



CAPITAL

December 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.

A message from Advisory Board Chair, Nichola Hay

When we formed AELP London in April this year, we wanted to make sure that organisations involved in the delivery of employment and skills in the capital were given a voice. I think, and I hope you'll agree, that we've made a good start!

We've built an excellent working relationship with the Skills Team in the Mayor's Office and London Councils, and I'd like to thank them both for their support. It's been great to see our members able to provide feedback to them, and Ofsted (and others!) through our Strategic Forums, and to see that feedback listened to and acted on.

We recognise, however, that this is just a start and we have much to do in 2019. From Apprenticeships and the AEB to the Good Work Standard, Functional Skills, funding caps and much more... we have a packed agenda for 2019.

We'll be responding to that agenda through events, lobbying, consulting, conversations and more besides! Watch this space.

There is strength in numbers. We'll be working to build our membership further in 2019, encouraging more organisations to join us in our mission of increasing London's workforce



productivity and improving social mobility. I encourage you to talk to your networks, tell them about us and ask them to get in touch. The benefits are there for all of us.

I am delighted to be able to wish all our members and partners a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I look forward to seeing you next year.

Nicki.

The AELP London Strategic Forum: 06 December 2018

Another Strategic Forum, another sunny day on the banks of the Thames. Okay... it rained during the meeting, but it had brightened up by the time we'd concluded what was a packed agenda. And on that note, please find a 'brief' summary of our key talking points.

GLA Skills' Team Update

We were delighted to be joined by Cameron Tait and Brendan Hogarth from the GLA's Skills Team. Cameron, who is quickly becoming part of the furniture at our Forums, gave a brief overview of current activity in their team:

- The recent AEB event, supported by AELP London proved to be a great success... the 'information event' slides are available through the TFL website, and any organisations wanting to ask questions regarding the AEB can do so through the online portal.
- The Skills London event attended by Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, was a great success (the Mayor stayed much longer than scheduled!) and made a number of announcements, including:
 - £1.3m investment in Apprenticeship Pilots (see previous editions of Capital for more detail)
 - The Careers for London Action Plan (please see article below)
 - Further planned capital investment in the capital's skills sector

Brendan gave our members a detailed update on the work currently being undertaken to support the development of the Good Work Standard, one of the Mayor's manifesto pledges.

The Good Work Standard is being developed in partnership with business and is focused on improving economic fairness. To borrow from Brendan's presentation 'the Good Work Standard will help employers to help their employees' by 'creating a benchmark for employment best practice' covering areas such as the living wage, work/life balance and financial inclusion.

We're delighted to be able to share Brendan's [presentation](#) with our members.

The Good Work Standard is due to launch in February 2019 and we believe that there are obvious benefits for our members in adopting the Standard. First and foremost, it will demonstrate a commitment to best practice. More pragmatically, the Standard will be 'embedded into GLA procurement practices', so members that hold the Standard will have a competitive edge.

Nichola Hay also advised Brendan that she felt the membership can play an important role in providing impartial advice and guidance to employers to promote apprenticeships. This was welcomed by Brendan and we'll provide further details about upcoming opportunities in the New Year.

London Councils Update

We're delighted to let you know that AELP London has been invited to attend the [London Councils](#) Board meetings. This means that we can provide feedback to their Board, as well as ensuring that the profile of our members is raised, which can only lead to improved communication and collaboration.



Peter O'Brien joined us at the Forum and provided us with an informative update of their agenda and current projects.

- **Technical Skills Education** – this is a priority area for London Councils and they are keen to boost training and productivity
- **Post 16 Funding** – Yolande Burgess (who joined us at our November Strategic Forum) attended the Select Committee at the House of Commons, to provide representation and discuss the importance of post 16 funding both inside and outside schools
- **Apprenticeships** – participation in apprenticeships remains low in the capital and London Councils is working with their peers at the GLA to address this. Their ambition is to create an 'all age' careers service. You can read more about their plans through their website. Peter also outlined how they will be making data available (before Christmas) that shows a trend for a move towards apprentices receiving the living wage
- **The Levy** – like many others, London Councils would like to see more flexibility in the way the Levy is administered, increased simplicity and increased speed in the development of standards. They recently wrote to the Chancellor and Skills' Minister to outline their concerns
- **T-Levels** – London Councils currently has a consultation open covering funding, which will close in February, details are available through their website
- **Social Workers** – eight boroughs are currently coming together to deliver an apprenticeship approach to building their social worker resource. They are likely to partner with an academic provider, as it is a degree level apprenticeship, but it is anticipated that this approach may be replicated across other apprenticeships. This may create opportunities for members to work in partnership and any updates will be shared with AELP London.

We're also pleased to let our members know about a couple of events that London Councils will be holding in the New Year, supporting their annual business survey. Each year London Councils, in conjunction with the London Chamber of Commerce run an annual business survey and this year's survey was focused on businesses views on skills, employment and the apprenticeship levy.

London Councils will be running two sub-regional breakfast events to discuss the findings, which we believe will be of interest to our members. Full details of how to register can be found through the links below:

[Business 100 Survey: Follow Up Meeting \(West London\) 22nd January](#)

[Business 100 Survey: Follow Up Meeting \(Central London\) 29th January](#)

Ofsted

This was the first of our Strategic Forums that Ofsted has attended. We were delighted when our guest presenter Reiks Drijver, started his presentation by saying how he was 'delighted to be back in touch with London providers as a result of the AELP London forums'. The feeling is mutual!



Reiks' presentation, titled 'Towards the Education Inspection Framework 2019' was very informative and provided a great opportunity for Reiks to get some direct feedback from providers. Again, we're delighted to share Reiks' [presentation](#) with our members... and provide a few headline notes below, by way of summary.

- Ofsted is focused on creating a framework that works for all providers and doesn't feel like it's something that has been designed with schools in mind
- Their aim is to make EIF inspections a 'force for improvement'

- At the heart of the new framework will be 'the curriculum'... and this is defined by three key words:
 - Intent
 - Implementation
 - Impact
- **The framework will judge:**
 - Quality
 - Curriculum
 - Wider development
 - Leadership and management
- Ofsted are working hard to reduce 'overlap' in the current judgement areas to ensure the system is less repetitive and fairer
- There will be a greater focus on education and a reduced focus on data (within reason!)
- The four 'awards' grades will not change
- A consultation will be launched in January 2019 and the new EIF will be published in the summer of 2019 and launched on the 1st September 2019
- It will remain the case that Prime Contractors will be the focus of inspections, but subcontractors may be inspected in some instances, for example, if 'concerns have been raised' about their delivery
- Self-Assessment Reports, which are sometimes overlooked by providers, are seen by Ofsted as a really useful tool. They give providers the opportunity to provide narrative that supports their data. They are always reviewed by Ofsted
- The Provider Survey is also seen as a useful tool by Ofsted and providers are encouraged to respond – for example they enable providers to identify periods (8-weeks) where an inspection may be problematic for operational reasons etc. NB this 'period of grace' was introduced by Ofsted as a direct result of AELP lobbying, so it is particularly important to take advantage of it, or there is a risk it may be removed

Following Reiks' update, he took a number of questions from our membership and agreed to take a number of points away for further discussion with the Ofsted team, including:

- The need for further clarification on how the initial provider 'risk assessment' will be delivered, what data will be measured etc
- Providers would like to see an 'acknowledgement of receipt' built into the 'Provider Survey' system
- Providers highlighted the importance of Ofsted enabling 'shadow nominees' to observe the nominee during the inspection process. While Ofsted do in some cases permit this, Reiks outlined that they were keen not to do so across all inspections. Providers pointed out the importance of shadow nominees to them, in terms of consistency, knowledge sharing and succession planning for future inspections. This will be discussed further. Mark Dawe also advised members that this issue was on his list for planned discussions with Paul Joyce.*

***UPDATE: Following our Strategic Forum and influenced by the lobbying work of AELP and AELP London, Paul Joyce has announced that FE and skills providers will be able to have Observer Nominees, alongside main nominee in full inspections.**

Digital Entitlement: Gateway Qualifications

Diana Muallum of Gateway Qualifications provided our members with a detailed update on the forthcoming Digital Entitlement, which will launch in 2020. Diana was very clear that the development of the entitlement is a work in progress and they are looking to secure the input of training providers to help them progress. There is also recognition that providers are an invaluable source of insight into what actually meets the needs of learners in the real world.



AELP will look to provide a collective response, but we also recommend that providers do give feedback directly to Diana (a process that begun during the Forum!).

The Digital Entitlement ensures that adults without digital skills, including retired, unemployed and those with disabilities will be entitled to training.

Two qualification levels are currently proposed:

- **Beginner** i.e. no digital experience
- **Essential** i.e. those with some experience

Evidently there is a greater degree of complexity to delivery and Diana advised how discussions are taking place as to whether there will be unitisation of learning. This is something that feedback is particularly sought on.

You can access Diana's presentation [here](#).

AELP Policy Update

AELP CEO, Mark Dawe, provided his customary "canter" through the national policy agenda. The following represents (very much) the edited highlights!

Devolution – Mark introduced Harminder Matharu who will be joining AELP on the 19th December to provide dedicated support for the devolution agenda. Harminder will be splitting her time 50/50 between the national agenda and the London agenda.

You can learn more about Harminder, and the work she'll be doing via an article from our friends at [FE Week](#).



Devolution continues, albeit at differing speeds, across the various combined authority areas i.e. West Midlands, Manchester. AELP is in regular dialogue with all areas, ensuring that we are able to influence development, as well as sharing insights, disseminating best practice etc. Regional events are planned for 2019 to support the agenda, and further information will be shared with members via the usual channels.

AELP London events – we'd like to hear from our members regarding what events would be of particular interest/use to them in 2019. Get in touch via aelp_london@aelp.org.uk to let us know where you'd like some support, guidance or maybe the opportunity to network with other organisations and stakeholders.

Our first event of the New Year will take place on 15th January and focus on the re-opening of the Register of Approved Training Providers (RoATP).

The Session Objectives are as follows:

- To have a clear understanding of the steps required for a successful ROATP submission
- To understand how to use past track record, processes, systems and performance data to support their submission
- To be clear on the process and questions, how to answer these and avoid the pitfalls
- To be able to effectively plan the submission and understand what comes next

Full details are available via the [Events section](#) of the AELP website.

ASK Project - the Apprenticeship Support and Knowledge for Schools and Colleges programme (ASK) is funded by the National Apprenticeship Service, part of the Department for Education. The programme is designed to give schools, colleges and other educational establishments across England free support to develop and transform how your students think about apprenticeships.

AELP will be putting in a bid, working in conjunction with regional networks and national providers.

5% - it probably goes without saying that we were delighted to hear the announcement in the

reduction of the employer contribution from 10% to 5%. We'd be even more delighted to hear the announcement of when this will happen. We are pushing the government hard to make the change as soon as possible... particularly as we are hearing that some employers are choosing to delay starts until the change happens, to save on costs.

Transfer of funds – in the West Midlands, discussions are taking place regarding how levy underspend from large employers can be transferred to SMEs. The key here is to ensure that large employers do not assume the administrative burden. AELP are working with the ESFA to help ascertain the most effective mechanism to achieve this effectively.

RoATP – the [register re-opened](#) on 12th December. Our understanding is that providers currently on the register should not encounter problems in re-registering assuming that they have been actively delivering training... effectively!

Provider funding caps – further updates will follow on this issue, as we are awaiting confirmation as to the preferred approach to applying any funding caps. While we understand that recent cases such as 3aaa and learndirect have presented an argument for change, we believe that the key lies in good management by providers and commissioners...not a one-size cap.

The AELP Governance Code – [our code of conduct](#) has received great feedback from the Department, and as we have previously mentioned, at a range of events, we encourage our members to download and implement the code. We'll be delivering a number of events next year to support the dissemination of the code, starting with [a webinar on the 24th January](#).

The IFA and Standards – uncertainty continues and it's obvious that the lack of communications from the IFA is fuelling this uncertainty. Much of the skills system is in a state of 'let's wait and see...', which is a hugely unwelcome situation. AELP is continuing to work hard to try and influence on this issue.

Off The Job Training – we're re-doubling our efforts on working to bring more flexibility to the 20% rule. We know from our discussion with Ofsted that they are 'adamant' that the 20% rule is not a quality issue and their interest is in 'quality' of training. It's a funding rule, and one that we think is too rigid.

End Point Assessment – one of our members during the Forum described end point assessment as a "world of madness" ... with no dissension! It's clear that there are still significant issues that continue to cause huge problems. AELP is fighting on many fronts and recently published a [paper](#) that summarises our position, which we would recommend our members download and digest.

Functional Skills - AELP recently wrote to the Minister regarding Functional Skills funding, receiving what we can only describe as an 'unusual response'. Funding for classroom-based learning attracts twice the funding of that in the workplace and we believe it needs to be put on a level playing field. The Department's response that the lower funding level was due to efficiency in the delivery model does not ring true. As you may expect, we will be challenging this assumption.

The Careers for London Action Plan

The Careers for London Action Plan was published by City Hall on 23rd November, coinciding with the launch of the Skills London careers and jobs fair.

The Action Plan has been developed in collaboration with schools, colleges, training providers, employers, unions, universities and London boroughs... it sets out:

- The Mayor's vision for careers provision in London
- What City Hall will do to help realise this vision
- The vital role that other organisations – including employers, schools, colleges and universities, but also government – must play

We recommend that our members take the time to download and digest the [Action Plan](#).

WorldSkills – a reminder!

Believe it or not WorldSkills has now been taking place for 63 years, raising the profile and recognition of skilled people, and shows how important skills are in achieving economic growth.

WorldSkills UK Competitions bring together apprentices and young people from around the UK to compete to be the best in their chosen skill, first in national competitions and then as Team UK in international skills competitions.



A [short paper](#) was recently released that outlines the benefits to providers and employers in taking part in the WorldSkills Competition. We believe that the competition provides a great opportunity to promote the excellent work taking place in the capital and encourage our members to get involved.

Useful information, guides, resources and more

With so much happening across the sector, we thought it would be useful to provide a quick a summary of a few things that you might find useful:

AELP Best Practice Guidance

There are a range of best practice guides available through the [AELP website](#). We've provided some easy links below to guides that we think our members might find useful. It's definitely worth keeping an eye on the website for the latest updates, as well.

EPA/EPAO

[Reasonable Adjustments – A Best Practice Guide](#)

Many of the new Apprenticeship standards make reference to reasonable adjustments but stipulate that you should refer to the EPAO Reasonable Adjustment Policy. Having carried out a review these differ and in some cases do not yet exist, which does not give a valid, reliable and manageable approach to supporting individuals with support needs.

[Pricing and Eligible Costs – A Best Practise Guide](#)

There have been questions raised by providers and employers about what is included in an EPA price and what has to be paid for additionality. Furthermore EPAO members have been concerned that providers and employers do not release the expectations as to who pays for what.

Subcontracting

[The AELP Good Practice Governance Guide](#)

Subcontracting has become an integral element of the FE system. It has grown and evolved mainly because of the changes to the funding system and policy development, and, as such, little has been written on what good practice looks like. To fill this vacuum AELP, Collab Group and HOLEX have worked together to produce a short good practice guide to support both the prime and subcontractor on the key principles of subcontracting.

[Online Assessor Training](#)

A reminder that EPAO and provider AELP members can access a free online assessor training course, developed in partnership with Innovate Awarding and Pearl Assess.

Building the membership



Since AELP London was formed earlier this year, we've been working hard to forge links with key stakeholders, such as the GLA and London Councils.

We've also been working to expand our membership, because we know that the best way to make a network work is to increase its number, make it more diverse and expand its reach.

For this reason, we encourage you to speak with your peers, customers and stakeholders to let them know about the benefits of joining AELP London, either as a member or a Patron. Need a reminder of the benefits? No problem.

Membership Benefits 2018 – 2019

- Access to AELP's broader policy knowledge
- Lobbying to support London-based providers objectives
- Up to date information about changes to the skills and employability agenda in London
- Monthly AELP London e-newsletter - *Capital*
- Access to the AELP London webpage on the AELP website
- Opportunities to network with other London members
- Support from the AELP Research Team
- Access to the half-day, bi-monthly AELP London Strategic Forums
- Access to AELP London member only events
- Discounted delegate fees to attend AELP events, webinars and conferences
- Complimentary Subscription to e-publication FE Week (worth £60)
- AELP Project Delivery Team support or AELP Events Team support for webinars and conferences
- Discounted AELP Full or Associate Membership

Membership Fees

Membership of AELP London is available to any organisation that delivers government funded skills or employability programmes to learners, apprentices or jobseekers.

- Turnover under 2.5m - £450.00 + VAT
- Turnover over 2.5m - £650.00 + VAT

Associate Membership is also available for an annual fee of £100 + VAT

AELP London Patron Benefits 2018 – 2019

- Branding on the AELP London website
- Patron profile on the AELP London website
- Discounted opportunity to deliver own webinars to members
- Patron footer branding on the AELP London Newsletter 'Capital'

Patron Fee

£2,500 + VAT or £1,000 + VAT for an existing AELP Patron

The AELP London Strategic Forum

Our next Strategic Forum will take place at [City Hall](#) on Monday 4th February 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 December edition of CAPITAL.

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

Date	Time	Venue
Monday, 4th February 2019	9.30am – 11.30am	City Hall
Thursday, 4th April 2019	9.30am – 11.30am	City Hall
Cancelled Monday, 3rd June 2019	9.30am – 11.30am	City Hall
Thursday, 18th July 2019	9.30am – 11.30am	City Hall
Thursday, 3rd October 2019	9.30am – 11.30am	City Hall
Thursday, 05 December 2019	9.30am – 11.30am	City Hall

As we updated last month, we'd like your feedback on our Strategic Forums, so we can keep evolving them to meet your needs. The feedback on our inaugural Forum was 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

AELP London Office shutdown dates

A quick note to let you know that on Thursday 20 December 2018 the AELP London team are going out for Christmas lunch! We will be leaving the office at 11:30am and it will then be closed for the rest of the day. If you have any urgent enquiries on that day please call Mo Parsons on 07854 215490, or Jane Hickie on 07909 966621.

Friday 21 December 2018 will be a normal working day, however we will be officially closing for the Christmas break at 5pm.

We will return on Wednesday 02 January 2019 at 8am.

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'.

Last month we let you know that we're working on a new AELP London website. We're making good progress and we'll be able to share an update with you very soon. 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.

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 aelp-london@aelp.co.uk.



AELP London

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