



Gillian Keegan MP

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Apprenticeships and Skills

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Jennifer Coupland:

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15th June 2020

Dear Jennifer,

RE: LEVEL-8 APPRENTICESHIPS

The Secretary of State for Education wrote to you on 26th February 2020 to ask you to undertake a formal review of the Senior Leader Level 7 apprenticeship standard. I want to thank you for the work that you and your staff have carried out on this review.

Higher and degree level apprenticeships continue to form an important part of our skills and education system, providing people of all backgrounds with a choice of high-value vocational training alongside traditional academic routes.

As the Secretary of State set out in his recent letter to you regarding the Senior Leader standard, it is important that levy funds are supporting those that can benefit most from an apprenticeship, such as those starting out in their careers or helping people from disadvantaged backgrounds to get ahead. While we do not yet know the full impact of the Coronavirus, our priority is ensuring that apprentices and employers can continue to access high quality training, both now and in the future.

I do not believe that using levy funds for Level 8 apprenticeships, which could result in a PhD, provides value for money, nor are they in the spirit of our reformed apprenticeships system.

Therefore, I am writing to inform you that after careful consideration the Department will not fund apprenticeships at Level 8. As the powers to take decisions on standards development and approval reside with the Institute you will wish to consider whether you continue to invest resources in the development of apprenticeships at this level.

I know that the employers currently developing Level 8 apprenticeships were informed in the summer of 2019 that funding for these standards could not be guaranteed, due to the need to ensure that we are meeting the needs of employers and apprentices at all levels in a way that is financially sustainable and delivers good value for money.

I am aware that the employers involved have worked hard developing not only these Level 8 apprenticeships, but also a range of apprenticeships at lower levels that have contributed to the success of our reforms. I want to thank them for their continued commitment to this vital programme.

I am copying this letter to Antony Jenkins, Chair of the Institute.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gillian', with a large, stylized loop at the beginning.

Gillian Keegan MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Apprenticeships and Skills