



General Secretary

Recruitment pack

May 2025



**Become the
voice of our
profession**

**Applications
close at noon
on 5 June**

Table of contents

→	01	Letter from the President
→	02	The opportunity
→	03	About the role
→	05	Practical information
→	06	Informal inquiries

Appendices

→	A1	Requirements and role of the General Secretary
→	A2	Election address or statement
→	A3	Nomination form
→	A4	Candidate contact details form

Welcome from the President



David Collingwood

President, Association of Educational Psychologists

As President, I'm incredibly proud to be part of an organisation that stands up for educational psychologists every single day.

I think this is a really important time for our profession. With education reform under scrutiny across all four nations, the voice of educational psychologists has never been more needed. As EPs, we bring expertise, compassion, and an unwavering belief in the potential of every child. And as the next General Secretary of the AEP, you could lead that voice nationally, helping to shape policy, standing up for our values, and fighting for a fairer, more inclusive education system for the children we serve.

Our General Secretary represents you as members, advocating for our profession, and ensuring we remain a strong voice at both national and local levels.

The role is more than a leadership position. It's a chance to be at the forefront of change. It offers opportunities to grow, to lead with purpose, and to make a meaningful difference, not just within the organisation but across the whole system that supports children and young people.

We're looking for someone who can build on the strong foundations already in place, bringing their own leadership experience and commitment to educational equity and inclusion.

Our General Secretary will work collaboratively with members and the wider team to help ensure that educational psychology continues to thrive and make a real difference to the lives of children and young people.

If this resonates with you and excites you, we would love to hear from you.

Warm wishes,

David

The opportunity

In response to the growing pressures on the education system and the needs of children and young people, the AEP is focused on influencing change.

We are calling on governments across all four nations to work with us to deliver lasting, systemic improvements, including:

- embedding inclusion within education reform, strengthening early intervention through better training and support in schools
- securing greater investment in educational psychology training to increase the number of educational psychologists to meet the growing needs of children and young people.

For our new General Secretary, this means stepping into a role with a clear mandate - to lead and shape the AEP's voice on the national stage, drive forward these policy priorities, and ensure members have the recognition, support, and working conditions they need.

An aspiring leader

The General Secretary is an ambassador for our profession.

They will help steer the organisation through an exciting period and be at the forefront of influencing key policy developments, advocating for our values and helping to ensure educational psychologists have a powerful voice on the national stage.

It's also an incredibly rewarding role, offering opportunities for personal growth, organisational leadership experience, and the privilege of representing and supporting peers across the UK.

Whoever takes up the role will be pivotal in influencing policy and championing inclusion.

At the same time, they'll be a passionate advocate for the profession, standing up for the thousands of members who work every day to promote wellbeing and inclusion, ensuring they are supported, empowered, and heard.

They will build on our strong foundations built over many years, leading with impact and be committed to making a difference to the lives of children and young people on a national scale.



About the role

The term General Secretary can mean different things in different unions, from operational lead to strategic figurehead. At the AEP, the General Secretary is both.

Elected by members, the postholder serves as the chief officer and strategic leader, guiding all aspects of the organisation and representing educational psychologists at the highest levels.

This is a role with real influence, shaping the profession, advocating for change, and ensuring the AEP continues to deliver on its mission to support EPs and improve the lives of children and young people.

Key responsibilities include:

- Providing strategic leadership and implementing NEC policy decisions
- Representing the AEP as a trade union and professional body
- Leading campaigns and influencing national policy and public debate
- Managing staff, systems, and internal operations
- Acting as spokesperson for the AEP to government, the media and key stakeholders
- Supporting and advising the NEC and attending meetings
- Overseeing casework, training for local reps, and salary/conditions negotiations
- Promoting the profession and leading the response to consultations, inquiries and national issues

The General Secretary is accountable to the National Executive Committee, through the President, who acts as their line manager.



Essential experience and skills

We're looking for someone who will bring a blend of strategic leadership, operational insight, and a deep understanding of the professional and policy contexts in which educational psychologists work to the role.

You will have:

- Strategic leadership experience in a union, professional body, or public service
- Experience in organisational planning and operational delivery
- Understanding of educational psychology and/or union/employment contexts
- Excellent communication, influencing and interpersonal skills
- Confidence managing staff teams and supporting governance

Personal attributes

- Collaborative and visionary leadership style
- Politically astute, credible and resilient
- Committed to equity, inclusion and trade union values
- Able to work independently, handle complexity, and lead in a values-driven way

Support

The General Secretary is supported by a skilled and passionate staff team, covering casework, communications, operations, and member services as well as a committed National Executive Committee that provides strategic direction and support.

They will work closely with a national network of regional and local representatives to ensure members are heard, supported, and represented. They will also have access to peer networks across the trade union and education sectors, as well as expert legal and advisory support as required.

The AEP is a supportive organisation that values collaboration, open dialogue, and mutual respect.



Practical information

This is a unique opportunity to step into a high-impact, national leadership role and be rewarded accordingly.

Our General Secretary will receive:

- A competitive salary starting at £79,661 with annual progression (up to £89,618)
- Car loan scheme and generous pension contributions
- Flexible and hybrid, home working - our main office is in Durham and there will be national travel across the UK
- Opportunities to travel and represent the profession at events, conferences, and high-level meetings across the UK

This is a full-time elected position (four-year term, with the option to restand). The successful nominee will need to step away from their current role but, in return, will gain a platform to lead, and create a greater positive impact for children.



Who can apply?

Nominees must be:

- Qualified educational psychologists
- Have been an AEP member for at least five of the past seven years

Key information

To be considered for the role, nominees must be nominated by **20 eligible AEP members** (full, trainee, or assistant EPs). Members can only nominate one candidate in this election. It is the candidate's responsibility to make sure their signatories are qualified to nominate them. If in doubt, please contact the AEP office.

Nominations must be received by noon on 5th June 2025 by our independent scrutineer: Civica, The Election Centre, 33 Clarendon Road, N8 0NW or email nominations@cesvotes.com

Nominees can submit an election address for distribution with voting papers. More information on the address is available at the back of this pack, along with a full job description and person specification, nomination and candidate contact forms.

Informal enquiries

We know stepping into a position like this is a big decision. Any members who are considering the role, or are interested to find out more and would like a friendly, informal and confidential chat, please do get in touch with AEP president, David Collingwood.

Email

david.collingwood@aep.org.uk



Requirements and role of the General Secretary

(See also Section J of the constitution)

The General Secretary of the Association (AEP) is in effect the chief officer and strategic lead of the organisation, who works with the National Executive Committee (NEC), AEP staff and members to ensure that the AEP can achieve the goals set by its members, and remains true to its mission, vision, and values.

Principal Requirements and Conditions

The General Secretary is an **employee of the AEP** but the position is subject to **statutory election** by eligible members. The AEP's constitution specifies a **term of office of four years** from the date of election. The post-holder is eligible to stand in subsequent elections for the post.

Nominees for the post of General Secretary must be **qualified educational psychologists** in good standing within the profession, and must have had a **minimum of five years' full membership** of the AEP within the immediate past seven years. Time spent in employment as the AEP's General Secretary will be counted towards the required five-year period of full membership.

The General Secretary will be a **whole-time employee** of the AEP during their term of office. They may not undertake any other employment during this period. If relevant, a candidate newly elected to this position will therefore need to resign, or negotiate an appropriate period of absence, from any current employment.

The General Secretary will be employed on a **salary and conditions of service** as determined from time to time by the NEC, and as provided in written further particulars upon election to the post.

There is **no contractual entitlement to redundancy, redeployment or severance payment** where a General Secretary does not seek re-election at the end of a term of office, fails to be re-elected in an election, or resigns from the post for any reason during a term of office.

The General Secretary is responsible to the National Executive Committee (NEC) through the President, or through the Vice-President deputising for the President. The President (or Vice-President deputising) acts as the General Secretary's line manager as necessary.

The General Secretary will not be a member of the NEC but will be expected to attend all its meetings in a non-voting capacity, as well as attending all General Meetings of the Association.

Desirable previous experience:

- Developing strategy and managing/ leading/supervising teams towards supporting the practical application of an agreed strategy.
- Organising, negotiating and/or campaigning within a trade union or similar context.
- Managing budgets successfully, at an organisation, team, or a project level.
- Advocacy and/or representation/case handling in employment matters.

Personal attributes, knowledge and skills:

- Knowledge of the work and aims of the trade union movement.
- Strong communication, negotiation and interpersonal skills.
- Credibility to influence stakeholders at all levels, including engagement with a range of media.
- Solid organisational and planning skills.
- Good knowledge and experience of using standard IT programmes.
- Ability to exercise a high level of discretion, diplomacy, judgement, and initiative.

Requirements and role of the General Secretary

- Ability to work to a broad brief, with competing priorities, under-pressure and without supervision.
- Analytical and creative problem-solving skills.
- Commitment to social justice and trade unions.
- Ability to actively promote equality and diversity in all aspects of the Association's work.

Key responsibilities and tasks:

1. The promotion of the role of the Association as an effective trade union

1.1 Ensure that trade union and other legislation having implications for case law and other relevant documentation is monitored.

1.2 Lead the AEP's delegation to the Soulbury Committee, its Panels and Working Parties and to prepare relevant documentation.

1.3 Ensure that issues relating to salaries and conditions of service for EPs both nationally and locally are monitored and to take such action as may be determined by the NEC to negotiate terms and conditions for EPs via the Soulbury Committee.

1.4 Ensure that appropriate investigations and preparation of information relating to salaries, conditions of service and related issues as required by the NEC is undertaken.

1.5 Ensure that the NEC is briefed on significant issues arising from the role of the AEP as a trade union.

2. Oversee and ensure support of individual members and groups of members in issues relating to salaries, conditions of service and employment

2.1 Determine how casework is allocated according to policies as determined from time to time by the NEC.

2.2 Ensure that matters which should be communicated to members and LEA.

Representatives, concerning the conduct of local casework, is brought to the attention of the NEC.

2.3 Oversee the induction, development and training of AEP local representatives, Regional Representatives and new NEC members in matters relating to individual and LEA casework.

2.4 Ensure that the NEC is provided with regular reports as may be required on developments in casework involving individual members and groups of members.

3. The active promotion of the role and work of educational psychologists through the promotion of the AEP as a professional association

3.1 Promote the policies of the AEP and the public image of educational psychologists as agreed by the NEC.

3.2 Respond positively and constructively to specific requests for information about the policies of the AEP as appropriate.

3.3 Ensure that Acts of Parliament, Court decisions, Government briefings and circulars and other relevant documentation are monitored and brought to the attention of NEC.

3.4 Represent the Association on outside bodies, working groups and conferences as requested by the NEC.

3.5 To act as a spokesperson for the AEP and ensure that the AEP's views and advice on matters of concern to the profession of educational psychology are made known at all levels of national government; local government and other public and private bodies concerned psychological and educational matters.

3.6 To act as a spokesperson for the AEP within the media as required.

Requirements and role of the General Secretary

4. Working with Officers and the National Executive Committee on key areas of policy and development

4.1 To undertake the duties and responsibilities specified by the constitution of the Association. To lead the Association and ensure strategic and operational aims and objectives are met, in accordance with policies agreed by the NEC. To establish and continuously develop the AEP as a viable and effective organisation. To report to and advise the NEC on the activities and performance of the Association.

4.2 To have overall responsibility to ensure that documents for members, government departments and others as determined by the NEC are produced.

4.3 To have overall responsibility to arrange for research to be undertaken and for responses to be made to specific enquiries for information on key professional issues as agreed by the NEC.

4.4 To have overall responsibility to ensure that AEP databases and other relevant information systems are appropriately maintained in line with GDPR and arrange for them to be updated and kept fit for purpose.

4.5 Ensure that the NEC are informed and advised on key areas of policy and development relevant to the profession and employment of educational psychologists.

January 2025

Election address or statement

Nominees can submit an election address (max. 1,250 words) for distribution with voting papers.

This is your chance to share:

- Your views on current and future issues in educational psychology
- Your professional background and areas of interest (particularly in relation to trade union interests)
- Strategic priorities you would champion as general secretary.

Nominees can also include details about their current post and employer or state if they are self-employed, and how they meet the requirements of the post as outlined in the job description.

The deadline to submit the election address is **5 June 2025**. Even if elected unopposed, all statements will be published to AEP members.

Please note: An election address must not contain statements of a discriminatory, disparaging, racist or sexist nature or that make accusations against members or staff of the AEP.



Election of the General Secretary 2025 - 2029

Closing Date for Nominations: noon on 5th June 2025

NOMINATION FORM

Please see the **Notice of Election** for full details of the eligibility requirements to stand for this office and how to submit a nomination. This can be downloaded from the AEP website or obtained from the Association office. Nominations must be submitted using this form. All nomination forms submitted must clearly show the details of the candidate and supporter and must be **deposited with the Independent Scrutineer by the closing date and time** specified above or they will be declared invalid.

This form can be downloaded in a Microsoft Word compatible format for completion electronically, or can be printed and completed manually. Hard copy versions of the form are available from the AEP office on request. If you require any technical advice on collecting signatures electronically using this form, please contact the AEP office.

Note to Candidates and Supporters

Candidates must have a **minimum of five years' Full membership** of the AEP within the immediate past seven years. Supporters must be Full, Assistant or Trainee members of the Association at the closing date for receipt of nominations. A nomination must be supported by at least **20 eligible members** of the Association.

Declaration by Candidate

I the undersigned agree to be nominated for election to the office of General Secretary of the Association of Educational Psychologists:

CANDIDATE'S NAME	Membership No.	Signature of Candidate	Date signed

MEMBER SUPPORTING this nomination

You must be a FULL, TRAINEE or ASSISTANT member of the AEP. You can nominate only ONE candidate for this office.

SUPPORTER'S NAME	Membership No.	Signature of Supporter	Date signed

Data Protection – information for candidates

Candidates must use one nomination form per supporter to avoid sharing personal data of their supporters. Please permanently delete or securely dispose of any personal data of supporters obtained on nomination forms once your nomination has been confirmed by the independent scrutineer.

The candidate and their supporter consent to the personal data they supply in this form, and in any accompanying election statement, being used by the AEP and its appointed independent scrutineer and any other data processors and controllers it uses for the purpose of conducting this election.

This is nomination form number:	<input type="text"/>	of a total	<input type="text"/>	forms being submitted for this nomination
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NB: Candidates should ensure that they also include a completed Contact Form with any nomination forms they submit

The completed nomination form should be submitted to the AEP's Independent Scrutineer:

Civica, The Election Centre, 33 Clarendon Road, N8 0NW

If submitting the form by email please use the address: nominations@cesvotes.com



Election of the General Secretary 2025 - 2029

CANDIDATE CONTACT DETAILS

This form should be completed by the candidate submitting a nomination in this election, and should be sent to the Independent Scrutineer together with their nomination forms.

Please ensure that you include a postal and/or email address to which confirmation of receipt of your nomination can be sent by the Independent Scrutineer, and a telephone number on which you can be contacted by the Independent Scrutineer or the AEP in case of a query about your nomination.

This form can be downloaded in a Microsoft Word compatible format for completion electronically, or can be printed and completed manually. A hard copy version of the form is available from the AEP office on request.

Candidate details	
Full Name	
AEP Membership No.	
Postal address	
Post Code	
Telephone number	
Email address	

Total number of nomination forms being submitted:	<input type="text"/>
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All candidates consent to the personal data (as defined by the Data Protection Act) they supply in this form, being used by the AEP and its appointed independent scrutineer (and any other data processors and controllers it uses), for the purpose of conducting this election.

This form should be sent **together with all nomination forms** directly to the AEP's Independent Scrutineer:

Civica, The Election Centre, 33 Clarendon Road, N8 0NW

If submitting the form by email please use the address: nominations@cesvotes.com