

CAPITAL

September 2018

Welcome to CAPITAL, AELP London's membership newsletter, designed to keep our members up to date with the latest developments across London's employability and skills sector.

AELP London working in partnership with the GLA

As an AELP London member, you'll be aware that we've been forging a productive relationship with the GLA to ensure that we build an effective communications channel with them. This is a key part of our strategy to ensure that we're up to date with their thinking and delivery plans, and that we can ensure they receive feedback and insight from our members.

As well as hosting and attending our Strategic Forums, we're working with the GLA in an advisory role and meeting with them regularly to discuss the development of the Capital's employment and learning landscape.

On 6th August a team from AELP London comprising Nichola Hay (Advisory Board Chair), Jane Hickie (Chief Operations Officer), and Simon Ashworth (Chief Policy Officer) met with Forogh Rahmani (Principal Policy Officer) and Cameron Tait (Senior Policy Office) of the GLA's Skills and Employment Unit.

The following provides a short, 'at-a-glance' update of the key points we discussed:

London Councils and GLA Collaboration: Careers/IAG

- The aim is to grow the Apprenticeship Ambassador network from 200 to 700
- The National Careers Service funding in London has been cut by 1/3
- The GLA is currently working with the Careers Enterprise Company (CEC)
- There is an aim to extend the Enterprise Advisory Network to all schools

- ESF funding is being set aside to enhance SEND offer in schools

Adult Education Budget (AEB) Update

- The PIN for AEB is expected to be published in late August/early September, with the procurement likely to commence in October and contract awards in April... with commencement scheduled for August 2019
- The GLA favours multi-year contracting, where possible, to encourage longer term investment to build local capacity
- The overall key message is that there is an aim to ensure that there is initial stability in the provider base
- There are a number of questions in the Skills for Londoners framework consultation to ascertain wider views of stakeholders, linked to helping design the procurement e.g. minimum contracting values, approaches to subcontracting (fees etc)

Apprenticeships Pilots

- The Apprenticeship Pilots will be focused on the utilisation of levy underspend, and therefore levy transfer
- There is a primary interest in supporting priority sectors i.e. Food Retail/Hospitality, Construction and Digital Creative industries
- The GLA has initially engaged with the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR) to support the pilots, but is also likely to offer out, through a competitive tender, for a third party to facilitate this programme

Skills for Londoners Board

- The composition of the Board will be: 1/3 providers, 1/3 employers and 1/3 borough representatives and meetings will be held quarterly
- Nichola Hay will represent AELP London
- The primary purpose of the Board is to make representations to the Mayor, who has delegated responsibility for the AEB
- The Skills for Londoners Framework consultation closed on 17th August and AELP London has submitted a formal submission

AELP London/GLA ESF consortium events (please see article below)

- A Skills for London Business Partnership is currently being established, specifically for employers to join, and this is something AELP London provider members may wish to encourage their employers to apply for

Mayor's Good Work Standard

- The Mayor's Good Work Standard is due to launch in November 2018, to coincide with living wage week. Its key principle is to help improve the social mobility of Londoners
- The GLA is currently considering if the Standard become a mandatory 'kite mark' requirement
- The Standard will include: '*Must do, Should do, Could do*', measured against four specific categories with relevant sub criteria: Fair Pay and Conditions, Wellbeing in the Workplace, Skills and Progression, and Diversity and Recruitment

AELP London Support for GLA Hubs and Working Groups

- o The Skills and Employment Knowledge Hub is keen to develop a data hub and business community to support stakeholders and the GLA is keen to encourage providers to provide their own analysis, data and LMI

The Skills for London Business Partnership

The GLA has asked us to share an update with our membership regarding the Skills for Londoners Business Partnership.

“The Mayor is inviting applications for board members to the Skills for Londoners Business Partnership, which will ensure input from London’s employers and key sectors into our skills and employment programmes. We are keen to secure board members with knowledge of the opportunities and challenges facing London’s key sectors. Applications are particularly encouraged from business leaders and/or sector representatives with expertise in skills challenges related to increasing demand, aging workforce, automation and Brexit – for example retail and hospitality, health and social care, education and early years, construction and infrastructure and STEM.

“Applications are also encouraged from those with a background in growth sectors identified in the Mayor’s Economic Development Strategy, in particular: advanced urban services (such as architecture, urban design, planning, engineering, property development, energy and transport); cultural and creative industries; financial and business services; life sciences; low carbon and environmental goods and services; tech and digital; and hospitality and tourism.”

We believe this is a great opportunity for our membership to provide input into the Skills for Londoners Strategy. Interested applicants must apply by 17th September 2018, and full details of the application process can be found on the [GLA’s website](#).

If you have any questions about the Board, please contact Cinar Altun of the GLA on 020 7084 2528.

Policy Update: Simon Ashworth – Chief Policy Officer

Despite it being the summer, it has been a busy period in the employment and learning policy world. The following summarises some of the ‘biggest stories’:

Apprenticeship Funding Band Review

Back in May this year the DfE commissioned the IfA to review the funding bands for 31 existing apprenticeship standards. Both the sector press and social media have begun reporting the apparent outcomes of the Institute for Apprenticeships’ review of the funding bands of 31 apprenticeship standards. AELP has also seen correspondence indicating that management, customer service and hair professional standards are facing significant cuts in their funding bands. Commenting on this, Simon Ashworth said: We have two problems with this. The first is the continued lack of real transparency around how the IfA has arrived at these cuts and the second is the timing. On Management, we are told that unidentified ‘ineligible costs’ were not discounted originally and so the funding band should have been £8,000 instead of £27,000. But having accepted the representations of the employers on the trailblazers that this would have made provision unviable, the ‘right’ rate should now be £22,000. Without full transparency, this explanation of the £14,000 difference is as clear as mud. The timing is very strange when the



government is now saying quality is more important than quantity as the 3 million target starts to look like a broken manifesto commitment. If bands are reduced, then quality will also be damaged. Let's see the proper costings and have a rational discussion on rescuing the falling starts while protecting quality.

ESFA announce extension to non-levy contracts and planned transition period

In the recently published statement, the ESFA announced they will be extending the current non-levy prime contracts which were due to expire in March 2019 for a further twelve months until March 2020. The rationale given was that following feedback about the scale and pace of the apprenticeship reforms the ESFA want to make sure that future changes are introduced in a gradual, well-managed way. This is to give time for employers and training providers to prepare to take full advantage of the new approach and to keep stability in the marketplace. Over the summer, the ESFA will work closely with employers and training providers to plan what a gradual transition should look like and will provide further details in the autumn.

National ESF Procurement Launched

The new ESFA ESF procurement round which will run from April 2019 for two years has now had further information announced. The below values are indicative of the value nationally, the opportunity published for each Investment Priorities (IP) will be advertised in Lots at LEP level. Prior Information Notices (PIN) were published on the 4th of August 2018 and it is expected that the Contract Notices will be published towards the end of August 2018. The links to the PINs are provided here for your information:

- o The opportunities have indicative values of £84m: IP 1.1 [Skills support for the Unemployed](#)
- o The opportunities have indicative values of £62m: IP 1.2 [Skills support for those who are NEET or who are at risk of becoming NEET](#)
- o The opportunities have indicative values of £10m: IP 1.4 [Managing Agent for Community grant programme](#)
- o The opportunities have indicative values of £168m: IP 2.1 [Skills Support for the Workforce and Redundancy Support](#)

Formal ESFA process for dealing with new providers making insufficient progress in monitoring visits

The ESFA updated their [guidance](#) on the removal from the RoATP and eligibility to receive public funding to deliver apprenticeship training to also now include their approach to intervention in regards to the outcome of Ofsted's new provider monitoring visits. Previously a grey area the guidance makes it clear that when Ofsted has published a monitoring visit report that finds that 'insufficient progress' has been made under one or more of the themes assessed, then unless the ESFA identifies an *exceptional extenuating circumstance*, it will write advising that, with immediate effect, the provider (a) must not start any new apprentices (b) can continue to deliver training to existing apprentices but must inform all of the existing employers they are working with, and providers they operate as a sub-contractor to, about the Ofsted monitoring visit report and (c) is prevented from working with new apprentices via an existing subcontracting arrangement or entering into a new subcontracting arrangement. Unlike getting a grade 4 for apprenticeships in a full inspection the ESFA will not remove the affected provider from the RoATP for making insufficient progress in a monitoring visit, but the affected provider will be unable to recruit any new apprentices until Ofsted has undertaken a [full inspection](#) and the assessment grade for that inspection, is at least 'requires improvement' for apprenticeships or for "overall effectiveness where there is no separate apprenticeship grade.

It is good that we now have a definite and clear definition of the process which the ESFA will follow in regards official intervention for new providers, but more importantly the guidance provides the much needed clarity that ultimately it is Ofsted who judge a provider's quality of provision and not the ESFA. The ESFA are responsible for a compliance and intervention process which is triggered by Ofsted. In previous months we have seen some unhelpful crossover and a blurring of lines in regards roles and responsibilities which has now been made much more transparent. Let's hope others take note about the importance and need for greater transparency.

Skills for Londoners Framework consultation

The Skills for Londoners Framework consultation concluded on 17th August 2018. AELP London provided the GLA with a formal submission which will be available through the AELP website shortly.

AELP London Advisory Board Update

Each month, we'll be sharing updates of the work of our Advisory Board. This month we profile two more of our Board Members:

Diane Betts

AELP London Advisory Board Member

CEO at [First Rung](#)



Diane has dedicated her career to supporting vulnerable men, women and young people irrespective of their background or faith. With over 20 years' leadership experience in not-for-profit organisations that provide specialised social support, Diane is an ambassador and an advocate for enabling social mobility and equal access – helping spearhead organisational and policy change and leading much-needed debate.

Diane is the CEO of First Rung and has built it into the largest independent unique training provider in North London and Watford, during an increasingly challenging funding environment. Since joining First Rung in 2007, they have had 100% achievement in all contracts - a record the organisation is proud of and works hard to maintain. Key to its success has been its ability to build strong and sustainable relationships with commercial organisations, such as Nando's, Sainsbury's and Utility Warehouse, that share their values and mission.

Steven Mitchell

AELP London Advisory Board Member

Director of Research Innovation and Development at [Skills Training UK](#)



Steven has led Skills Training UK towards a number of quality milestones, including; becoming the first organisation to achieve Excellent for the Merlin Standard twice; an overall grade of Good from OFSTED; and full assurance from the DWP Provider Assurance Team.

Steven started his career after university at ABN AMRO before joining Reed In Partnership, leading the quality team there nationally, before joining Skills Training UK in 2009, joining the Board in 2014.

Steven currently attends as a member of the AELP Quality Forum which supports OFSTED and the inspection of Further Education and Skills.

Our next Advisory Board will take place on Friday 19th October 2018.

AELP London Patron Focus



Our Patron Members play a huge role in enabling us to effectively support our membership through our lobbying and added value services.

Last month we shared an update with you on our inaugural AELP London Patron, [BIIAB](#). This month we are happy to share with you a 'think piece' that their Commercial Manager, Sally Power, recently authored:

Delivering the Apprenticeship Standard

Where do I start? What do I need to do? How do I put together over a yearlong study programme to cover this standard? What can I show the Employer? How will we plan the delivery model now? How will I keep the apprentices motivated, when there is no evidence of their progress? What will Ofsted want to see? How will we know when the apprentice is ready for the End-Point Assessment?

Sound familiar?

These are just a fraction of the questions that our Training Provider, Employer and College customers continue to ask us, as they try to get to grips with the delivery of apprenticeship standards and migration from frameworks.

The landscape is different and there are many risks for Providers and Employers in the delivery of standards, and the ability to be efficient and deliver effectiveness. There is often a limited understanding by the Employer of their role and their involvement throughout the apprenticeship programme. The recruitment of the apprentice is crucial. They must be recruited to the right role, at the right level in order to fully complete the standard and successfully pass through the gateway. If they can't do this in their current job, this is the wrong apprenticeship for them.

Providers are delivering standards like a framework. The standards themselves are short and lack detail and structure compared to detailed qualification specifications, amplification and internal and external quality assurance requirements in Frameworks. Without the structure some Providers have struggled to know how to organise and structure their delivery to ensure the depth, breadth and level of the training is successfully completed.

The requirements and currency of occupational experience, knowledge and skills of the delivery team are different for standards compared to frameworks. The emphasis is on training and less so on assessment and so this is impacting on the current skill sets of the of the Provider teams, but also on their recruitment strategies. With the changeover to standards, Providers are reporting that the average number of visits to train, and to monitor apprentice performance has increased and it is taking longer than expected to get the apprentices to the gateway. Completion rates to the Gateway, in some instances are being affected, as apprentices are not making progress or can't recognise any progress and are struggling with their learning. All of these issues will increase the risk profile of Providers, apprentices will be on-programme longer than expected and drop off rates will increase, meaning fewer apprentices complete, or make it through gateway which will impact on timely completions.

BIIAB have heard many stories and picked up many anecdotes in our meetings across the sector over the last few years. Whatever we hear or read in the related press reports each week about

the fall in numbers of apprentices, the quality of delivery and the issues with funding, the standards are what we have to deliver and so the BIIAB approach continues to be to provide advice, guidance and support to our Customers to ensure that they can mitigate risk, improve efficiencies and create effective training delivery across the standards.

The most important way we can provide this essential support is through the BIIAB Quality Assured Delivery and Assessment Preparation (QADAP) service and pack. The QADAP service is designed to provide a 'full fat' quality assurance service. Each BIIAB QADAP pack has been designed in order to be efficiently used in a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and they are easy to use with apprentices and Employers. It enables Providers, from day one of working with the apprentice, to have a tailored, consistent and standardised approach to delivery, covering all that is required in the standard and enabling any potential gaps in the apprenticeship delivery to be identified, and built in from the very start of the apprenticeship. It tracks individual apprentice progress towards the 'Gateway', providing recognition of milestone achievements along the apprentices' journey which encourages and motivates apprentices and will prepare apprentices for the End-Point Assessment.

One of our Customers, Professor David Foskett, Welcome Skills, explains how the QADAP service and packs works for them:

'The BIIAB QADAP service and packs are invaluable as a learning, monitoring and development tool for all apprentices. The QADAP packs create a very clear study programme, that contextualises the standards in a format that is easy to understand and follow, making the applied learning enjoyable, relevant and motivational. The QADAP service and packs make the learning achievable, helping create a successful outcome.'

We have listened to our customers and continue to respond to the lessons learned from recruitment, training delivery and preparation for End-Point Assessment. We understand that people who choose an apprenticeship to continue their learning, need to have the best opportunity to learn the necessary skills, knowledge and behaviours to be successful and we want them to succeed and flourish in their vocational career.

For further information on our QADAP service and packs, please visit our [website](#) or [contact us](#).

The AELP London Strategic Forum

We took the decision to cancel August's Strategic Forum meeting due to a large number of 'apologies' sent because of the holiday season, so subsequently there is no update in this month's CAPITAL.

Our next Strategic Forum will take place at [City Hall](#) on Friday 19th October at 9.30am -11.30am.

The meeting will be hosted by Advisory Board Chair, Nichola Hay, and a policy update will be provided by Simon Ashworth and Mark Dawe. We will provide an in-depth update of the discussion points and outcomes in the October edition of CAPITAL.

Please be aware that only full members of AELP London are able to attend our Strategic Forum meetings.

| Date | Time | Venue |
|--------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| Friday 19th October 2018 | 9.30am – 11.30am | City Hall |
| Monday 3rd December 2018 | 9.30am – 11.30am | City Hall |
| Monday 4th February 2019 | 9.30am – 11.30am | City Hall |
| Thursday 4th April 2019 | 9.30am – 11.30am | City Hall |

Monday 3rd June 2019

9.30am – 11.30am

[City Hall](#)

Your feedback on our Strategic Forums is really helpful to keep us up to date so we can keep evolving them to meet your needs. The feedback has been broadly positive, but we don't rest on our laurels so please continue to let us know your thoughts by emailing aelplondon@aelp.org.uk

Continuing the conversation

We're committed to engaging with our members, working with you to understand how we can best support you and designing services 'with you, not for you'.

Website

Our new website will be ready to launch in the next couple of weeks. Our aim is to deliver a website that provides a great user experience; enables members to communicate with one another; and provides a showcase for the excellent work taking place across London.

Workshops

We want to deliver a series of workshops for you. Your feedback on topics relevant to you would be most welcome.

You can also talk with us via Twitter @AELPLondon, or the more 'old fashioned' way by email at aelplondon@aelp.org.uk or over the phone at 0117 440 9525

Best wishes,

Jane Hickie
AELP COO
janehickie@aelp.org.uk

We want to make sure that CAPITAL evolves to meet the needs of our members. If you have any feedback, or are interested in writing a comment piece, then we would love to hear from you. Please email us at aelplondon@aelp.co.uk.



AELP London
E: aelplondon@aelp.org.uk | W: www.aelp.org.uk/aelp-london

Tel: 0117 4409525

© Association of Employment and Learning Providers
2nd Floor, 9 Apex Court, Bradley Stoke, Bristol, BS32 4JT
Registered in England, Company No. 2209949, VAT No. 545 1202 79.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without the prior permission, in writing, of AELP