



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Wokingham Borough Council Adult Education Plan

August 2019- July 2020

Definition

Adult Education refers to all classroom based learning delivered under contract to Wokingham Borough Council or directly by departments within the Council, using the Education and Skills Funding Agency's Adult Education Budget. (AEB)

Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to ensure that the delivery of adult education in the borough is strategic, well- co-ordinated and responsive to local need

It recognises that a range of other adult education opportunities are available across the borough, primarily delivered by Activate Learning, The Crescent Centre, The Workers Education Association the University of the Third Age and numerous small voluntary and third sector providers. Care is taken to ensure that WBC's curriculum offer complements the curriculum offered by these providers with the aim of facilitating a pathway for disadvantaged learners to move from engagement activities to further learning with these or other organisations as appropriate.

Evidence of Need

Although Wokingham Borough remains one of the least deprived local authorities in the country, with its residents generally better paid and better qualified than residents in other areas, a small proportion of adults are not benefitting from the overall affluence and employment opportunities on offer in the borough. Wokingham's population is aging creating greater demand on Social Care Services.

The Facts¹

Economic Prosperity

1. There are 3,600 workless households in the borough 7.7% compared to 11% in the South East and 14.5% in Great Britain²
2. Skills shortages are reported by one in five Berkshire employers in areas such as construction, health and social care and hospitality/customer service
3. 3800 residents have no formal qualifications 3.8% compared to 5.6% in the South East and 7.8% in England³

Adults

1. Our over 65 population is predicted to rise by 35% by 2030, and over 80s by 70%
2. We have an increasing proportion of older people with learning difficulties
3. Over one third of older people live alone and around half of service users would like more social contact
4. In 2016/17 there were 262 emergency admissions for intentional self -harm. This is an 85% rise over the last two years
5. 19.3% of adults surveyed feel they have high levels of anxiety compared to 19.5% in the South East and 19.9% in England

¹ Source Wokingham Borough 2025 Proposed vision and Priorities Engagement Summary unless otherwise stated

² ONS Annual Population Survey – Households by combined economic activity status

³ ONS Annual Population Survey

Children

- The GCSE achievement gap between children known to be eligible for free school meals and all other pupils in the borough is too high at 36 percentage points compared to a south East gap of 34% and England at 27%
- The attainment gap of pupils at the end of key stage 2 in reading writing and maths is also greater in Wokingham with 50% of disadvantaged pupils reaching the expected standard compared with 75% of all other pupils. A gap of 33.3 percentage points compared to a gap in England of 28 percentage points

Strategic Context

National Strategies

The Adult Education Budget is awarded on a yearly basis to local authorities and other providers by the Education and Skills Funding Agency part of the Department of Education. The Principle purpose of this budget is

'To engage adults and provide the skills and learning they need to equip them for work, an apprenticeship or further learning'⁴

Over 90% of Wokingham's AEB budget goes to community learning courses which requires tailored programmes of learning to be provided which must

'Develop the skills, confidence, motivation and resilience of adults of different ages and backgrounds in order to:

- *Progress towards formal learning or employment and/or*
- *Improve their health and wellbeing, including mental health and/or*
- *Develop stronger communities'⁵*

There are a number of other national strategies which this plan takes notice of, namely

- a. Industrial Strategy -Establishing a technical Education System focused on developing workforce skills
- b. National Retraining scheme - supporting people to re-skill to meet the needs of the 21st Century workforce
- c. National Careers Strategy - All adults should have access to free face to face advice with more bespoke support for those who need it
- d. Integrated Communities Strategy (Green Paper) – boost English language skills through a community based English Language Programme

Regional Strategies

The Thames Valley Berkshire Learning and Enterprise Partnership Skills Priority Statement April 2018

Key Findings pertinent to this plan

- Address ongoing shortages in low profile labour intensive sectors such as hospitality, logistics and social care, which could be exacerbated by Brexit

⁴ ESFA Funded Adult Education Budget Funding & Performance management Rules 2019-20

⁵ ESFA Funded Adult Education Budget Funding & Performance management Rules 2019-20

- Soft Skills in highest demand from these employers include Communication, Organisation, Excel, Problem solving and English
Valuable skills for individuals looking to enter these careers include good interview skills, employability skills, industry licenses and up-to-date technical skills for those who wish to retrain or re-enter the workforce after a gap.

Local Strategies and Plans

Two Wokingham Borough strategic plans have been used to inform the Adult Education Plan:

1. Wokingham Borough Council Plan (2018 review)

Key priorities linked to Adult Education

- Continue to close the achievement gap for all vulnerable children
- implement new ways of working to develop the local community and voluntary sector to improve people's mental health and wellbeing

2. Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2018-24)

Key priorities linked to Adult Education

- Reduce Social Isolation
- Promoting and supporting good mental health
- Reducing health inequalities

In order to contribute to the achievement of key performance indicators set out in national, regional and local strategies, Wokingham Adult Education service will implement the following plan in 2019-20

Wokingham Adult Education Plan

Strategic Aim	Linked Strategies/ Evidence of Need	Key Actions
<p>1. To engage adults and provide the skills and learning they need to equip them for work, an apprenticeship or further learning'</p> <p><i>Develop the skills, confidence, motivation and resilience of adults of different ages and backgrounds in order to progress towards formal learning or employment</i></p> <p><i>Address ongoing shortages in low profile labour intensive sectors such as hospitality, logistics and social care, which could be exacerbated by Brexit</i></p> <p><i>Improve Soft Skills in highest demand from these sectors including Communication, Organisation, Excel, Problem solving and English.</i></p>	<p>Adult Education Budget</p> <p>LEP Priority Skills Statement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to commission local community and voluntary sector organisations to deliver courses in the local community which are of benefit to their users. • Use community setting including schools, libraries, community centres, church and parish halls, and children's centres wherever possible to deliver of engagement and taster courses internally, and via contract aimed at attracting first time learners. These will include taster sessions, workshops, and family learning sessions • Embed soft skills, Maths, English and Digital Skills into all courses where appropriate • Maintain and improve effective pathways for Wokingham Borough Learners / residents to access employability courses delivered by National Careers Service and other partners and deliver a small number of bespoke courses for those residents unable to access these providers. • Provide good quality information advice and guidance to learners on their next steps • Offer short introductory vocational courses in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Working as a classroom assistant ○ Working in construction ○ Working in the health and care industry ○ Working in customer service • Deliver a combination of accredited and non- accredited ESOL courses for residents wishing to improve their English language skills

Strategic Aim	Linked Strategies/ Evidence of Need	Key Actions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver introductory digital skills including Microsoft Excel and Word for work from community settings across the borough. • Involve local employers in the design and delivery of vocational courses where possible.
<p>2. Develop the skills, confidence, motivation and resilience of adults of different ages and backgrounds in order to Improve their health and wellbeing, including mental health and/or develop stronger communities</p> <p><i>Reduce Social Isolation</i> <i>Promote and supporting good mental health</i> <i>Reducing health inequalities</i></p> <p><i>Implement new ways of working to develop the local community and voluntary sector to improve people's mental health and wellbeing</i></p>	<p>Adult Education Budget</p> <p>Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2018-24)</p> <p>Wokingham Borough Council Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission the delivery of a programme of Wellbeing in Mind Courses aimed at those who have low to moderate mental health issues • Commission the delivery of a programme of independent living skills aimed at residents with moderate to profound learning difficulties and or disabilities • Commission a programme of courses aimed at improving the skills of volunteers within the borough • Deliver a number of social media awareness courses aimed at equipping elderly residents in particular with the skills and knowledge they to be able to take advantage of new technology whilst keeping themselves safe on line. • Deliver healthy eating courses • Deliver courses from community settings across the borough in order to bring together members of local communities and encourage local interaction • Maintain and develop progression pathways for learners attending courses which include advice on where to access further support
<p>3. Continue to close the achievement gap for all vulnerable children</p>	<p>Wokingham Borough Council Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver Helping your Child with English, and Helping your Child with Maths courses aimed at developing the skills and

Strategic Aim	Linked Strategies/ Evidence of Need	Key Actions
		knowledge of parents of young children on how maths and English are now taught at key stage 1 and 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deliver a programme of family learning workshops during school holidays aimed at introducing parents to techniques they can use to play and learn with their children.