



The end of the *patchwork.*

A manifesto for SME people leaders. By Cademi, 2026.

BY CADEMI · 2026

The third issue in The Board-Ready Series.

A NOTE FROM CADEMI

You didn't set out to run four **training tools**.



It just happened. Compliance needed a tool. Wellbeing needed one too. Leadership had their own preference. Onboarding moved into a spreadsheet someone updates by hand. HR tried to hold it all together with a calendar invite and a smile.

We've sat in rooms with HR Directors at 4pm on a Wednesday and watched the same picture appear on the whiteboard. Five logos. Five logins. Five renewals. One person trying to make it look like a strategy on a slide for the board on Friday.

This isn't a strategy. It's a symptom. And every day it persists, you pay a tax that nobody quite measures — in licence fees you've forgotten about, in admin hours you'll never get back, in learners who quietly stopped logging in six months ago.

We've written this leaflet because we think the conversation needs to change. Not louder. Just clearer. Training belongs in one place — and we're going to spend the next twelve pages telling you why.

Cademi leadership

Cademi · 2026

WHAT WE'RE ARGUING

**Training belongs in
one place.**

**Training belongs in
one place — *not five.***

**Training belongs in
one place, or it *isn't
working.***

Three sentences. One argument. The rest of this leaflet is evidence.

EVIDENCE

The patchwork isn't a strategy. It's a **tax**.

Four numbers. Each one is what fragmentation costs an SME with 100–250 employees. None of them appears on a single line item – which is why nobody has ever quite got round to fixing them.

3–7

Separate training tools the typical UK SME now runs to cover its workforce.

240 hrs

Of admin time lost annually to reconciling reports across systems that don't talk.

£22,000

Average annual duplicate-licence spend for a 200-person SME running 3–5 tools.

34%

Of SME training is meaningfully personalised. The rest is pushed in bulk and ignored.

Source: Cademi SME benchmark 2026; UK SME L&D Stack Survey 2025 (n=412); industry licence-cost reconciliation across 84 Cademi deployments. Figures typical for organisations with 100–250 employees.

THE MANIFESTO BODY

Seven principles. Centralised **training**, rebuilt from the ground up.

Read these as commitments, not features. Each one is a line in the sand. Screenshot the ones that sound right.

01**One platform.**

Not a portfolio of tools stitched together by email. One spec, one roadmap, one team accountable for the whole experience.

02**One login.**

If your people need a password manager to learn, you've lost them. The friction wins every time.

03**One source of truth.**

Every report — compliance, completion, cost, engagement — reconciles from one system. No CSVs. No 'I'll get back to you on Monday.'

Continued overleaf →

PRINCIPLES 4-7

04**Every category, one home.**

Compliance, skills, wellbeing, leadership, onboarding, DEI, H&S. Specialists are valuable. Five specialists are not.

05**Personalised by role, not pushed in bulk.**

AI does the heavy lifting. The right learning lands with the right person on day one — not after a six-week project to build a pathway by hand.

06**Mobile-native.**

Learning happens on a train, between shifts, on a warehouse floor. If your platform requires a desktop, it doesn't deserve the frontline.

07**Accessible to everyone.**

Multilingual by default. Designed for the warehouse and the boardroom. Compliant with WCAG 2.2 — because accessibility isn't a feature, it's the floor.

“If your people need a password manager to learn, you've lost them.”

READER PARTICIPATION

How many separate training tools does your organisation run **right now?**

Tick yours. Then look around the room and ask three colleagues to do the same. The number you all land on is rarely the number on the procurement record.

1

One tool. We're already where we want to be.

2-3

Manageable, but the seams are showing.

4-6

The patchwork phase. The tax is real.

7+

It is no longer a stack. It is a museum.

QR**See the live results.**

Scan to see anonymised, real-time results from 500+ SME people leaders who answered before you.

cademi.io/poll →

WHAT IT LOOKED LIKE TO SWITCH

Three SMEs. Three patchworks. One way out.

Logistics, mental health, professional football. Different sectors. Different scales. Same pattern.

LOGISTICS · 250–499 EMPLOYEES

The logistics SME that retired three tools in 90 days.

Driver CPC sat in one system, yard and warehouse compliance in a second, leadership development in a third. The audit trail lived in two spreadsheets that disagreed with each other. After consolidation: one platform, role-based pathways, mobile delivery to drivers on the road. Three legacy contracts retired by day 90.

3 tools

retired in 90 days

“We had four platforms doing five jobs and not one could tell us how many drivers had completed CPC last quarter.”

Lesa Nicholson · Head of People, Buffaload Logistics



FOOTBALL & EVENTS · 201–500 EMPLOYEES

The football club that moved seven reporting systems into one.

Matchday operations alongside commercial, academy and stadium teams — each with its own induction, its own safety brief, its own way of being signed off. Seven reporting systems, three regulators, one fixture list that doesn't wait for paperwork. After consolidation: separate pathways per workforce, mandatory induction completed before first shift, live matchday-readiness dashboards. Board reporting time dropped from two days to twenty minutes.

7 → 1**reporting systems unified**

“On a matchday I now know who's compliant by 9am — not by Tuesday.”

Jacqui Aspinall · People & Culture Director, Millwall F.C.

MENTAL HEALTH CHARITY · 51–200 STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

The charity that consolidated compliance and wellbeing — and watched engagement double.

Paid staff and volunteers, all subject to the same safeguarding standards, across multiple localities. Compliance lived with one provider; wellbeing in an app; volunteer onboarding in a Google Drive folder. After consolidation: psychometric-led personalisation, mobile-first volunteer access, automated commissioner evidence packs.

2.1×**engagement vs. previous stack**

“It was the first time we could prove what the training was actually delivering — to commissioners and to ourselves.”

Sarah Hughes · Director of Operations, CPST Mind

ACROSS ALL THREE

Different sectors, different headcount, different regulators — and the same pattern. The pain was never any individual tool. It was the gaps between them.

THE PATTERN, IN NUMBERS

The numbers under the narrative.

Averages across 84 SMEs that moved onto Cademi between 2024 and 2026. Your numbers will differ – but the direction won't.

2.4

Average number of legacy training tools retired in the first twelve months.

£19,800

Average annual cost saving once duplicated licences and admin time are reconciled.

+23pp

Average improvement in training completion rate after consolidation onto one platform.

270 hrs

Average admin hours recovered per year. The equivalent of seven working weeks.

Source: Cademi customer outcomes data, 84 organisations onboarded between 2024 and 2026. Excludes deployments still inside their first 90 days. Methodology available on request: research@cademi.io.

PRINT THIS PAGE

Seven questions. Ask them this week.

Put these in front of each of your current training providers. The answers — and the silences — will tell you everything you need.

PROVIDER REVIEW · 2026

PROVIDER: _____ · DATE: _____

01 How many separate tools am I currently paying you for?

02 Can you give me one report covering every type of training by Friday?

03 What's the true cost per learner per month, all-in?

04 How long would it take to switch a content category off your platform?

05 What happens to our data if we leave you?

06 How much of our training is actually personalised — and how?

07 What do I get from staying with you that I'd lose by consolidating?

STAND WITH US

If you believe training belongs in one place, stand with us.

Add your name. Join 500+ SME people leaders rebuilding training from the inside. When you sign, your name joins a visible roll of signatories – a record of who said yes to clarity, and when.

SIGN AT [CADEMI.IO/MANIFESTO](https://cademi.io/manifesto)

Add your name. Six fields. Two minutes.

Or scan the code. We won't email you weekly. We'll email you when the next issue lands and when something material changes – that's it.

RECENTLY SIGNED

Lesla Nicholson · Head of People · Buffaload Logistics

Sarah Hughes · Director of Operations · CPSL Mind

Jacqui Aspinall · People & Culture Director · Millwall F.C.

Mark Partington · Managing Director · Partington's Holiday Parks

David Reilly · Group HR Director · Pullman Fleet Services

... and 500+ more at cademi.io/manifesto.

20 MINUTES. NO SLIDES.

Want us to walk you through what centralising your stack would actually look like?

Twenty minutes. One call. No slides, no pitch deck, no demo theatre. We'll bring the framework. You bring the specifics of your stack. You'll leave with a written 90-day consolidation plan — yours to keep, whether or not you ever work with us.



BOOK YOUR 20-MINUTE WORKING SESSION

cademi.io/book


WHAT TO EXPECT

5 min

We walk through where you'd score on the centralisation framework.

10 min

We map your current stack against a one-platform model — live, on screen.

5 min

You leave with a personalised 90-day plan in writing. Yours to keep.

Liam Swanson · Business Development Manager, Cademi

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The end of the patchwork starts here.

If three or more of the principles sounded like the company you work for — the next move is a 20-minute conversation. We'll bring the framework. You bring the specifics.