

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

Issue 986, 14 August 2020

It's Friday again, and with it, the latest Countdown!

A-Levels

It's been a bit tense in the Hickie household over the last couple of weeks as our daughter has watched with increasing incredulity the controversy surrounding exam marking as she has waited for her A level results. Like many other middle-class parents these days, I find myself talking to her regularly about apprenticeships as an option although a place at a leading university remains her goal. Imagine my horror then when she and her friends on a Facetime call said that they had never been told about apprenticeships at their school, in fact one of them said she had never even heard of an apprenticeship! But as Robert Halfon reminded us at the start of the week, this is far from being a one-off anecdotal story. It has remained commonplace since the Baker Clause came into force in January 2018 and AELP has been pushing hard on schools being required to comply with the legal obligation. Despite talk of Ofsted checking on compliance, Mr Halfon's continued concern is totally justified and we agree with him that it's about time that Baker was properly enforced, as AELP has said before it's about time we add some bite to the bark and failure to comply with the legal and statutory requirement of the Baker Clause should become a limiting grade factor as part of Ofsted's inspection regime. ([More here](#)).



Traineeships

This week, we have seen a lot of interest building on Traineeships procurement. Paul Warner's webinar on it earlier this week attracted hundreds of attendees and a poll within it indicated that nearly 90% of them intended to bid. As I write this, we're still not certain of exactly when the ITT will come out, but we are hopeful that the "In Conversation with the ESFA" later today, when we will be joined by Louise Wright, Deputy Director for Apprenticeships, ESFA, might give some more clues, or even better a direct announcement about the ITT going live. Whenever it appears however, it will certainly be a short turnaround to complete it, and ESFA will be looking for indicators that you are in a position to start delivery quickly. In that respect, as we have always said, track record is key and really must play an important part in considering who is allocated what from the new money coming available. Simon Ashworth will be running a webinar for members to guide you through this process early next week.

Centre for Social Justice

We were also really interested to see the Centre for Social Justice report on apprenticeships ([mentioned below](#)) which makes a long list of considered recommendations on how apprenticeships can play a part in rebooting the economy. With young people's prospects currently looking so bleak we really must do everything we can to support Level 2 apprenticeships offered by SMEs in particular, which have been badly impacted by the introduction of the levy. We certainly would like the government to act as quickly as possible on what the CSJ

have had to say.

Model Contracts

I'm delighted to let you know that the updated versions of our Model Contracts are now available for apprenticeship providers. These were an incredibly highly-valued member benefit last year, saving literally thousands of pounds for businesses in legal fees, and with our partners at VVV we have been carefully updating them to ensure they reflect the very latest funding rules. Full members can access them on [this link](#).

AELP Business Recovery Conference

Don't forget the Business Recovery Conference we are running on the 9th and 10th September ([details below](#)) – we have a truly superb line-up of speakers and workshops that you can dip into over the two days and with ten log-ins allowed per booking, I think I'm safe in saying it will be extremely good value! We certainly look forward to seeing as many of you as possible on line over the two days.

Finally, it was with great sadness this week that we learned of the passing of Sean Errington, a regular guest on AELP webinars and a highly respected figure in the sector. Our condolences to his family at what must be a very sad time for them.

Jane Hickie | Managing Director | AELP

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Policy

CSJ report on apprenticeships

On 10 August, the Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) launched its report 'Trade Secrets: How to reboot apprenticeships and kick-start recovery'.

In introducing the report, Robert Halfon MP states three main priorities: supporting more small businesses to take on apprentices, urging the public sector to set a stronger example in the field of apprenticeships, calling for more degree apprenticeships. The report itself makes up to 20 separate recommendations to help stimulate the apprenticeships system as the country seeks to recover from the effects of the pandemic.

AELP welcomed the CSJ's report findings with Managing Director Jane Hickie calling it "potentially a seminal

piece of work in the context of apprenticeships playing a key role in supporting the economic recovery and their importance being recognised in the forthcoming white paper on further education and skills.”

[You can view AELP's full response to the report here.](#)

[You can find the full report here.](#)

First new employer incentive payments for new apprentices

The latest employer version of the funding rules already highlighted that: “Payments for eligible apprentices starting between 1 August and 30 September will be made in January 2021”.

In new guidance published this morning, it firms up the actual payment date each month. The government will ... “make payments on the 10th working day of each month. We will ask for your organisation’s bank details when you apply so that we can pay you directly.”

It has already been confirmed that employers will need to claim the incentive payments directly through the Apprenticeship Service and therefore providers should not use their procured non-levy contracts to fund starts where employers are looking to make a claim for this incentive.

[You can see further guidance here.](#)

New relief scheme announced for providers of apprenticeship training to public sector employers

The ESFA has published details for a new scheme which was introduced to enable public sector employers, who pay the apprenticeship levy to provide relief to their suppliers of apprenticeship training if they consider that they meet the requirements as laid out in the above guidance, in line with Cabinet Office Procurement Policy Note 02/20 – Supplier relief due to Covid-19 dated March 2020 and Procurement Policy Note 04/20 – Recovery and Transition from COVID-19 dated June 2020.

This relief scheme will apply to activity undertaken by the apprenticeship training provider in July, August, September, and October 2020 and paid in the subsequent months. Retrospective claims prior to July 2020 cannot be claimed through this relief scheme. Apprenticeship training providers who subsequently receive support from this scheme must be prepared to provide all evidence of spend for future reconciliation and provide ‘open book’ access to accounting records to the ESFA, upon which their application is based.

In the guidance, it highlights that only training providers designated by a public sector employer as a ‘critical supplier’ will be invited to apply to this scheme. Eligible providers will have to be able to demonstrate a financial need for exceptional support and will be subject to open book accounting scrutiny to determine the proper use of funds. Training providers should contact their public sector employer(s) to discuss their eligibility and not ESFA.

Public sector employers that would like to support their training provider(s) through the scheme should speak to their usual contact in the National Apprenticeship Service in the first instance. Public sector employers must notify the ESFA by 14 August 2020 if they want to request that relief is paid to their apprenticeship training provider(s).

[You can read more about the scheme here.](#)

£40m funding package for transport to support 16-19 learners in FE settings

On 8 August, the Government announced new measures to ease public transport as children and young people return to education in September.

This included new funding for additional dedicated home to provider transport (including ITPs), which will be distributed to Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) who will receive more than £40m funding for the autumn term to help them create extra capacity and allow more students to use alternatives to public transport, whilst social distancing measures remain in place.

Funding allocations are based on the number of children and young people in the area and how far they have to travel to schools and FE settings. FE providers are encouraged to work with LTAs to ensure that the needs of FE students are reflected in local plans.

LTAs will be asked, through the grant arrangements, to spend this funding to support school and FE transport, but they also need to consider local priorities and allocate funding accordingly. They may choose to provide coach services for 16-19 students directly or, for example, allocate funding to individual colleges to arrange their own transport services where this is needed as a result of social distancing on public transport. LTAs will also have the flexibility to use the funding to meet the needs of local families, which could include hiring other modes of transport to supplement public transport.

The announcement also encouraged students and staff who have the option to walk, cycle or use a scooter to do so, with the drive for active travel being backed by £2 billion of government investment. This will be supported by a new campaign due to be launched shortly to reduce demand on public transport at peak times and minimise overcrowding in the autumn to ensure that public transport is available for those who do not have an alternative. New guidance on dedicated school transport is also due to be published shortly. Although primarily aimed at local authorities, this guidance will also be relevant for FE providers with their own dedicated transport.

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

DfE guidance on UK nationals living abroad and their eligibility for funded apprenticeships

The Department for Education has published [guidance for UK nationals living in the EEA or Switzerland](#) wishing to start an apprenticeship in England before 1 August 2021, confirming that they will continue to be eligible on the same basis as now.

Apprenticeships starting from 1 August 2021 will continue to be eligible for an apprenticeship in England if they meet the eligibility requirements in place at the time, including that:

- they are living in the EEA or Switzerland on 31 December 2020
- they have been living in the EEA, Switzerland, the UK or Gibraltar for at least the last 3 years before starting an apprenticeship
- they have lived continuously in the EEA, Switzerland, the UK or Gibraltar between 31 December 2020 and the start of their apprenticeship
- they will spend at least 50% of their working hours in England during their apprenticeship
- the apprenticeship starts before 1 January 2028

Children of these individuals will also be eligible for an apprenticeship in England on the same terms even if they are not themselves UK nationals.

Research and Consultations

Stability of the early years workforce in England report

The Social Mobility Commission has published a report 'The stability of the early years workforce' to warn that 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.

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.

[You can find the full report 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!

BOOK NOW! 

Upcoming #aelpwebinars

aelp | webinars 

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 »](#)

Ofsted nominee training for those managers who are experienced in the role on inspection

Tuesday, 18 August 10:00 am - 11:30 am BST

Facilitator: Richard Moore, Richard Moore Solutions



This webinar will tell you everything you need to know about being a nominee during an Ofsted inspection based on the Education Inspection Framework (EIF). It builds on the 'Overview of the role of the nominee' webinar delivered by Ofsted in June.

[Register »](#)

Exploring the new legal entitlement - Essential Digital Skills Qualifications

Thursday, 20 August 2020 | 10.00 am - 11.00 am BST

Sponsored by

Facilitator: Diana Muallem, Independent Education Consultant and Paul Saunders, Director Of Business Development, Gateway Qualifications



This webinar will take a deep dive into the new fully funded adult essential digital skills qualifications based on the Department for Education National Standards and explore how they can be utilised for all your adult programmes.

This webinar is sponsored by [Gateway Qualifications](#). Please use a business email address to register for your **complimentary** place.

[Register »](#)

AELP Policy Member Update Webinar

Friday, 21 August 2020 | 10.00 am - 11.00 am BST

Sponsored by

A complimentary monthly update from AELP's Chief Policy Officer Simon Ashworth on Policy.



Sponsored by [The Skills Network](#).

[Register »](#)

Webinar Recordings on Demand also available [here](#)

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AELP Events & Webinars Calendar



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

AUGUST

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 »

20 August Webinar [Exploring the new legal entitlement - Essential Digital Skills Qualifications](#) £0 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

02 September Webinar [The Relevance of Learning Theories to Practical Teaching and Training](#) £49 Online »
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 »

OCTOBER

08 October Webinar [The Apprenticeship Infrastructure Audit](#) £49 Online »

aelp | member events



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 »
28 October [Digital & IT](#) Online »
29 October [Land-based](#) 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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