are experienced in the role on inspection](#) £49 Online »
- 21 August** Webinar [AELP Policy Webinar](#) £0 Online **Member Exclusive** »
- 25 August** Webinar [Supporting the effective delivery of Functional Skills in mathematics – Level 1 and 2](#) £49 Online »
- 26 August** Webinar [How learning providers can support victims and survivors of domestic abuse](#) £49 Online »
- 27 August** Webinar [Improving Bid Success](#) £49 Online »

SEPTEMBER

- 09-10 September** Conference [The Business Recovery Conference](#) £100 Online »
- 15 September** Webinar [Staying safe online – keeping learners and your staff safe online](#) £49 Online »
- 22 September** Webinar [Curriculum sequencing](#) £49 Online »
- 24 September** Webinar [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - why it matters](#) £49 Online »



AELP Member Exclusive Meetings

SEPTEMBER

- 07 September** SIG - [Foundation](#) Online »
- 16 September** [Hospitality and Catering](#) Online »
- 23 September** [Construction](#) Online »
- 24 September** [Creative & Design](#) Online »
- 29 September** SIG - [Learning Support](#) Online »

OCTOBER

- 07 October** [Hair and Beauty](#) Online »
- 14 October** SIG - [Schools and Education](#) Online »
- 15 October** [Engineering, Manufacturing and Automotive](#) 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 (SIGs) and cswales@aelp.org.uk (Sector Forums).

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