

Future Apprenticeships Webinar: Apprenticeship Reforms for Governors and Non Executives Questions and Answers Log

Date: 17 January 2017

Chair: Mike Cox, Operations Director, AELP

Facilitator: Dr. Sue Pember OBE Governance Advisor and HOLEX Director of Policy and External Relations

Q: What is the interaction between the levy and LA maintained schools?

A: Local Authorities will be levy payers and therefore so will LA maintained schools. Local Authorities may choose to use their levy on their own staff or pass their 2.3% floor target [2.3% of the staff of public bodies must be apprentices] down to other organisations under their control. Schools are taking on apprentices to work as technicians, sports support workers and in their offices.

Q: What are the implications on funding arrangements if a college were to form a subsidiary? Apprentice Training company to satisfy the demand for apprenticeships in its geographical areas.

A: Under the new rules any organisation delivering apprenticeships must be on the RoATP and must also deliver apprenticeships and not be just a broker. As a 'new' company the application to the RoATP would need consideration, but if a wholly owned subsidiary the financial robustness questions should be fine. You would also need to consider the benefits of doing so as a subsidiary rather than as part of the college as whole. The college will have a stronger local identity that employers may prefer to deal with.

Q: To what extent have sixth form colleges engaged with apprenticeships; what do you consider to be the advantages and disadvantages of them doing so?

A: There are not many 6th form colleges delivering apprenticeships although some are. Their challenge is around the roll-on roll-off nature of apprenticeship delivery as opposed to the termly intakes that they will be used to. One benefit would be the ability to have students swap from an apprenticeship to an A-level or visa-versa. However, managing the funding for that switch would be a challenge.

Q: Stewart Segal wrote apprentices should be offered the opportunity to resist their GCSEs as part of their apprenticeships. Would this be implemented with the new standards of the future of apprenticeships?

Q: How will the GCSE changes impact the apprenticeship industry?

A to both questions: The main impact will be that employers will not understand the new numerical grading. Some providers may also think about raising their entry criteria to avoid the need to get apprentices without GCSEs to achieve the level 2 required. Especially as the funding for English and maths is low.

Apprentices can be funded for retakes but as the guidance states that is only:

“In exceptional circumstances, we will fund:

113.1. approved ‘stepping-stone’ qualifications (including components, where applicable) to support progression to English or maths Functional Skills or GCSEs at Level 2 to address specific skills gaps

113.2. re-takes of GCSE English or maths where the apprentice has a grade lower than grade 4 (or C) and they receive further teaching

Q: Can you clarify if the levy fund can be used for non-apprenticeship training? I’m hearing some rumours that it can.

A: The levy can only be used for Apprenticeship training.

Q: 16-18 year olds are still being encouraged to stay on at school and the apprenticeship is not discussed. More of a statement than question.

A: Careers advice is an area that AELP are working hard to address within schools. Some schools are more forward thinking than others and welcome FE providers in to discuss all of the options available. However, there is a long way to go. Especially with the 'high achieving' students who are often now included in vocation information.

Q: Can the levy fund be used as additional training for an apprentice for example an online course in say Microsoft or time management? As long as it is for the apprentice?

A: All learning must be able to be mapped clearly to the achievement of the standard. A generic ICT qualification may struggle to pass that criteria. However, providers have flexibility and must respond to what employers require.

Q: Have you heard anything about when Employers are going to be invited onto DAS? We will need to be invited onto it, but I haven't heard anything. Any idea how we will be contacted?

A: We understand that the timings for this are still on track. Employers will be written to, but we have not seen a draft of the letter.

Q: How confident are we that the RoTAP decisions will be communicated at the beginning of March.

A: We are confident that the results will be given in March.

Q: Once the replay of this meeting is released may it be shared externally - in addition to being a Governor I am also Chair of the County Cricket Board who are looking at

apprenticeships and this would assist with the boards wider knowledge.

A: Yes please feel free to share all resources from the www.futureapprenticeships.org.uk programme website. There are several webinars available.

Association of Employment and Learning Providers

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