

Rt Hon Gavin Williamson CBE MP
Secretary of State for Education
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

27 May 2020

Dear Mr Williamson

I am writing on behalf of the British Academy of Management – the learned society for Business and Management scholars in the UK (www.bam.ac.uk) – with regard to the Review of the Senior Leader Master’s Degree Apprenticeship, which you have ordered. We regret the proposal to remove the mandated qualification element from this apprenticeship.

Many of our members are involved in delivering these programmes and feel very strongly about the potential negative impact of the proposed withdrawal of the mandated qualification element, as their conversations with participants suggest the qualification is key to employee and sponsor engagement. Participants in these schemes are not stereotypical Executive MBA students, but are usually middle managers, often working in public service (particularly the NHS), and are frequently newcomers to Higher Education. One such member wrote: “The rich combination between the L7 standards, the space for thinking offered by the 20% off-the job learning, in-company sponsorship and academic input cannot be under-estimated. This model enables a rapid and rich work-based approach to learning and practice development. Without the L7 funding and focus I personally don’t think companies will be committed to manager development to the same extent. This has consequences for the future of the UK economy.”

What our members have told us chimes completely with the findings from Chartered Association of Business School’s survey reported in their letter to Jennifer Coupland, Chief Executive of the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education, on 3rd April 2020 regarding this proposal; I attach a copy of that letter for your reference. The Academy wishes to express its full support for, and reiterate the points made in, that letter.

We would be happy to talk further with you about this.

Yours sincerely,



Madeleine Barrows
CEO, British Academy of Management