

Westminster Higher Education Forum policy conference:

Next steps for degree apprenticeships in England - growth, delivery, quality, and participation

Timing: Morning, Tuesday, 21st October 2025

Taking place online



WESTMINSTER
HIGHER EDUCATION
FORUM

Draft agenda subject to change

- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentary
- 9.05 **The evolving landscape for degree apprenticeships in England and priorities moving forward**
Senior commentator
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.25 **Next steps for degree apprenticeships in England - funding, impact of recent reform and supporting sector growth**
impact of Level 7 funding reforms and the Growth and Skills Levy | transparency in levy implementation and responding to uncertainty around scope and timescales | role of Skills England in aligning funding and delivery | scaling provision across sectors and regions | strengthening partnerships between HE, FE, training providers and employers | co-design, progress monitoring and quality assurance frameworks that respond to labour market needs | aligning provision with local and regional skills priorities | partnership models and sustainable delivery pathways | modular and foundation pilots | supporting retention and learner progression | implications and next steps following the 2025 Spending Review
James Walker, Director, Apprenticeships, Manchester Metropolitan University
Cathryn Moses-Stone, Head, Policy and Impact, Chartered Management Institute
Senior representative, employer
Senior representative, FE
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.10 **Priorities for strengthening the provision of degree apprenticeships in HEIs**
Sophie Ireland, Policy Adviser, Universities UK
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.30 **Chair's closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentary
- 10.35 Break
- 10.45 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentary
- 10.50 **Addressing regional skills gaps and supporting local businesses through degree apprenticeships**
Professor Liz Mossop, Vice Chancellor, Sheffield Hallam University
- 11.00 **Aligning degree apprenticeships with workforce needs, employer priorities and regional growth ambitions**
aligning Level 6 and 7 provision with regional economic priorities | engaging local authorities in system development and supporting devolved approaches | building delivery capacity across regions | improving awareness of routes into priority industries | addressing administrative and financial barriers for SMEs | use of levy flexibilities and targeted support to encourage SME participation | integrating micro-credentials and stackable qualifications | embedding degree apprenticeships in lifelong learning and professional development strategies
Brian Culleton, Director, Apprenticeships, University of Huddersfield
Senior representative, employer
Senior representative, local authority
Senior commentator
- 11.20 Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.40 **Effective degree apprenticeship delivery - course quality, collaboration and the role of employers and training providers**
Senior representative, training provider
- 11.50 **Improving access, diversity, widening participation and supporting progression**
incorporating degree apprenticeships into access and participation plans | promoting inclusive recruitment and onboarding | partnerships with disadvantaged communities | progression from lower-level apprenticeship qualifications | supporting learner wellbeing and access to tailored support | the role of degree apprenticeships in social mobility | use of evidence and monitoring to improve access and outcomes | granularity in socioeconomic data to support policy development
Senior representative, HE
Senior representative, employer
Student representative
Senior commentator
- 12.10 Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.30 **Degree apprenticeships in England - next steps for policy**
Senior representative, policy
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.55 **Chair's and Westminster Higher Education Forum closing remarks**
Senior Parliamentary
Sean Cudmore, Westminster Higher Education Forum