Skills Roadmap for London

Helping Londoners to access good jobs and to lead happier, healthier lives

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Mayoral foreword

The coronavirus pandemic has taken a huge toll on London's economy and communities. Despite recent signs of recovery, employee numbers had still not returned to pre-pandemic levels by September 2021. London's unemployment rate is now around 30 per cent above the national average and the highest of any UK region. The human cost of this is truly incalculable, with many struggling to make ends meet, families feeling enormous strain on their finances, and large numbers of Londoners worried about their futures.

That's why, as Mayor, I've made jobs a top priority for my second term. My administration is firmly focused not just on boosting London's economy and protecting employment, but on supporting the creation of the new, secure, and well-paid jobs that our communities need and deserve.

As part of our strategy for achieving this, we're working hard to make sure that all Londoners are able to acquire the skills they need, either to get back into work or to land better-paying jobs. This means supporting Londoners to retrain, upskill and enhance their employability.

Since 2019, the Greater London Authority (GLA) has been responsible for London's annual £320m Adult Education Budget (AEB), which funds the majority of further education for adults aged 19 and over. Working closely with skills and learning providers, as well as London's boroughs, businesses and civil society organisations, we've taken important steps to make London's adult education offer more inclusive – ensuring that more Londoners are able to get the skills they need to progress both in life and work. This has included enabling more Londoners in low-paid work to access AEB courses and supporting Deaf Londoners to train for qualifications in British Sign Language.

We've also managed to improve access to learning for people seeking asylum, increase funding by 10 per cent per learner for those enrolled in essential and vocational skills courses – including English, maths and digital skills – while reinvesting savings back into new training programmes that are designed to close London's skills gap in key areas.

I'm proud of the huge strides we've made; but, faced with the economic storm unleashed by Covid-19, I know we must redouble our efforts to support adult learners. One way we can do this is by equipping Londoners with the skills they need to get jobs in the sectors that are key to London's economy: from our digital and green industries to our hospitality, health and social care, and creative and cultural sectors. My Mayoral Academies Programme will help achieve this by investing in greater collaboration between skills providers and employers in these key sectors.
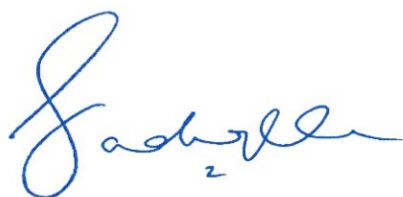
In response to the pandemic, we'll be allocating substantial funding to this end, following the investments we've made to improve the digital infrastructure of our providers. This helped to ensure that learning could continue during lockdowns, and that training was also available for those at risk of digital exclusion. London's adult and further education sectors have already done so much to aid learners during this crisis – whether that was by moving

courses online or creating Covid-secure learning environments – and we want to continue backing our skills providers in their role as Anchor Institutions and a vital part of the infrastructure in their communities so they can keep supporting Londoners.

Over the past couple of years, City Hall has built strong relationships by listening to adult skills providers, the further education sector, Londoners, London's employers, and unions. Their voices have been invaluable in planning and designing skills provision in our city. By continuing our work together, I'm confident we can make sure that Londoners get the helping hand they need to realise a better and brighter future for themselves and their families.

I'll never forget that London gave me the opportunities to go from a council estate to being Mayor of the greatest city on earth. And I want all Londoners to have that same shot at reaching their full potential.

I want to thank all those who supported the development of this Skills Roadmap and responded to our consultation. Our Roadmap sets out my vision for how we can improve the prospects of thousands of Londoners – ensuring they can flourish and thrive – at the same time as boosting our businesses, addressing inequality, and making our city a fairer, greener and healthier place in which to live.

Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London

Executive summary

The Skills Roadmap for London sets out how the Mayor plans to ensure London's skills offer better serves London's communities and economies, building on the success of the delegation of the Adult Education Budget (AEB) to the Mayor in 2019. In eight sections, the Roadmap sets out the actions the Mayor will take over this Mayoral term to ensure skills provision, learning and adult education are locally relevant, make an impact, and are accessible. These actions are summarised below.

Locally relevant skills

Making skills provision more locally relevant means providing a more joined-up skills and employment offer that meets the needs of Londoners and the local economy, including businesses and employers.

1. **Collaboration and partnerships**	*City Hall[1] will* Foster a more integrated skills and employment system, including with other public services and support, by: • investing in the setup of Integration Hubs to support the 'No Wrong Door' approach • publishing information about provision we fund to enable provider collaboration, including AEB-funded providers' delivery plans. Publish new guidance for providers to stimulate collaboration and partnerships, including through good subcontracting.
2. **Meeting the needs of London's businesses and employers and helping Londoners into good jobs**	*City Hall will* Boost collaboration between business and skills providers in London and develop a programme of support to help providers work with employers. Regularly share data and information to support skills planning.
3. **Learning that supports progression**	*City Hall will* Continue to focus London's AEB on, and highlight the importance of, learning at Levels 2 and below, especially where evidence shows positive social and economic outcomes. Support and strengthen progression to higher level learning from Level 2 and below.

Making an impact

We want the learning we fund to transform people's lives, making an impact and leading to positive economic and social outcomes.

4. **Measuring the social and economic benefits of adult education**	*City Hall will* Create a new baseline of social and economic impact data for adult education, publishing the findings from the London Learner Survey in 2023.

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[1] references to which mean the Mayor of London/Greater London Authority

		Through the London Learner Survey, work towards collecting representative data across all our funded providers. Use social and economic impact data to inform future skills policy and delivery in London.
5.	**Evaluation and best practice**	*City Hall will* Assess the impact of changes introduced since delegation of the Adult Education Budget through a multi-year impact evaluation. Build on lessons learned from our commissioned research and evaluations to develop and expand programmes based on best practice.

Accessible skills

We want to make adult education and skills provision even more accessible to those who need it most, recognising that participation in learning can lift people out of poverty and address persistent inequality at the root.

6.	**Raising awareness of London's skills and learning offer for adults, especially among those who need it most**	*City Hall will* Deliver a long-term marketing and community outreach programme for adult education in London. Increase understanding of London's adult education offer by partners and employers to boost referrals into adult education and skills provision. Improve coordination of English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and fully fund courses for asylum seekers.
7.	**The role of adult education providers as Anchor Institutions and good employers in their communities**	*City Hall will* Expect City Hall-funded adult education providers to be 'Good Employers' that meet or are working towards the Mayor's Good Work Standard. Expect adult education providers to be inclusive organisations that are representative of the communities they serve and are located within. Expect adult education providers to set out their plans for achieving net zero-carbon estates by 2030. Introduce a quality mark across Mayoral priority sectors and showcase best practice.
8.	**Investing in physical and digital learning spaces**	*City Hall will* As part of the London Recovery Programme's Digital Access mission, work with partners to improve the digital infrastructure of London's adult education services, improving digital connectivity and access to devices for learners.

	Encourage more co-location of learning with other activities and services. This will help create multiple opportunities for people in both physical and digital learning spaces, in a way that fits their complex lives and helps address issues of exclusion.

The Roadmap is based on extensive consultation with skills providers, London's communities and businesses, civil society, and local government. City Hall will continue to work in partnership with these stakeholders to achieve the commitments set out in the Roadmap.

Introduction

In 2019, adult education funding was delegated to the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, alongside other Mayoral Combined Authorities across the country. For the first time, local leaders were given the powers and funding to shape adult education to better reflect the needs of their regions. Since the Mayor took on the responsibility for an annual budget of nearly £320m, City Hall has made significant changes to help Londoners (aged 19+) access and benefit from participation in learning. As a result, thousands of low-earning Londoners, paid below the London Living Wage, have developed their skills, and benefitted from fully funded courses[2]. We have increased the per-learner funding available to providers so they can better support people to progress and achieve their ambitions. And, we have reinvested funds back into adult education, targeting provision to meet the needs of London's employers through programmes including our £32m Good Work for All fund.

Our Roadmap comes at a time when skills and adult learning is increasingly being recognised as fundamental to addressing the challenges facing London, the UK, and the world. The Covid-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on our communities and economies, exacerbating existing inequalities and stresses caused by austerity and Brexit. The impacts of the climate and ecological emergencies are also increasingly apparent. In order to meet the Mayor's ambition for London to be a net zero-carbon city by 2030, there is a need to green our economy and increase support for a greener, more resilient city.

In developing this Roadmap, City Hall has worked extensively with skills providers, London's communities and businesses, civil society, and local government. Through engagement and consultation[3], we have set out our plans for London's skills and employment system over the Mayoral term. Underpinning these plans is data, research, and evidence. This includes work to identify those Londoners who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic and are most in need of adult education, as well as improving our understanding of the barriers they face. This includes disabled Londoners, older and younger Londoners, black or ethnic minority Londoners, women, Londoners who have English as an additional language, those seeking asylum, Londoners with caring responsibilities – as well as Londoners at the intersections of these different forms of inequality.

Our Roadmap is part of a new way of working that builds on the successes we have already achieved since the delegation of the AEB. It is an approach which sees City Hall working with skills providers, businesses and Londoners in the planning and design of adult education. It takes a dynamic approach to identifying and targeting those most in need of adult education, bringing together insight from data, annual community conversations[4], peer-led research and other community engagement on an ongoing basis. It embeds skills as part of

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[2] Inclusive of 19,980 fully funded AEB learners in receipt of low wages in 2019-20 academic year and 12,830 fully funded AEB learners in receipt of low wages between August 2020 and January 2021.

[3] Adult Education Roadmap consultation report, CooperGibson, October 2021

[4] Community conversations involve community organisations and other partners hosting a conversation with their community to gather their views and understand their experiences. Community conversations formed part of the public consultation on the Roadmap.

the wider London Recovery Programme, connected with work across City Hall to drive London's social and economic recovery.

Going forward, as we deliver the ambitions of our Roadmap, we also hope to see a more strategic and less piecemeal approach to further devolution on skills to ensure London is able to build on the delegation of the AEB and the establishment of the Mayoral Academies Programme

The next sections of the Roadmap set out the actions we will take to ensure adult education in London is **locally relevant**, **makes an impact** and is **accessible;** building skills that truly respond to the needs of London's economy and communities.

A note on skills: We recognise there are several terms used to refer to education and training for adults. The difference between them can be subtle and there are often different connotations for each term. City Hall believes what is important is that all activity that delivers education and training for adults in London works to create a positive impact for Londoners in terms of both economic and social outcomes, including health and wellbeing. The Skills Roadmap aims to support this. In this Roadmap we use the terms skills, skills provision, and adult education interchangeably to refer to a range of training options available to adults aged 19 and over. This covers further education (including that which is not funded by the AEB), lifelong learning and vocational training and adult education.

Locally relevant skills

Locally relevant skills provision means developing a more joined-up skills and employment offer in London that meets the needs of Londoners and the local economy. It takes account of the unique communities, civil society organisations, businesses, and partnerships in a local area. In a city as large and diverse as London, a local area can be a neighbourhood, a collection of boroughs or the capital as a region in its own right. The different actors in London's skills system need to be empowered to collaborate and shape solutions that work for their local area, so that skills provision is better integrated with other services, makes the most of delegation, and reflects and responds to the needs of the capital's communities and economy.

London faces a set of challenges which are different to the rest of the UK. London suffers from high levels of structural inequality, exacerbated by Covid-19; and in London's highly skilled labour market, those without higher level skills (Level 3 and above)[5] can be trapped in low-paid work. In 2020, over a fifth of the working age population in London had not obtained a Level 3 qualification, equivalent to at least 1.3 million Londoners.[6] This not only curbs Londoners' employment prospects; there is a strong relationship between higher skill levels and positive social outcomes across health, wellbeing, and social integration. These wider outcomes will help London support an ageing population[7] and address growing instances of mental health conditions.

Businesses and employers in London continue to report skills gaps, with factors such as Brexit, the pandemic and the climate emergency bringing new challenges that require tailored, local solutions. Despite job vacancies nearing pre-pandemic levels, London's unemployment rate is 30% above the national average, and London's hospitality sector lags behind the rest of the UK in bouncing back to pre-pandemic levels.[8] Skills provision in London must address these challenges head on, demonstrating to Londoners, partners and UK government the transformative power of the further and adult education sectors in helping Londoners to access good jobs and to lead happier, healthier lives. Unlocking these benefits will create positive social and wellbeing impacts that can then be felt across the city.

1. Collaboration and partnerships
The needs of communities and employers across the capital are diverse; Londoners all have different learning goals and support needs, and each business faces different skills challenges. Collaboration and partnership between London's civil society, businesses, skills

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[5] Level 3 qualifications can be achieved through both academic and technical courses. They include, and are equivalent to, AS and A-levels.

[6] According to the ONS Annual Population Survey, an estimated 1.36 million (21.3%) London residents aged 16-64 had achieved their highest qualification at NVQ level 2 or below in the 12 months to December 2020. A further 439,000 (7.2%) working age Londoners had 'other' qualifications where the level is not known and 60,600 (1.0%) working age Londoners had Trade Apprenticeships (at any level).

[7] GLA (2016), The London Plan

[8] According to ONS Workforce Jobs, as of June 2021 jobs in 'Accommodation and Food Services' are 11% lower than pre-pandemic (December 2019) levels in London, compared with 7% lower for the UK overall.

providers, local government, and support services, from employment to health to housing, will mean that adult education can respond more effectively to these needs. This could mean a college working with specialist providers and community organisations to provide outreach and wrap-around support to Londoners who struggle to engage with learning. Or it could mean a training provider engaging businesses to make sure the courses they offer will address businesses' skills gaps and equip learners with the skills they need for employment.

At City Hall, we recognise that we cannot work directly with all of London's skills providers, employers, community groups and support services. We want to see a more integrated skills and employment offer for Londoners, where our providers work with these organisations, big and small, to realise the benefits of collaboration and empower local partners to implement solutions that work for them, their communities and local employers.

Nationally there is a move away from subcontracting; in London, the Mayor is clear that good subcontracting is an important mechanism for collaboration. It supports strong relationships with a range of delivery partners who are experts in meeting the needs of different groups of people, working in particular neighbourhoods, and delivering specialist learning. It also ensures that these partners are fairly resourced for that role.

To increase coordination in the skills system, the Mayor is working with London's boroughs and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) in London to establish 'Integration Hubs' as part of a 'No Wrong Door' approach. The hubs will strive to achieve effective collaboration between service organisations, skills providers, and other key referrers into adult education. For Londoners, this means no matter what their starting point or which service they access first, they will be connected to the right type of support at the right time to help them on their journey in life and into work.

City Hall will:

Foster a more integrated skills and employment system, including with other public services and support, by:
- **investing in the setup of Integration Hubs to support the 'No Wrong Door' approach**
- **publishing information about provision we fund to enable provider collaboration, including AEB-funded providers' delivery plans**

The Mayor is providing initial investment into the setup of four new 'No Wrong Door' Integration Hubs to boost coordination and partnership working between skills, employment and other support services, such as careers and health, with delivery led by the sub-regional partnerships (Central London Forward, Local London, South London Partnership and West London Alliance). This initial investment is a starting point; City Hall, the London boroughs and DWP London want to see the 'No Wrong Door' approach launch a new way of working that continues in the long term.

City Hall will also support coordination across public services, sharing new research and toolkits, including recent work on social prescribing. Alongside new research, City Hall will continue to be transparent and open in publishing information and data about current

delivery and the future plans of skills providers, including summaries of annual delivery plans prepared by AEB providers. This will showcase delivery across London to facilitate collaboration, avoid duplication and address gaps in provision.

Publish new guidance for providers to stimulate collaboration and partnerships, including through good subcontracting

This guidance will identify best practice in collaboration and partnerships between skills providers, businesses, community organisations and other key services. It will also set out how we encourage good subcontracting that works for London, supporting both prime and subcontracted partners to deliver skills and training support effectively. This guidance will build on the principles in the [GLA's Corporate Responsible Procurement Policy](#), and will be incorporated as a feature of City Hall's future adult education commissioning approaches.

2. Meeting the needs of London's businesses and employers and helping Londoners into good jobs

London's business environment is exceptionally dynamic, and this reflects London's place as a global business capital. It is home to specialist, high-skilled sectors and activities, and a diverse employment base with employers of differing sizes and skills needs.

However, the Covid-19 pandemic has had a major impact on London's businesses and labour market. The number of pay-rolled employees in London was still down on pre-pandemic levels in September 2021, while the latest estimate for the unemployment rate was around 30 per cent above the UK average.[9] There were also still 263,000 London staff on furlough at the end of August 2021, with uncertainty regarding how smoothly furloughed workers would be reabsorbed into employment. Sectors such as hospitality and the creative industries have been particularly hard hit by public health restrictions and immigration changes, which make staffing and recruitment a challenge. [10]

Yet as our economy reopens, job vacancies are increasing and were close to pre-pandemic levels in September – presenting opportunities for Londoners to access good work in sectors that are key to London's recovery. [11] This includes the transition to becoming a net zero-carbon city, with new research highlighting the prospect of over 500,000 green jobs being created by 2030[12].

Skills provision in London must respond to these challenges and opportunities, and strengthening partnership working between employers and skills providers will be vital to

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[9] For the three months ending August 2021, the unemployment rate in London was 5.8%, compared with a UK average of 4.5%. London had the highest unemployment rate estimate in the UK for this period.

[10] For example, take up of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme was relatively high in accommodation & food (18%) and arts and entertainment (13%) at the end of August 2021. UK-wide data from the ONS also suggests that these industries were finding it more difficult than usual to recruit in recent months, partly down to a lack of EU applicants. See: ONS (2021) Hospitality businesses are most likely to be struggling to fill vacancies

[11] According to Emsi data, the volume of online jobs postings in London reached 98% of September 2019 levels in September 2021. This compares to 78% of September 2019 levels in September 2020.

[12] According to WPI Economics, the total number of green jobs in London (in 11 priority sectors) is projected to increase from 234,000 in 2020 to 505,000 in 2030 in a central scenario. Source: WPI Economics (2021) Green Jobs and Skills in London: cross-London report.

achieving this. It will help shape the types of courses on offer, meaning courses directly respond to business need and equip Londoners with the skills needed in the workplace. It will mean Londoners can be confident the training they undertake is directly relevant to job opportunities and developing long term careers. It will help Londoners into good jobs at a time when there is a significant disability employment gap and almost one in six Londoners are now claiming Universal Credit, many of whom are in work but trapped in low pay and poor working conditions.

Many providers already have established relationships with employers – from multi-nationals through to local small and medium sized enterprises. However, we know from our engagement with businesses and employers that it can be difficult for them to understand the skills offer in London and to connect with skills providers. A decade of austerity has weakened the ability of London's skills providers to engage with employers, as resources have rightly been prioritised to support learners. We want to build on providers' business engagement good practice. With delegation of the AEB to the Mayor and a new focus on employer collaboration, City Hall can help to address the challenges faced by businesses head on by boosting collaboration between providers and employers.

City Hall has an excellent track-record in facilitating innovative partnerships with businesses and employers. The London Progression Collaboration, delivered in partnership with the Institute for Public Policy and Research and JP Morgan, has generated £8.4m in levy transfers to smaller businesses to create apprenticeships. Our engagement of employers through the Mayor's [Business Advisory Board], the [London Business Hub,] [Skills for Londoners Business Partnership] and other programmes ensures City Hall can understand the needs of employers and design programmes that can help address their skills challenges. Going beyond apprenticeships, we are working to support closer collaboration between skills providers and businesses through London's AEB and the Mayor's Academies Programme. Going forward, we will also integrate Skills Bootcamps[13] as a further way for Londoners to get, or improve, industry relevant skills and fast-track to interviews with local employers. These programmes support skills development in sectors key to London's recovery and address ambitions for the capital to be net zero-carbon by 2030. This begins with a £9.5m investment in new Academy Hubs to support people into jobs in the green, creative, digital, health and hospitality sectors, with support for the social care sector to follow.

City Hall will:
Boost collaboration between business and skills providers in London and develop a programme of support to help providers work with employers
City Hall will work with the Mayor's Skills for Londoners Business Partnership and Skills for Londoners Board, which serves as London's Skills Advisory Panel, and London's employer representative bodies to help plan skills provision that meets business need now and in the future. This will involve steering coordination and engagement activity between London's businesses and providers and designing and delivering a support offer for providers to help them better engage London's businesses and employers. We will ask our AEB providers to set out how they are going to respond to business and employer need in their annual

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[13] Skills Bootcamps offer free, flexible courses of up to 16 weeks. They are available for adults aged 19 or over who are either in work or recently unemployed. Some Skills Bootcamps have additional eligibility criteria.

delivery plan submission to City Hall. Through the Mayor's Academies Programme and Skills Bootcamps, we will directly fund collaboration between businesses and skills providers to coordinate training and design learning that meets sector skills needs, especially in sectors key to London's recovery from Covid-19.

Regularly share data and information to support skills planning
City Hall will make it easier for skills providers to understand and find timely, granular, local labour market information; and will explore ways to incentivise the use of this information in curriculum planning. We will help showcase the skills offer in London, making it easier for businesses to engage with providers, with regular data releases and reports on what is being delivered through the AEB and by sharing labour market and social analyses, culminating in an annual Local Skills Report. These reports will also include analyses of how adult education is supporting skills delivery in sectors important to London's recovery.

3. Learning that supports progression

Following Covid-19, it is even more important for us to focus on learning that supports progression for all those who take part. Progression means helping Londoners take the next step at key transition points in their lives, such as a new or better job, and better personal health and wellbeing outcomes.

London is different from the rest of the country; given the competitiveness of London's labour market, the higher proportion of people without qualifications are more likely to be unemployed or in low-paid work than in other regions. Londoners therefore need support to gain essential skills at Level 2 and below.[14] Gaining these skills can have a profound and transformative impact on people's lives and the communities they are part of so there is rightly a strong focus on supporting learners at these levels through London's AEB. The Mayor wants to support learners' progression in learning, employment and in their personal and communal lives by ensuring that all Londoners have access to the basic skills they need to progress within education and/or into work.

We also know that Level 3 qualifications are an important springboard, particularly for London's labour market, which is why we have introduced a more inclusive Level 3 offer through London's AEB. This enables any eligible unemployed or low-income Londoner to access Level 3 learning and retrain, even if they have existing qualifications.

We recognise that the journey to a Level 3 qualification takes time, and the resources and commitment it takes for learners and providers to attain and deliver these should not be underestimated. Peer-led research commissioned by City Hall found that Londoners want to see a wider range of flexible routes to progress to higher-level learning; we want to ensure providers are able to make full use of the flexibilities the Mayor has introduced through the AEB to achieve this. City Hall-commissioned research on higher level skills in London has also identified a potential role for bridging provision between Level 3 and Level 4 to support progression. We want to work with adult education providers to establish clear progression routes from AEB-funded provision to Level 4 courses in these areas and beyond.

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[14] Most qualifications have a difficulty level. The higher the level, the more difficult the qualification is.

City Hall will:

Continue to focus London's AEB on, and highlight the importance of, learning at Levels 2 and below, especially where evidence shows positive social and economic outcomes

Equipping Londoners with essential skills makes it possible for people from all backgrounds to contribute positively to society, connect with others who are different to themselves, improve their economic prospects, and be more informed and active citizens. While there is a move to deliver more higher-level skills provision, this should not come at the expense of learning essential skills. With many Londoners still requiring basic skills, the AEB must continue to have a focus on delivering provision at level 2 and below. To support this, City Hall will provide additional guidance on how to use learner support funding[15] and the flexibilities introduced by the Mayor to the AEB to provide more tailored learning at this level. This will include sharing best practice and guidance for providers on using 10 per cent of their AEB formula-funded allocation for non-formula-funded provision. City Hall will also ensure that new funding to deliver Multiply[16] in London adds value to existing numeracy support funded by the AEB and targets those who might face barriers to accessing existing provision.

Support and strengthen progression to higher level learning from Level 2 and below

We will continue London's successful Level 3 AEB offer and explore ways to enhance this offer in future years, including possible bridging provision from Level 3 to 4 where there is evidence of positive social and economic outcomes and of meeting London's employment needs.

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[15] Learner support is part of the AEB and is available to provide financial support for individuals with a specific financial hardship preventing them from taking part/continuing in learning. This can cover childcare funding, digital devices for accessing online learning, travel and/or other hardship funding.

[16] Multiply will provide all local areas in the United Kingdom with funding to deliver bespoke adult numeracy programmes in their area from April 2022. It is targeted at adults without a GCSE grade C/4 or higher in Maths and employers who want to upskill their workforce.

Making an impact

We want the learning that we fund to transform people's lives. By improving the data collected on London's skills provision, our approaches to commissioning and delivery can be informed by data about the impact of provision. This will help ensure learning leads to positive outcomes for Londoners, helping them in life and work.

Londoners take part in adult learning for many different reasons, and the benefits of learning are well established. As well as equipping Londoners with the skills they need to secure a job and progress in work, adult learning can also deliver social benefits such as improved levels of confidence and wellbeing. Developing skills can also help address wider determinants of health inequality and increase participation in volunteering and other social activities. We want all Londoners who participate to enjoy the benefits of high-quality adult education, and for London's employers to be confident that the system is producing the skills they need.

To maximise the impact of London's AEB, we must ensure we prioritise funding to be spent on provision that yields the most benefits for Londoners. Through the London Learner Survey,[17] we are measuring how learners' lives change after they complete their learning, whether that is improvements in health and wellbeing or entering new employment, and we will use the data collected to understand where to focus City Hall-funded provision.

4. Measuring the social and economic benefits of adult education

Ensuring that provision delivers social and economic benefits for learners has been a long-held ambition in London. Recently proposed national reforms to post-16 education also recognise the importance of outcomes. In London, we have already started laying the groundwork for this through the pioneering London Learner Survey.

The survey was developed in consultation with providers, employers and other stakeholders, and will measure learners' progress against seven priority social and economic impact areas for learning in London.[18] After an initial pilot, the survey was launched at the start of the 2021-22 academic year.

Data on the impact areas will become available in 2023 and enable us to better illustrate the benefits of provision such as entry into jobs. It will also allow us to identify which courses have led to other positive outcomes for learners that are harder to measure, such as improved self-confidence. Survey data will then be brought together with data from other

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[17] In order to help City Hall understand the effectiveness of AEB, the London Learner Survey will capture the feedback of learners and robustly measure their progress against seven outcome priority areas.
[18] These social and economic impact areas include improvements to health and wellbeing; social integration; learner self-efficacy; participation in volunteering; progression into employment; in-work progression; and progression into further education and training.

sources[19] to provide a robust assessment of the impact of learning. Where possible, this may include longitudinal analysis to better understand the longer-term impacts of learning.

City Hall will:

Create a new baseline of social and economic impact data for adult education, publishing the findings from the London Learner Survey in 2023

The survey will capture changes in learner circumstances, after engaging with learning, across seven priority impact areas. The data will be used to understand the impact of City Hall-funded adult education and help to inform future policy.

Through the London Learner Survey, work towards collecting representative[20] data across all our funded providers

City Hall will work closely with providers administering the baseline survey, and the organisation commissioned to undertake the follow-up survey, to drive up response rates and ensure that data collected is representative across providers.

Use social and economic impact data to inform future skills policy and delivery in London

Social and economic impact data will be used to ensure provision is aligned with London's priorities and needs. This will include integrating impact areas within provider delivery plans, the Mayor's Academies Programme, and future Mayoral skills and employment programmes.

5. Evaluation and best practice

We know there is excellent work being done in London, the rest of the UK and internationally to deliver positive outcomes through skills provision. We want to build on such examples to maximise the impact for Londoners participating in adult education.

The UK government has proposed merging all adult skills funding streams into a single Skills Fund. The Mayor has called for full autonomy over any such Skills Fund in London. If this is forthcoming, the Mayor (in consultation with key sector stakeholders) will set out how to administer funding most effectively.

With the future allocation of funding in mind, it is therefore important that we understand the approaches which will deliver adult education with the highest impact in London. At the heart of this is a multi-year AEB impact evaluation which, along with the results from other commissioned research, will enable City Hall to build on best practice. This will include engagement with providers, civil society, communities, businesses, and other stakeholders to improve the design and delivery of adult skills in London.

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[19] This would include data captured in the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) and we will also explore the possibility of getting access to the Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) data that is currently available at the Secure Research Service (Office for National Statistics). The LEO data links the ILR to other administrative data sources, which might help to further showcase the impact of adult education against key information measuring economic development and other education progression outcomes.

[20] Not all AEB-funded learners will complete the London Learner Survey. This means the data collected via the survey will be a sample of learners. It is important that this sample of learners is representative (reflective of all AEB-funded learners as a whole).

A considered approach to incentivising positive outcomes as part of future programmes is needed to avoid unintended consequences. Job outcome payments, introduced as part of the Mayor's Academies Programme to help support people into jobs, will be reviewed as part of a full evaluation of the programme.

Best practice also means listening to providers, communities, and businesses to understand what works and what needs to be changed. In London this has led to positive changes, made quickly, to improve access to learning from communities that could otherwise be excluded.

An inclusive commissioning approach will also be adopted, reflecting our role as an Anchor Institution in London. This will involve aligning City Hall's commissioning and governance processes with our Corporate Responsible Procurement Policy and industry best practice. Through this approach, we aim to ensure that our commissioning practices are equitable, fair, and sustainable. As part of this, where we can identify issues of structural disadvantage for organisations in the skills system, we will aim to address these.

City Hall will:

Assess the impact of changes introduced since delegation through a multi-year impact evaluation

The AEB Impact Evaluation started in 2020. An annual evaluation report will be produced to establish the extent of success of policy changes introduced by City Hall, and help to inform future policy, lobbying and advocacy. The final AEB Impact Evaluation report, covering the first four years of delegation, will include an impact assessment using data collected through the London Learner Survey.

Build on lessons learned from our commissioned research and evaluations to develop and expand programmes based on best practice

This may include reviewing how previous funding opportunities were developed, promoted, and awarded, integrating best practice from other programmes, and directing more funding towards provision shown to have the greatest impact.

Accessible skills

We want to ensure London's adult education system is even more accessible and connects Londoners with the support they need throughout their lives. Participation in learning can lift people out of poverty and build connections and experiences that enrich lives. Two million Londoners live below the poverty line, more than half of whom are in working families. Many Londoners are stuck in, or moving in and out of, low-income, insecure employment with few chances to progress into better-paid and more stable jobs. Evidence suggests that people with higher-level skills are not only more likely to be in employment but are also likely to earn more in employment. They are also likely to work in higher-level occupations and enjoy greater job security. So upskilling is an important way of tackling in-work poverty.

Often, it is the Londoners who would benefit most from training who are least likely to engage in adult education. [21] This includes disabled Londoners who we know have been particularly impacted by the pandemic. City Hall has commissioned analysis to better understand which groups of Londoners currently participate in adult education. We will use this on an ongoing basis alongside labour market information, community engagement and peer-led research in communities to help define the groups most in need of adult education.

These groups are often those that faced persistent inequalities prior to the pandemic who have now been further disadvantaged by its impact. They include Londoners with no or lower-level qualifications, Londoners in low-paid work, older (aged 50+) and young Londoners, Londoners from Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, disabled Londoners, Londoners with English language needs, people seeking asylum, and adults with experience of the criminal justice system. Driving participation in learning for these groups is essential so they can experience the social and economic benefits of learning. This requires targeted programmes and outreach so we can understand and address the indirect costs and other issues that block participation in learning and open up routes to improved health and job prospects.

The Mayor also recognises that London's skills providers are often Anchor Institutions and key organisations in their communities. Despite a decade of underfunding by government, and more recently, the significant impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, they have continued to provide more than just learning, carrying out a wide range of activities that help to make London a better place to live and work. A key part of making adult education more accessible will be supporting providers in this role and helping to create inclusive places of learning.

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[21] YouGov polling on adult learning commissioned by City Hall in October 2020.

6. Raising awareness of London's adult education offer, especially among those who need it most

Londoners told us one of the main barriers to learning that they face is a lack of information about what's available.[22,23] There are a lot of adult education opportunities in London, many of which are free, but Londoners have limited awareness of these opportunities and their progression pathways to higher levels of learning. Londoners can also lack awareness of the wrap-around support available to help them, for example with adjustments to make learning inclusive and to cover indirect costs such as transport and childcare. With record numbers of Londoners expected to be unemployed following the end of the furlough scheme, and many looking to reskill or retrain, it is vital that Londoners and key referral partners know what opportunities and support are available. This also includes employers who can find it difficult to navigate the adult learning offer and the available pathways for their workforce.

Some Londoners need extra support to engage with learning. Structural inequality can mean people come to learning with differing experiences of education. For many people their past experiences have been negative, and they've lived through trauma and discrimination. Community organisations play an important role in engaging and supporting these groups, especially those who are digitally excluded. Coordination between providers, support agencies and other referral organisations is also important in making information about provision, and the venues where it's delivered, accessible.

Londoners were also clear that the affordability of provision can be a barrier. The Mayor has taken significant steps to address this by fully funding courses for those earning below the London Living Wage, as well as enabling them to retrain with a fully funded Level 3 course even if they have a prior qualification at this level or above. However, some groups still struggle to access provision; and migrants and refugee communities in London have faced significant barriers which the Mayor is committed to addressing.

City Hall will:

Deliver a long-term marketing and community outreach programme for adult education in London

This will include a flagship marketing campaign to raise awareness of adult education opportunities and wrap-around support among Londoners and employers. It will also promote training opportunities and careers in key sectors for London's recovery such as jobs and skills in the green economy, health and care, hospitality, digital and creative industries. There will be a grants programme for small community organisations to provide outreach to and target those most in need of adult education and those who might be digitally excluded, so as to increase their participation. City Hall will host a new annual Mayor of London Learner Awards to celebrate the achievements of adult education.

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[22] "More than just education: A participatory action research project on adult education in London", Toynbee Hall, September 2021.

[23] Adult Education Roadmap consultation report, CooperGibson, October 2021.

Improve understanding of London's adult education offer by partners and employers to boost referrals into adult education and skills provision

Key partners will include the National Career Service, Jobcentre Plus, other support agencies working in health, support for disabled people and for young people, businesses and employers, and community organisations. Through the 'No Wrong Door' approach we will improve collaboration between these organisations and adult education providers and encourage London's sub-regional partnerships to use their networks, connect directly with community organisations and improve links with careers services. These networks will share resources and toolkits that can improve communication and marketing of adult education entitlements and opportunities, including funding support for childcare, travel, and digital access. They can also build on existing referral routes through Jobcentre Plus and social prescribing, connecting people to learning to help people find work or improve wellbeing.

Improve coordination of English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and fully fund courses for people seeking asylum.

The Mayor is committed to supporting social integration, and English-language proficiency can be a barrier to many Londoners participating in what the city has to offer, accessing services and finding, or progressing in, work. To make ESOL more accessible to those that need it, we want to see improved coordination of ESOL provision, meaning greater collaboration between skills providers, support services, and community organisations to signpost Londoners to provision and to provide wrap-around support to learners. City Hall will improve ESOL coordination and referrals at a sub-regional level, including through No Wrong Door Integration Hubs. This will include disseminating guidance through the hubs, including on how boroughs can best make use of funding for new arrivals on resettlement schemes such as the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy, the Afghan Citizens Resettlement scheme, and the Hong Kong British Nationals Overseas scheme. City Hall will also target Londoners with English language needs through our marketing and community outreach programme and update our webpages to make them multilingual and help signpost Londoners to ESOL provision and resources.

These actions will build on the Mayor's work to ensure learning is accessible to London's migrant and refugee communities, including fully funding AEB-eligible people seeking asylum to enrol on skills courses from the 2021-22 academic year.

7. The role of adult education providers as Anchor Institutions and good employers in their communities

Adult education providers make an enormous contribution to the communities they serve and are a vital part of London's infrastructure, from the learning they provide through to their role as local employers and through their supply chains. If we want to help those in greatest need to access and fully participate in learning, it is essential that Londoners see themselves represented in the adult education system; and that providers have a skilled workforce that is inclusive and representative of the communities they serve at all levels.

The Mayor is ambitious for further and higher education providers, to lead by example in their local communities, particularly those who are Anchor Institutions. This means being 'good employers' that meet or are working towards the Mayor's Good Work Standard (GWS) and pay a living wage. It also means playing their part in helping London to become a

net zero-carbon city by 2030. Further and higher education providers are important drivers of innovation and inclusive, economic growth; and will be at the forefront of delivering the skills and new technologies that will be key to achieving the Mayor's ambition of reaching net zero-carbon by 2030. We recognise that providers are all starting from different positions and want to support providers on this journey, to demonstrate progress against each of these areas. These expectations will also be embedded into future City Hall grant-award and procurement opportunities.

City Hall will:

Expect City Hall-funded adult education providers to be 'Good Employers' that meet, or are working towards the Mayor's Good Work Standard

City Hall will support providers to make progress towards meeting the GWS, providing dedicated assistance and guidance. The first step on this journey is achieving London Living Wage accreditation.

Expect adult education providers to be inclusive organisations that are representative of the communities they serve and are located within

To support this, City Hall will establish a baseline of the further education workforce in London and identify best practice in building a representative workforce. We will also seek to identify and remove barriers to new providers accessing AEB funding in London and ensure funding opportunities are accessible to a wide range of high-quality providers.

Expect adult education providers to set out their plans for achieving net zero-carbon estates by 2030

All City Hall-funded adult education providers will be asked to have a plan in place by 2024, setting out the actions they will take to achieve net zero-carbon by 2030. This will include the management of estates and supply chains, as well as a focus on healthy, sustainable, affordable food. We will provide guidance and support on this.

Introduce a quality mark across Mayoral priority sectors and showcase best practice

The Mayor's Academies Programme will introduce a quality mark that sets a high bar for skills training in London and that responds to the needs of sectors key to London's recovery. The quality mark will build on the work of the Mayor's Construction Academy[24] and will only be awarded to high-quality training providers who meet our assessment criteria. There will be opportunities for quality marked providers to work together to tackle sector wide challenges through network meetings. This will be central to driving high standards for sector-skills provision.

8. Investing in physical and digital learning spaces

Creating an accessible educational offer also means getting learning to the learner. London's adult education providers have made extraordinary progress in adapting their learning offer to be delivered online during the pandemic. This work has been supported by the Mayor's £11m Covid-19 Response Fund which supported additional online learning and improvements in digital infrastructure.

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[24] The Mayor's Construction Academy aims to help more Londoners train in the skills they need to access construction sector vacancies on the capital's housing construction sites.

However, we know not everyone is comfortable, able, or even inclined to learn online. That is why it is also important that we support learners to access physical learning environments. We know that Londoners want to see a wider range of venues and spaces used for this purpose.

Londoners travelling to centres of learning bring our streets to life and provide opportunities to meet and connect with new people and places. The impact of embedding learning opportunities in community hubs is well documented. Therefore, we want to encourage learning to take place in spaces such as children's centres and vacant high-street premises. There is also demand for investment in facilities and technologies to deliver skills provision that better meets employers' needs.

City Hall will:

Work with partners to improve the digital infrastructure of London's adult education services, improving digital connectivity and access to devices for learners
We will seek to fully understand and share information on the impact of increased remote learning on learners; and will continue to support providers to find innovative ways to deliver online learning to effectively tackle digital exclusion.

Through the Marketing and Community Outreach Programme outlined in section 6, City Hall will pilot different ways of increasing take-up of adult education provision by digitally excluded Londoners (including the Essential Digital Skills Entitlement).

As part of the London Recovery Programme's Digital Access mission, we are working with the London Office of Technology and Innovation, the Mayor's Digital Inclusion Innovation programme will map the scale of digital exclusion across London to improve the targeting of digital inclusion services more effectively, and explore ways of making devices and affordable data plans available to digitally excluded Londoners.

City Hall will support the development of sector-specific training environments and encourage more co-location of learning with other activities and services. This will help create multiple opportunities for people in both physical and digital learning spaces in a way that fits their complex lives and helps address issues of exclusion
Using available capital funds, City Hall will develop a funding programme for investment into priorities such as achieving net zero-carbon estates, sector skills delivery linked to the Mayor's Academies Programme, and creating inclusive learning environments. The extent and scope of the programme will depend on the value of funds available and will be informed by feedback and lessons learned from previous rounds of skills capital funding. Where possible we will look to support access to other sources of capital funding so we can progress each of these priorities.

Conclusion

We recognise that many of the plans set out in the Roadmap require multiple changes that will take time to implement, and we will not necessarily see their impact immediately.

We also recognise that this is a time of great change for the further and adult education sector, with new changes being proposed by the UK government as part of its levelling up agenda.

We have ensured that the changes outlined in the Roadmap align with this levelling up agenda. There are stark inequalities within London, and London's labour market has been hit particularly hard by the pandemic, with disproportionate impacts on certain jobs and workers in the capital, while also deepening social isolation and effecting mental health. The Roadmap will help to address these inequalities and thereby level up London while contributing to the levelling up of the UK.

However, implementation of the Roadmap will rely on further changes from central government to empower London and other leading city and regional governments to establish joined up skills systems that meet the needs of their areas.

We welcome the indication that more funding streams, including Bootcamps and Multiply, will be allocated through the GLA and the Mayoral Combined Authorities. However, we want to see a more strategic and holistic approach to delegated adult skills funding and powers. This means giving London and other areas the powers and funding to establish a more comprehensive, inclusive and joined up adult skills offer than that which can be delivered through the administration of multiple restricted budgets. Further delegation of adult skills funding will further boost London's skills-led recovery, and support people to participate in society through learning, help them into work, and uplift people's health and wellbeing.

City Hall wants this Roadmap to be a marker of where we would like to get to over this Mayoral term. Achieving the ambitions we have set out will ensure we can deliver positive impacts for Londoners and London's businesses, making our communities places of learning that support people in life and work and enabling London to continue playing a pivotal role in supporting a national recovery.

London Adult Education Roadmap

Summary of consultation and community engagement feedback

Final report

October 2021

CooperGibson Research

Contents

Executive Summary

The Greater London Authority (GLA) is developing a 'London Adult Education Roadmap', which will set the direction of travel for adult education in the capital and aims to make adult education in London more accessible, impactful and locally relevant.

To inform the development of the Roadmap, the GLA held an extensive public consultation through mid-June to August 2021. This involved engaging over 100 organisations through a written consultation and stakeholder roundtables, including local authorities, learning providers and employers and businesses. The consultation also captured the views of almost 1000 Londoners from diverse backgrounds through community conversations hosted by community organisations across London. CooperGibson Research was commissioned by the GLA to analyse and report on the 64 responses to the written consultation, 44 community conversation summaries, and seven stakeholder roundtable events involving 52 organisations. This report provides an analysis and synthesis of this feedback.

What did Londoners say?

Community conversations were held by 44 community organisations across London serving a range of different demographic groups, including black and ethnic minority communities, women, socially excluded people and those living in poverty, young people, disabled people, older people and learners. Based on those organisations which provided details, a **total of 995 community members** were involved.

When **describing adult education**, Londoners referred to:
- Career progression and life chances - job opportunities, skills and techniques to progress in a career.
- Personal and well-being benefits - self-esteem, developing healthy routines, emotional and mental well-being, and making friends.
- Community benefits and cohesion - sense of identity, connecting with others, and a sense of togetherness.
- Skills and knowledge development - new skills, qualifications, and diversifying knowledge.

Barriers to accessing training were:	Londoners **want adult education opportunities** that are accessible to all:
• Travel costs, costs of courses.	
• Affordability and access to childcare.	• Community-based and local.
	• Offer flexible delivery.
• Lack of information about what's available.	• Affordable or free to access.
	• Provide one-to-one support.

Digital access was a common theme. They said it could be improved by offering:

- A loan scheme for digital devices.
- A second-hand or donation schemes for devices.
- Financial support to assist learners in accessing digital devices and the internet.
- Greater access to community buildings to use devices.
- Free WiFi in public spaces.

What did businesses and employers say?

Businesses and employers were engaged predominantly through three targeted roundtable events with members of London First, Federation of Small Businesses and London Chamber of Commerce and Industry. This involved 32 organisations. The key themes raised included:

A changing economic and skills market	Re-skill and re-train Londoners to meet emerging skills gaps across sectors. Rising demand for digital skills.
Employer engagement and support	Partnership is crucial to work-related experience. Employers need to engage with the 'culture of learning'. Networking would support small businesses.
Recruitment issues and quality of new entrants	Small businesses lack capacity for recruitment and training, preferring skilled entrants. Lack of basic skills and professionalism in interviewees is an issue.
Progression and career pathways	Clearer routes through qualifications to higher levels are needed (including leadership training) and emphasis on employability and wider skills to help motivate for work.
Flexibility in the adult skills system	Help to break down barriers and support sustainable employment by funding flexibility for lower-level qualifications, progression and broad personal and social outcomes, as well as employability skills, would
Raising awareness and appeal of adult education	Rebrand adult education to attract adults and small business, with emphasis on continuous (skills) development. Careers planning and mentoring will help people get and remain in the right job.

What did learning providers and other stakeholders say?

Learning providers and other stakeholders were engaged through a written consultation (64 responses) and seven stakeholder roundtables. Organisations involved included local authorities, sub-regional partnerships, colleges and institutes

of adult learning, independent training providers, employers and businesses, unions, higher education institutions, non-governmental organisations and charities, SEND practitioners, representative bodies, and community organisations. Stakeholders were asked to give their views on the draft Adult Education Roadmap, including plans to make adult education more accessible, impactful and locally relevant.

Accessible	• Emphasis on use of **community venues** for delivery, representing safe, friendly, welcoming and accessible spaces. This is alongside prioritising **digital skills** and support in **digital access** (including finance and access to devices/infrastructure). Blended delivery approaches were welcomed. • Use of **local knowledge and relationships** to co-design and implement promotional campaigns and to reach diverse groups. Messaging should be clear, accessible (in different languages), informative (about the offer), and relatable. • **Promotion** through case studies of learner success, multiple media sources to reach a wide audience, showcasing events, and using community venues and organisations. Consider use of quality marks to showcase excellence. • **Collaborative approaches** are needed to improve the referral process, provide information about the offer and pathways, (e.g., a directory of provision) and IAG, to raise awareness of options. • Ensure a strong qualification and professional development framework for the workforce and address recruitment and retention issues to ensure the **workforce represents London's communities**.
Locally relevant	• Broad support for plans around **subcontracting,** with emphasis on **responding to local need** and **social responsibility**. • **Use of data/LMI/evidence** is paramount to developing learning packages and making strategic decisions. Key challenges will be around basic skills, COVID-19 recovery and loss of non-UK nationals. • Encourage **employer-provider collaboration** and sharing effective practice, using existing networks and relationships. • Clear signposting and **progression pathways**, **flexible delivery** (e.g. evenings) and provision (e.g. bite-sized learning), and funding support for learners, would enhance the level 3 and 4 offer. Similarly, **understanding the needs of diverse communities** is needed to support much needed lower-level provision. • Employers should be involved in design and delivery, with **good partnerships** to help them articulate their skills needs.

Impactful	• Broad support for **measuring the impact of adult education**, with an emphasis on **longitudinal approaches** and capturing **social and personal outcomes**. Use of existing tools, standard impact measurements and key performance indicators were mentioned. • There is a need to **minimise burden on providers**, align with current data collection systems and allow flexibility (using qualitative and quantitative data and accounting for different settings/learners). • **General support for incentivising outcomes** as long as this does not encourage practice that disadvantages learners or providers, it reflects the wider impacts and benefits of adult learning, and it considers the geographical focus. • Future commissioning should be underpinned by **flexibility** to adapt provision to local and learner need, clear understanding of **skills gaps/market trends** and current/future economic needs. Accommodating **diverse and marginalised groups** is a priority.

1. Introduction

The Greater London Authority (GLA) has, since 2019, had delegated responsibility for the commissioning, delivery and management of London's Adult Education Budget (AEB). The first years of AEB delivery has provided key learning and the GLA is now positioned to set the capital's future direction of travel for adult education in its 'London Adult Education Roadmap'. The overarching aims of the Roadmap are to make adult education in London more accessible, impactful and locally relevant. This forms part of a wider vision in the context of the coronavirus pandemic to 'restore confidence in the city, minimise the impact on London's communities and build back better the city's economy and society'.[1]

In January 2022, City Hall will publish its final Adult Education Roadmap, having previously published a draft version for consultation. To inform development of the Roadmap, CooperGibson Research was commissioned to analyse and report on the broad engagement activity that has taken place within the sector and London community.

This report provides a summary of the findings across the engagement activity and the consultation questions asked.

Consultation approaches and participation

Broad engagement was sought across organisations, partners and individual Londoners through the following approaches.

1. **A formal written online consultation for stakeholder organisations centred on three key themes:**

    - Create an empowered and locally relevant adult education system.

    - Ensure impactful adult education is recognised.

    - Support Londoners most in need to better access adult education.

See Appendix 1 for the consultation questions in full.

In total, 64 responses were received via an online consultation (live from 21st June to 8th Augist 2021). This included a small number of cases (n=5), where interviews were held to facilitate the completion of the consultation questions. The 64 responses were spread across a range of organisations, as shown below.

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[1] Recovery in Context: https://www.london.gov.uk/coronavirus/londons-recovery-coronavirus-crisis/recovery-context

Type of responding organisation	No.
Business or employer	1
Community organisation	9
Further education college	9
Higher education institution	2
Independent training provider	7
Local authority	14
NGO	4
Other	5
Representative body or organisation	9
Sub-regional partnership	4

2.   Community conversations

These were events that enabled grassroots organisations and partners to canvas the views of individual Londoners. Questions asked (see Appendix 2) included a focus on the types of classes, courses and training opportunities attendees accessed and their thoughts on barriers to access as well as how these might be addressed. A range of options were offered to organisations in hosting these and guidance provided, including questions to ask.[2] Consultation Access Grants were offered to support the sessions. Community conversations took place during August 2021. Notes from the meetings were subsequently provided for analysis by conversation hosts.

44 community conversations held across London, involving 995 participants Target groups:	
- The general public - Learners - Women - Men - Older people - Children (aged 15 or under) - Young people (aged 16 to 24) - People with physical disabilities and/or special needs - People with learning difficulties - People with mental health needs - People from Black and Minority Ethnic communities	- People with a particular financial need (including poverty) - Asylum seekers/refugees: - Faith communities - Lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender people - Socially excluded / vulnerable people - Offenders, ex-offenders and their families - Other third sector organisations

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[2] Community Conversations Discussion Guide. https://www.london.gov.uk/publications/community-conversations-discussion-guide

Community conversations were submitted by 44 community organisations operating across a wide range of London boroughs (nine reported that they operate across all boroughs). These organisations were serving a range of different groups. Most commonly, they reported that their target groups for their community conversation were: people from black and minority ethnic communities, women, socially excluded/vulnerable people, people with a particular financial need (including poverty), young people, and learners.

3.   **Stakeholder engagement events**

These comprised seven stakeholder roundtables, including adult education providers, employers, unions and special educational need and disabilities (SEND) representatives, using a sub-set of consultation questions. The events took place during July and August 2021. Feedback from these events have been amalgamated with the written consultation analysis. In addition, business/employer views are highlighted separately.

In total, 52 organisations were involved in the roundtable events, with 62 representatives. The range of participants are shown below.

Event lead organisation type	Representatives
London Chamber of Commerce and Industry	4
The Federation of Small Businesses	18
London First (including businesses)	10
Association of Colleges	20
SEND representatives	4
Unions	5

Structure of this report

This report provides a summary of feedback of all the above engagement activity. It provides an analysis and summary of feedback for each question posed to consultees.

The report starts with an analysis of conversations held with London communities (Chapter 2), followed by a summary of business and employer views (Chapter 3) provided during roundtable events.

This is then followed by stakeholder views offered via the written consultation and stakeholder roundtable events. The following themes of the consultation with their relevant questions are addressed in the separate sections:

[Concluding comments](#) (Chapter 14) provide a brief summary of common messages across the consultation activity.

2.   Londoners' views (community conversations)

Community conversations were submitted by 44 community organisations operating across a wide range of London boroughs (nine reported that they operate across all boroughs). These organisations were serving a range of different groups. Most commonly, they reported that their target groups for their community conversation were: people from black and minority ethnic communities, women, socially excluded/vulnerable people, people with a particular financial need (including poverty), young people, and learners. See Appendix 2 for the discussion guide provided to community conversation hosts.

Of those which provided details, a **total of 995 community members** were involved.

This section summarises the key themes drawn out from the community conversations across the following areas:

- Barriers to accessing training and learning opportunities.

- Current and preferred ways of accessing training and learning opportunities.

- Resources or support needed to find out about training and learning opportunities.

- Suggestions for increasing digital access.

- Ideas for raising awareness of opportunities and how adult learning could be promoted to the community.

2.1 Barriers to access

> **What are the current barriers to taking part in different classes, courses and training opportunities in London?**

Most common were barriers around costs and affordability, lack of awareness of opportunities and accessibility of provision.

Costs - most conversations mentioned costs prohibiting access. Both indirect costs (for example, travel costs, loss of pay) and the cost of courses were identified. Travelling to courses outside of local areas and meeting the associated travel costs was said to be unachievable for those on low incomes. Lack of funding for the organisation delivering the provision was also mentioned.

Affordability and access to childcare - childcare was a key barrier to accessing courses/training (mentioned in two in five conversations). Key barriers were lack of

available childcare at training provision (such as, creches), and parents being able to afford alternative childcare or find flexible childcare to support them.

Lack of information about training opportunities - nearly half of the conversations mentioned this. Community members were unsure where to find information about provision, what was available, and said that they lacked a central resource to find out about available opportunities.

Accessibility/structure of provision - around two in five conversations noted barriers around the structure of training opportunities including:

- Timing of provision: difficulties in being able to attend training at certain times because of employment or family commitments, and that more flexible provision was needed.

- Location: communities wanted to feel safe attending venues, and they felt more comfortable in venues they were familiar with, often close to where they lived.

- Length: courses and qualifications that were too long in length were off-putting for some.

- There were mixed views on whether **online or face-to-face delivery** was preferable.

Cultural barriers were also raised around the structure of provision. For example, having single-sex groups (including the trainer) was mentioned by some.

Other barriers

Other common barriers mentioned in the community conversations included:

- Individual and family factors including confidence to attend training, caring responsibilities making it difficult to attend, and having a lack of motivation to attend due to previous negative experiences of education (such as, at school).

  Negative personal experience and not trusting teachers and the government. Most courses don't link up with jobs. Going to university is becoming more difficult and fees are very high. [People] don't want to end with a huge debt and a degree that will not lead to a job.
  (Community organisation)

- Digital exclusion including access to devices, the internet and data.

- Language barriers for non-English speakers.

- Proximity to provision as some were unwilling to travel to attend training.

- Issues for migrants and asylum seekers around eligibility for courses and restrictive benefits dependent on immigration status.

2.2 Accessing learning and job opportunities

> **Where do you currently go to do classes, courses, training or other type of learning? How about for help getting a job?**

Many locations for accessing training or learning were mentioned in the community conversations. Most commonly these included:

- Local colleges.

- Community groups/hubs or other voluntary organisations.

- Libraries and museums.

- Other learning providers and universities.

- Online courses.

- Children's centres and schools.

To access information about jobs, multiple sources were used including:

- Online resources and sites, such as, Google and job search sites.

- Media including newspapers, social media, shop windows, Transport for London.

- Friends, family or word of mouth.

- Job centre and job shops.

> **Where would you like to see more classes, course and training opportunities? How can these be as accessible as possible?**

Those who attended the community conversations wanted more local training and learning opportunities that:

- Were community-based, local and accessible that the community felt comfortable going to, such as, church halls, community centres, libraries, schools, children's centres.

- Offered flexible delivery, including weekends and evenings and a mix of online and face-to-face delivery, to fit around employment and childcare responsibilities.

- Considered accessibility for excluded groups (asylum seekers, young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), and those with disabilities, were all mentioned).

- Were more affordable or free to access.

- Provided one-to-one support to learners who may need it.

- Offered financial support or subsidies for digital access.

  If they have the service that not only pushes people to get a job, but also pushes people to develop their studies, you know, that would help to build confidence for people when they're applying for jobs and help people to get the job they desire rather than any basic job that's available. (Participant at community conversation)

> **What kind of resources or support would you like to help you find different classes, courses and training opportunities? How about to find job opportunities?**

To find out about different training or job opportunities those involved in the community conversations requested:

- Easily accessible information about training or job opportunities, that was well-promoted and easy to understand.

- A central directory or website for advertising opportunities.

- Tailored, one-to-one support or careers advice to help support understanding of available opportunities and decision-making.

- Financial support to cover costs of courses, or travel costs, or financial support for digital access.

- Peer support, such as buddies and mentors.

2.3 Increasing digital access

> **What can be done to make sure that people doing classes, course or training have the right digital devices and access to the internet?**

Suggestions were given as to how access to digital devices and the internet could be improved. The most common suggestions were:

- A loan scheme for digital devices (tablets, laptops, dongles).

- A second-hand or donation scheme for devices so that these could be passed on to learners who most need them.

- Financial support to assist learners in accessing digital devices and the internet, such as, grants, or subsidies to buy data or dongles.

- Greater access to community buildings (community centres, libraries) to use devices and other digital equipment.

- More free Wi-Fi in public spaces and buildings.

- Support and training for learners on digital skills and how to access and use devices.

  Have affordable or free equipment that can be loaned and data packages as the digital divide cannot be bridged without this and many of the families we support will fall behind without this access. Basic IT usage skill training is also needed or the hardware is not used. Application forms should ask questions about access to digital and means to address gaps. (Community organisation)

2.4 Raising awareness of adult learning opportunities

> **What ideas do you have to raise awareness about adult learning opportunities and encourage people in your community to do training, course, or other kinds of classes?**

Promoting adult education through media channels was mentioned in around one-third of the community conversations. Multiple channels were mentioned including adverts on YouTube, social media, radio adverts and magazine channels.

Using existing networks and groups was also viewed as being a key approach to raising awareness (in around one-third of conversations). Promoting opportunities through community and faith groups, support organisations and parental networks were all mentioned. Using staff at these groups to promote opportunities in addition to using these venues to advertise through leaflets, posters, mail-outs etc., was felt to be beneficial.

Other (less commonly mentioned) ways of raising awareness included:

- Use of peer support, mentors or community champions to share experiences, knowledge and encourage engagement.

- Local events, launches or open days promoting the offer.

- Ensuring information on provision is produced and promoted in an accessible way (for example, for non-English speakers).

> **How would you describe adult learning to your community to encourage them to take part?**

The descriptions of adult education to encourage participation were broad but generally covered the following themes:

Personal and well-being benefits, including mentions of self-esteem, helping to develop healthy routines and structure, enhancing emotional and mental well-being, and making friends.

> *The chance to do something positive with my life and help my children to thrive. Everything I never got the chance to do. The school I never went to and a chance to get a better job. A way to earn more money, make friends, challenge yourself and give it a go.* (Participant at community conversation)

Skills and knowledge development, including mentions of developing new skills, achieving qualifications, learning something new, and diversifying knowledge.

> *Adult learning isn't school! It's a way of improving skills and learning new ones. Meet like-minded people. Help people to set up their own businesses by offering a package of courses that cover all aspects of start-ups* (Community organisation).

Career progression and life chances including references around job opportunities after completing courses, providing the skills and techniques to progress in the wider world, and progressing up the career ladder raising earning potential.

> *Enables critical thinking, not just about a job acquisition and money, it's about future development to stay updated with current affairs, updating skills, gaining more experience in life as well as the labour market, and a good way to spend time enjoying learning about the world at large.* (Community organisation),

Community benefits and cohesion such as, developing a sense of identity, connecting with friends, family and communities, strengthening communities and a sense of togetherness.

> *We describe learning to our communities as an opportunity to improve both social and work-related skills. It is an opportunity to receive support to help them achieve their personal goals and ambitions. Which will in turn have a positive impact on their own communities. We educate learners about the positive effect that education can have in strengthening the internal economies of their*

*own communities. That is how an improved education or access to
work related courses can help them to provide an increased number
of employment opportunities within their own and wider communities.*
(Community organisation)

Use of positive and holistic marketing language in promoting adult education
including ensuring it is inclusive, empowering, and makes learning look fun and
enjoyable.

*The term "Adult Education" doesn't communicate the holistic nature
of all the things it encompasses. It can be misleading, not particularly
sexy. It's much more than just getting a skill to get a new job or make
yourself more employable.* (Participant at community conversation)

2.5 Feedback on the community engagement process

Those involved in facilitating the community conversations were asked their views on
the process. Overall feedback was positive in terms of the relevance of questions
provided, guidance/support and general experience of participating in a community
conversation.

- 33 out of 44 agreed (18 strongly agreed, 15 agreed) that the discussion
  questions were relevant to their community and were easy to understand; 5
  gave a neutral response, 5 disagreed (1 strongly disagreed, 4 disagreed) and
  1 gave a don't know response.

- 33 agreed (21 strongly agreed, 15 agreed) that the guidance and support
  provided to them to host a community conversation was useful, 5 gave a
  neutral response, 2 strongly disagreed and 1 did not know.

- 37 thought that the experience of participating in a community conversation
  was good (28 very good, 9 good), 4 gave a neutral response, 1 said the
  experience was poor and 2 did not know.

There was some mention in the feedback as to the language difficulties of the
questions supplied. Some had simplified and shortened the questions. A few either
requested the questions in different languages or had translated them themselves. It
was suggested that in the future, more consideration should be taken of those who
do not have English as their first language and that community organisations are
approached to help design the questions. In addition, a few commented about the
tight timescales once the grant was received and the difficulties this meant for them
in organising, conducting and writing up summaries of the conversations. However,
several mentioned that the community conversations had been a useful opportunity
for the community to come together, to share ideas and discuss the practicalities of
engagement in learning and training.

3. Business and employer views: roundtable feedback

Three roundtable events were held with businesses and employer representatives, involving 32 participants. These were open discussions and as such, the analysis is presented on a thematic basis rather than following the structure of the consultation questions. Six broad themes were identified across the three employer events.

3.1 A changing economic and skills market

Re-skilling and re-training are becoming increasingly important, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic when adults may need to move into new roles and new sectors. This may mean that individuals need to move down a qualification level or take a qualification at their existing level, to enable them to enter a new job market.

Several employers also highlighted:

- The current and future increasing demand for technical and digital skills, which has been further exacerbated by the move to hybrid working.

- The transient workforce in some sectors (including digital) due to supply not meeting demand, and seasonal changes.

- The fast pace of change (including move towards automation and augmentation), which makes it difficult for employers to understand the changing skills picture.

- A need to understand current and future skills gaps, market trends and the skills/workforce needs of different sectors. This should enable re-skilling for movement across sectors (for example, from retail where the workforce is likely to shrink further, to the care sector).

3.2 Employer engagement and support

Employer partnership is critical, particularly to support work placements, work-based learning and in providing a context for employability skills. A few mentioned the success of sector work-based academies and that they have *'proved impactful'*.

> *They [sector work-based academies] are really flexible, they meet employers' needs – but what is clear from the onset of that, is the employer voice and the employer playing a very active part… We have been really transparent around what we are looking for in terms of skills with our sector work-based academies so they can build on that foundation of learning and training and then we would map that*

to what we actually do when people secure employment for that progression, so that is just doesn't stop. (Employer)

Other comments were that:

- Engaging with employers requires speaking to those in decision-making positions, to ensure that opportunities can be unlocked.

- Businesses need support to understand the 'culture of learning', for those in leadership roles to integrate skills development and training within the organisation. A focus on continuous learning would support retention of talent.

- Employers could take a lead on meeting the skills gaps and developing the pipeline with support (from partners and the GLA, for example) and working in a collaborative way. A model mentioned was the Design Lab Programme.

- Employers, particularly small businesses, would benefit from a networking opportunity or forums, to share their skills needs with providers, and to raise their awareness of the support and programmes available to them.

- Support like Train the Trainer would be helpful for small businesses to help them support Apprentices appropriately.

3.3 Recruitment issues and quality of new entrants

Supply and demand, investment and quality were key concerns for employers:

- Recruitment and training new staff were said to need huge investments in time and resource, particularly for small businesses, which was often wasted when employees move on to another (often larger) employer. Several commented that small business require skilled entrants as they do not have capacity to train up staff.

- Poor quality of some interviewees was highlighted, including lack of basic skills, resilience and professionalism (for example, poor time keeping, interview skills) and lack of people skills (communication, dealing with customers, taking personal responsibility).

- Young people (and teachers) need to be educated about the reality of working in small businesses (for example, planning for deadlines).

3.4 Progression and career pathways

Employers thought that:

- Qualifications need to be designed with clear routes through qualifications to higher levels.

- Employability and wider skills (such as, collaboration and communication) are as important as qualifications. Developing these will give individuals the motivation to learn and progress.

- The need for motivation to work, linked to aspirations and the reasons for getting a job need to be embedded within any training/qualifications.

- Upskilling in leadership skills will support those in middle manager roles to progress, and help those in work to move roles, industries or careers.

- Training employers in unconscious bias will reduce barriers for older workers.

3.5 Flexibility in the adult skills system

Flexibility in AEB funding was considered important to provide a range of options that meet the needs of adults and employers and to recognise that *'this is a journey for a lot of people'*. This included enabling access to lower-level qualifications which support progression to levels 3 and 4, bite-sized learning / small qualifications, courses that build confidence, motivation, commitment and broad personal and social outcomes, as well as employability skills.

This approach would help to break down barriers, stimulate demand, and move people into work as well as remain in sustainable employment.

> *It is about creating sustainable employment opportunities and quality employment opportunities.* (Employer)

A few suggested that providers should work with employers to help them navigate the complex funding and qualifications systems and provide training which meets employers' and employees' needs, rather than imposing an inflexible funding system on them.

3.6 Raising awareness and appeal of adult education

Key comments related to:

- Rebranding 'adult education' for example to, 'career preparation and progression', with emphasis on continuous (skills) development to attract potential learners (which could be those who had a poor experience with education) and small businesses.

- Careers information and career planning support to ensure people are moving into the right roles.

- Provision of mentors to support learners through their journey (for example, helping to keep them motivated).

- Targeting specific types of under-represented Londoners.

4. Stimulate collaboration and partnerships

The following sections of this report focus on the feedback provided by a range of learning providers and wider stakeholders responding to the online consultation questions or participating in the roundtable events. Consultation questions can be found in Appendix 1.

This section provides details of learning provider and stakeholder feedback around subcontracting and collaborative working.

> **Q1a. What are the key considerations for creating effective guidance on good subcontracting and collaborative working?**

Written consultation respondents were broadly supportive of the Roadmap's priorities around subcontracting and there were no objections or mentions of the GLA's divergence from national policy. Most spoke generally about effective subcontracting rather than the guidance itself.

4.1 Responding to local need

Guidance on subcontracting and collaborative working should recognise the importance of responding to local needs (mentioned by over one-third of respondents). Key points for consideration for the guidance included:

- Assessment of needs is key, based on local and regional priorities, recognising variation across different types of provision and that London's boroughs face different problems and experience a wide range of skills needs.

- Subcontracting should focus on priorities and local plans, for example, provision colleges are finding difficult to offer, including for communities which are difficult to engage (a consensus from the college roundtable discussions).

- Providers should look beyond partners in their immediate geographical areas where necessary to get the right expertise and experience to meet needs.

- Larger providers should be encouraged to collaborate with subcontractors in their local areas to address gaps in the local labour market, including skills shortages.

- Guidance should also be flexible enough to allow providers to respond quickly to changes in the local economy or demand for certain skills.

- A focus on achieving greater parity between larger providers which have the capacity to secure AEB contracts and smaller local training providers which can meet employers' and learners' needs within communities.

- Offering opportunities for providers who are aware of and responsive to the needs of isolated communities and deprived areas.

    It is important to ensure subcontracted provision is developed in response to local need and embedded within the wider local skills and – where relevant – employment support system. There should be clear, specific requirements for organisations subcontracting to promote and demonstrate collaboration between subcontractors and other agencies in the system. Such requirements would help underpin the aspirations of a No Wrong Door approach. (Local authority)

In the roundtable discussions, colleges reported a shift away from subcontracting with other types of providers towards collaboration with college partners. Reasons for this included:

- Subcontracting being considered less popular now as rules imposed by the Education and Skills Fund Agency (ESFA) have limited what colleges can do.

- Some colleges have stopped subcontracting as there is more demand than they can meet, whilst others have retained a limited number of longstanding partners.

- Collaboration between colleges is more likely to guarantee quality assurance than collaboration with a non-college based subcontractors.

4.2 Social responsibility and social value

Around one-third of consultation respondents mentioned that social responsibility and social value should be considered in relation to effective subcontracting, in particular:

- Recognising providers and organisations that support and demonstrate the principles of the GLA's 'No Wrong Door' policy, including services providing a more holistic, wrap-around offer that enables effective signposting and referrals.

- A focus on organisations which work with under-represented groups, offer inclusive and flexible provision, and have considered the barriers to learning faced by disadvantaged groups.

- The social values of the organisation should be a consideration according to the SEND representative roundtable discussion, for example whether it is inclusive. In terms of SEND provision, this would mean ensuring that broader staff are skilled-up and understand how they might adapt their teaching style, their curriculum, and their resources to make provision more inclusive.

- Sustainability practices that allow for longer-term planning, for example, contracts of more than one year, which could be useful for smaller organisations in particular, to support strategic planning more effectively.

4.3 Other considerations for subcontracting guidance

Other reported considerations included:

- The guidance should be as simple as possible. Providers (colleges and independent training providers) from the roundtable discussions said they already have very robust subcontracting processes and policies in place so adding extra layers on top of that may complicate rather than support the process.

- Robust quality frameworks are in place that drive continuous improvement, these could be extended to the subcontractor or partner. Guidance could share best practice or effective models.

- Emphasise the important of ensuring organisations are financially robust and transparent, including checking for strong financial systems and procedures, clarity on how funding will be used and checks to ensure that they are of a high standard.

- The need to incentivise and stimulate collaboration and improve access to partners. Guidance should address that collaboration needs to be mutually beneficial through ensuring greater parity in arrangements between partners.

- Guidance could focus on the need to develop partnerships where there are common goals and shared values including employment partnerships (employers working with one main provider and the provider needing to subcontract to ensure coverage by level, sector, specialism and region).

- Subcontracting should focus on learning from existing good practice and using experience and expertise in the area, as well as complementing existing service capacity.

4.4 Supporting a joined-up approach

> **Q1b. How can partners in London work together to develop sustainable infrastructure that supports a more joined-up, integrated skills, careers and employment offer?**

Consultation respondents gave a number of suggestions for how partners could work together. Most commonly these included:

- Encouraging and supporting collaboration between partners including from the bidding stage, setting expectations, sharing of resources, good practice and a focus on mutual support, rather than competition.

- Alignment to local needs, businesses and flexibility in the offer through allowing providers to offer programmes at a local level, or to use funds across different areas. For example, this could include supporting health outcomes by enabling the coordination of the adult skills budget with funding from other sources such as the NHS.

- Scaling up of the careers hub model or roll-out of sub-regional careers hubs along with more alignment between adult learning provision and the national careers service, to support more joined up provision and to ensure effective access to Information Advice and Guidance (IAG).

- Use experts or specialists to support delivery (for example, regionally based Green Skills providers), a joined-up approach, with existing infrastructure and building on existing practices and programmes.

- Effective communication across partners.

- More accessible and comprehensive information for residents on the offer, such as a one-stop shop, or a web-based resource on opportunities.

- Partners could work with those who offer skills training at each level to ensure all learners have progression options. Where this is not possible, for example, when the skills are too specific, a few providers could be identified to provide a pan-London offer. This could link to Local Skills and Improvement plans and would help to ensure achievement of outcomes for those plans.

Less common suggestions included:

- Less 'red tape' and bureaucracy to make the process for collaboration easier.

- More research and mapping to understand needs, available provision and gaps across sectors, co-ordinated through integrated hubs and with input from employers and labour market information (LMI) specialists.

5.   Facilitate learning that meets London's needs

This section provides details of learning provider and stakeholder feedback around use of data and evidence, existing networks, approaches to developing learning packages, recovery following COVID-19 and key challenges.

> **Q2a. What are the key considerations for a process that will enable providers and employers to develop learning packages relevant for London's industries?**

5.1 Use of data and evidence

Around one-quarter of consultation respondents mentioned the use of data and evidence to support in the development of relevant learning packages. Suggestions included:

- Access and use of LMI to assist in understanding demand, supply and gaps in provision, for example, using data on employment levels, qualifications and skills in local areas, alongside business data, to help providers and employers understand communities better and develop packages accordingly.

- A role for the GLA to play in sharing relevant LMI with providers to inform strategic decisions, and to produce more accessible and regular LMI for providers.

- Research into current and future skills needs in London to help shape learning packages.

  Providers would particularly welcome this [LMI] being made available at borough and ward level, to facilitate improved targeting of provision to support residents into relevant local jobs. [Providers] would welcome data broken down by protected characteristics to help shape our approach to delivering more inclusive services. Equally, applying the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) measures to businesses, where appropriate, to measure impact and reach. The data must be easily accessible to both providers and employers, timely to ensure that it can be used effectively and proactively, and reliable to engender the confidence of stakeholders in the skills and employment system. (Representative body)

5.2 Utilising existing networks and relationships

Around one-quarter of consultation respondents thought that utilising existing employer networks, membership bodies or existing relationships with providers would support the development of learning packages. Suggestions included:

- Closer collaboration between providers and employers, so there is more understanding of employers' business and skills needs and the demand for certain skills to ensure that learning programmes are evidence-based and based around an understanding of skill gaps and job outcomes.

- Scaling up or utilising the role of existing employer advisory groups to co-create the skills offer.

- Using membership bodies to facilitate discussion with their members around the formulation of new provision and to build on existing provision that is already meeting needs but can be scaled up.

- A role for GLA to work with membership bodies, local authorities and Sub-Regional Partnerships to share practice on working effectively with employers in key sectors.

- Consideration of incentives or benefits for employers. This could include incentivising employers to engage with providers to fill their skills shortages, along with a degree of challenge about their role in creating a more diverse and inclusive workforce.

5.3 Other considerations for developing learning packages

To support the development of relevant learning packages, other reported considerations by consultation respondents included:

- More flexible AEB funding arrangements to allow providers to adapt programmes and qualifications (for example, being able to offer non-accredited qualifications) to meet emerging skills needs.

- Development of programmes and high-quality qualifications to meet needs in key sectors and across different levels, particularly level 2 and below, and higher-level skills.

- Flexible provision for learners to allow study to fit around employment, and personal responsibilities, such as bite-sized units of learning that can add up to a full qualification but with no requirement to do so and no time cap on completion.

- Flexibility for providers was mentioned in the college roundtable discussions as being necessary because some colleges are using non-accredited learning to meet employer needs and some are working with employers to develop locally grown skills. However, there are barriers to this, such as funding mechanisms and not being able to offer qualifications that are not on the permitted list.

- How to engage small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the development of learning packages, including how to address potential barriers to involvement such as, lack of time or resources.

- Focus on vocational learning and its promotion through IAG to ensure young people have a clear understanding of different pathways at a younger age.

> **Q2b. What are the key processes for how your organisations and its partners develop learning programmes?**

5.4 Current approaches to developing learning packages

Around one-third of consultation respondents mentioned using LMI and other data to help develop learning programmes. The type of data mentioned was wide-ranging and included catchment and community profiling data, vacancy data, National Offender Management Information System (NOMIS), and the Office for National Statistics (ONS). Some mentioned use of research and sector reports for insights into sector needs. Providers were using this data to inform their curriculum planning or to identify skills gaps.

> *First of all we use local market intelligence in terms of skills gaps, so it helps us identify where different skills/jobs are needed, gaps, what the market will look like in 2/3 years' time then we match that to our curriculum. We keep this very fluid as we want to be responsive, to meet demand, and offer skill sets at very short notice.* (Further education college)

Drawing on existing networks and partnerships was highlighted by one-third of consultation respondents. Consultation with partners and employers to identify need was common. This included, for example, meeting with employers and partners to ascertain need/gaps in provision, using provider and local authority structures and networks. Most mentioned undertaking this process along with reviewing LMI and other data to provide a comprehensive picture before making decisions.

Respondents were also developing their learning programmes through:

- Undertaking an in-depth data analysis and collection of LMI to assess the viability, potential success rates and geographical delivery areas of potential learning packages.

- Using feedback and evaluation data from employers, learners and partners to develop programmes and to revise existing programmes, to ensure they remained fit for purpose and relevant. Learner voice and feedback from the

current offer on websites, reviews or other feedback mechanisms were mentioned.

- Consideration of national and regional priorities around skills and sector development, for example, GLA strategic plan, COVID-19 recovery plans, corporate plans.

- Using subject specialists or industry experts to write learning programme materials, peer review and inform delivery approaches.

- Assessment of viability of potential learning programmes based on expertise in the area/sector and funding parameters.

Challenges mentioned included: working with smaller organisations, the availability of LMI, feedback in certain sectors, and being able to design programmes for certain groups of learners due to funding parameters and constraints.

> **Q2c. What are the skills challenges for your local area/business/sector both now and in the next 5 years?**

Consultation respondents tended to talk generally about skills challenges rather than distinguishing between immediate and medium or long-term challenges.

5.5 Recovery from COVID-19 and wider economic challenges

Over one-quarter of consultation respondents mentioned challenges related to COVID-19 and wider economic issues, particularly Brexit.

According to representatives from the college sector and unions in the roundtable discussions, one of the main challenges is understanding which skills are required by employers in the current economic and workplace context. This was attributed to a constantly changing and fluid baseline, due to post-pandemic, some sectors opening and some closing down.

Consultation respondents felt that there were potential challenges with:

- London facing higher levels of unemployment and furlough than elsewhere.

- Difficulties in knowing the long-term impact of COVID-19 on the workforce, making long-term planning difficult.

- Longstanding challenges exacerbated by the pandemic and Brexit in key sectors, such as, hospitality, leisure and tourism, and the reduction in non-UK nationals working in London. Providers, therefore, need to be very flexible and respond rapidly to changes and new demands in the labour market. A view that was supported across the roundtable discussions

The economic impact of the pandemic means that this now includes a great deal of rebuilding in sectors which were previously buoyant but have been badly hit (such as the creative industries). Similarly, Brexit is already affecting the availability of skilled employees in some sectors (such as hospitality). In addition to this there are also emerging needs in sectors such as technology and the "green" skills sectors. (Representative body)

5.6 Basic skills challenges

Over one-quarter of consultation respondents thought that basic skills continued to be a challenge, mentioning numeracy, literacy and digital skills primarily. Whilst recognising that this was a challenge pre-pandemic most felt that this needed to continue to be a priority. Comments included:

- Prioritising and promoting basic skills in the recovery from COVID-19 ensuring that there is a shared agenda across key commissioners on how to address these skills gaps.

- Consideration of basic skills gaps from key groups including Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups, the homeless, those whose first language is not English, and those with a learning difficulty or disability.

  In each LA area in London there are similar sets of key skills challenges related to the low skilled - basic English, maths, ESOL, digital, the unemployed, homeless, integration, crime and violence, disability and lack of work and progression opportunities. We would like to see these areas prioritised and promoted. We would also like to see them feature in any recovery plan, with the GLA working with other key commissioners such as health bodies and Jobcentre Plus to negotiate a shared agenda. (Representative body)

5.7 Wider challenges

Consultation respondents also mentioned recruitment and retention, funding, sector growth and wider social challenges:

- Recruitment and retention issues, and being able to attract employees to key sectors due to low salaries and poor prospects (mentions included green sector, early years, hospitality, leisure and tourism, construction, health and social care, and haulage).

  Recruitment and retention of early years staff trained at level 3 and [who are] ambitious to take on higher level study. Without a rewarding career structure with progression routes supported by

professional development opportunities there will be few ready and willing to take on nursery and pre-school management roles in a few years' time. (Independent training provider)

- The difficulties that providers face in being able to source or attract tutors/teachers to deliver in certain vocational areas, and in English and mathematics.

- Discussions with employer representatives in the roundtables highlighted frustration that entrants were not equipped with basic skills.

- Funding and contracting issues including short-term contracts, historical under investment in the sector, lack of flexibility in the AEB approval process and uncertainty over European Union (EU) funding.

- Growth and increasing demand in some sectors, such as, technology and digital related business, and the green sector.

- How wider social issues, such as mental health issues, crime and homelessness could be addressed through provision and recognition that they will have an impact on individuals' willingness to engage with provision.

6. Prioritise skills that support progression

This section provides details of learning provider and stakeholder feedback around ensuring clear progression pathways are in place, considerations for enhancing provision at levels 3 and 4, engaging the most in need, and ensuring flexibility in provision, including at level 2 and below.

> **Q3a. What are the key considerations for supporting and enhancing a London offer at levels 3 and 4, particularly where it can support the most disadvantaged Londoners to progress into employment in sectors key to London's economy?**

6.1 Clear signposting and pathways to and beyond levels 3 and 4

Clearer signposting and progression pathways would support a London offer at levels 3 and 4 (mentioned by over half of consultation respondents). Comments included:

- More flexibility in progression frameworks to account for variability in existing qualifications, for example, still allowing learners with literacy, numeracy or digital skills at a lower level to progress to level 3 or 4 provision.

- Increasing opportunities for learners to enrol on shorter course such as modular and bite-sized delivery as there was significant demand for this type of provision and it may open-up pathways for progression, particularly for disadvantaged learners.

    Proper flexibility in the offer is needed, by funding bite-sized modular delivery – so adult learners can keep working and doing other responsibilities, and don't have to complete a large, substantive and whole qualification within a year. (Local authority)

Stakeholders across the roundtable discussions also mentioned:

- The process of re-training should be made simpler and easier, for example, by extending the Lifetime Skills Guarantee so that those who already have a level 3 qualification can take another.

- It should be recognised that progression is not necessarily linear because during periods of economic turbulence individuals may have to leave their existing jobs, need to re-skill or drop down a level in order to re-enter the job market in a new role.

6.2 Funding and finance support for level 3 and 4 provision

Around one-third of organisations mentioned **funding and finance** as being key considerations in supporting and enhancing a London offer at levels 3 and 4, including:

- Support for disadvantaged learners to allow them to overcome financial barriers such as, childcare and transport costs.

- Better promotion of funding opportunities such as loans and other financial support available to disadvantaged groups of learners.

- Parity in funding and financing across courses, for example ensuring there is a balance in the offer at level 3 and 4 across subjects and sectors.

- Financial support for courses in certain industries and priority sectors such as engineering, digital, healthcare and construction.

  Ensuring the offer below levels 3 and 4 are appropriately funded and flexible to ensure the wide range of barriers people face are able to be accommodated. At all levels (including levels 3 and 4) have a mental wellbeing fund which providers can use flexibly to support learners with breaks in learning, mental health advisors / leads, resources etc. (Local authority)

6.3 Other considerations to enhance a level 3 and 4 offer

- Focus level 3 and 4 entitlement to provision that would best meet London's current and future labour market needs, including an assessment of the labour market returns of specific qualifications.

- Extending the National Skills Guarantee to include higher level skills provision (up to level 5), to enable adults who already hold a level 3 qualification to re-train and upskill.

- Broadening the range of qualifications eligible for support under the National Skills Fund to be more representative of the skills needs across the economy, not just specific technical qualifications.

- Good quality careers advice and guidance, alongside positive messaging about increasing skills and returning to learning, to encourage study at level 4 and above.

- A suite of high-quality, attractive level 3 and 4 qualifications and clear links between level 3 and 4 qualifications and employment.

- Better partnership working between providers, employers and schools.

Q3b. What are the key considerations for ensuring the GLA can stimulate provision at entry level up to level 2 that shows positive outcomes for learners, employers and communities?

There were mixed views as to whether there was a need to stimulate demand at entry level up to level 2. Some organisations felt that they already experienced significant demand at this level. However, there was generally support for the GLA's focus on this level of provision.

6.4 Focus on engaging the most in need in relation to level 2 (or below)

One-third of consultation respondents thought that there needed to be sufficient focus on engaging communities and individuals that were more difficult to involve in adult learning. Suggestions included:

- Understanding the demands and needs of diverse communities and learners such as asylum seekers and women, to establish how best to target and involve them in learning.

- A more joined-up approach to involving partners who support the most disadvantaged communities, to help facilitate learners' access to and connection with adult learning. This could include greater involvement of health, housing and community partners to help stimulate demand.

- Use of a variety of providers (college and community based), delivering in different locations to increase the potential entry points for learners. Suggestions included, accessible entry-level bootcamps connected to specific industries, similar to how they have been delivered through the Mayor's Construction Academy.

- Across the roundtable discussions it was highlighted that addressing the barriers to progression for many learners was important, including those with SEND, who struggle with literacy and numeracy and who need to access basic skills courses in order to progress beyond level 2 (which was considered an essential progression step for people upskilling in employment and accessing higher paid jobs).

- Consideration of how cultural barriers to learning (such as, for women or particular communities) can be overcome to support engagement.

    Many learners join our provision with a lack of confidence and understanding of how their route to employment can be supported. Others are dealing with multiple barriers to learning and to employment which are overcome over time and with access to multiple support networks and a series of courses to help learners

*get on track to a pathway towards progression. The flexibility to
develop programmes across the range of levels and both accredited
and non-accredited allows for entry points at a variety of places to
support those with varying entry points.* (Local authority)

6.5 Flexibility provision to enhance level 2 (or below) provision

One-third of consultation respondents mentioned the importance of flexibility in
delivery of provision at level 2 and below. Organisations mentioned flexibility both in
terms of approaches to delivery and the flexibility within funding requirements to
allow them to meet the needs of learners. Specific suggestions included:

- Consideration of delivery locations and approaches to reduce potential
  learners' fears of engaging. Suggestions included, a balance of digital and
  face-to-face delivery, in the community and 'out of hours' delivery and delivery
  of functional skills in workplace settings.

- Opportunities to offer non-accredited, bite-sized provision to stimulate interest
  and offer convenient learning.

- A system that accounts for the different starting points of learners and does
  not hinder certain groups. Some said that functional skills at level 2 is
  challenging for an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) learner.

- A strong emphasis on personalisation and offering bespoke support to those
  who need it, such as offering a variety of access points to provision.

- Flexibility within the funding arrangements so that providers are able to offer
  wraparound support, are incentivised to enable progression and are not
  penalised for delivering online courses (for providers who offer online delivery
  and do not receive the uplift in funding).

6.6 Other considerations for stimulating lower-level provision

Other commonly reported considerations for stimulating demands at entry level up to
level 2 included:

- Ensuring learners can see clear progression routes beyond their current
  qualification and offering high-quality and timely IAG to support learners with
  their progression.

- Recognition of wider benefits of learning at that level, such as, social and
  personal outcomes like confidence, mental health, motivation, and
  independent life skills.

- Strong marketing and advertisement of provision at this level to stimulate
  demand including streamlining and standardising information to employers.

> **Q3c. What are the key considerations for employers and skills providers to work together to embed essential employability skills into learning packages?**

6.7 Meaningful engagement and collaboration

Around three in ten consultation respondents thought that there needs to be more understanding of employers' needs, and greater partnership working and communication. Suggestions included:

- Closer relationships between employers and providers to establish a deeper understanding of their current and future needs and demands for skills and roles. Encouraging employers to articulate what employability skills they are looking for and recognising that these may differ across employers and across sectors, were mentioned.

- Employer endorsed provision with employers involved in delivery, such as via site visits, employer talks and offering work-experience and industry placements.

- Employers participating in the roundtable discussions also mentioned that employer engagement and the employer partnership element was critical in the facilitation of work placements and work-based learning. They felt it important to consider how employers provide a context for employability skills, such as sector-based work academy programmes.

- Respondents suggested there was a role for the GLA in promoting best practice initiatives led by employers, such as Accenture's Future Fit course to encourage other employers to become involved.

  Employers can be unclear about what actually they need from employees, or the exact skills set that is needed for particular sectors – work with sectors can help to identify the skills and attributes more clearly to help learning providers devise most appropriate courses to support learners progress into these strong and growing sectors.
  (Local authority)

6.8 Other considerations for embedding employability skills

Other reported considerations for embedding employability skills into learning packages included:

- Acknowledgement of the importance of broader transferable skills (such as, team working, communication, organisational skills, critical thinking and resilience), in developing employability.

- One of the key challenges mentioned by employers in the roundtable discussions was the changing needs of the economy/labour market and how

to respond quickly to these. It was suggested that given these are not constant, the emphasis could be partly on more transferable and generic skills (for example, financial education) and articulating to learners how these skills can be useful and in which sectors/jobs.

- Incentivising and measuring performance based on the technical and essential employability skills learners are acquiring, and the extent to which this leads to employment outcomes.

- Making employability skills more visible within the formal learning objectives and intended outcomes of courses and qualifications.

- Utilising existing links between providers and employers to share and promote opportunities and best practice in the delivery of employability skills, such as, through integration hubs.

- Clarifying and promoting a shared language for describing employability skills and a shared understanding of their meaning to ensure consistency across partners.

- Recognition of differences in employability skills needs for different groups of learners and sectors (such as the over 50s).

7. Understand the social and economic impact of adult education

This section provides details of learning provider and stakeholder feedback on the key considerations and suggested approaches to understanding the impact of adult education.

> **Q4. What are the key considerations for developing an improved understanding of the impact of adult education and making use of a new baseline of social and economic impact?**

The majority of consultation respondents were supportive of the London Learner survey. Respondents thought it would be useful in helping to developing a baseline, tackling disadvantage and in understanding the social and economic impact of adult education.

There were multiple other suggestions given for developing an improved understanding of the impact of adult education. These included:

- Capturing progression and destination data for learners including those that have moved into employment and progressed within their career.

- Using a longitudinal approach, measuring the longer-term impact of adult education to recognise that observable impacts may take longer. The Department for Work and Pensions and the Ministry of Justice data labs were mentioned.

- Using tools such as Skills Builder Benchmark to establish a baseline of learners' employability skills at the start of a programme. This can be used as a diagnostic tool to inform delivery, and also, repeated use will allow a measure of distanced travelled for individual learners. Roundtable respondents, including employers, colleges and particularly SEND representatives, thought that employability skills should be recorded in a more rounded way capturing job outputs and training alongside wider personal and social outcomes, including wellbeing and mental health development.

- Tracking social return on investment (SROI) such as through comparing investment in learners at varying qualification levels and the return on investment in terms of learner progression, salary increase, sustained employment, and wider social and family benefits. This would help establish whether the SROI is greatest for certain levels of qualifications. Some employer and SEND practitioner roundtable respondents gave similar feedback.

- Roundtable respondents thought that there should be sufficient focus on the social and wider impacts of adult learning in any impact measurement such as, the impact of ESOL and Information Technology (IT) courses on learners' everyday lives and how these break down barriers by enabling effective communication and improved digital skills. They also felt that it was necessary to incorporate a measure into learner impact surveys.

- Using standardised impact measurements, along with clear, concise and measurable key performance indicators that allow for benchmarking and easy interpretation by local authorities, the GLA, the ESFA and Ofsted.

- Consulting specialist organisations who have expertise in collecting data about particular learners (such as those with SEND), to inform approaches.

Respondents identified some challenges in measuring the impact of adult education including:

- The diversity of adult education can make the measurement of impact difficult due to provision being non-linear and outcomes for learners not always being seen immediately – longitudinal measurements of impact are therefore important.

- The need for approaches and tools to be accessible and inclusive. Suggestions were to use inclusive language in surveys (using providers' and not just 'colleges' to reflect the broad nature of provision) and consider how to engage some groups in surveys due to language or communication difficulties.

8. Embed strong measurement of social and economic impact

This section provides details of learning provider and stakeholder feedback around use of flexible data collection processes, the importance of minimising burden on providers, considerations for integrating new impact data, and views on incentivising outcomes.

> **Q5a. What are the key considerations for integrating new information and data on impact areas and learner feedback into future skills delivery?**

8.1 Flexible data collection processes

The most common feedback from consultation respondents (around one-fifth) was the importance of using multiple and flexible data collection methods. The suggestions provided were wide-ranging and included:

- Use of a variety of learner feedback including capturing views on accessibility, preferences for delivery (online versus face-to-face) and destination data.

- Capturing employer feedback on the quality and responsiveness of provision.

- Securing longitudinal data to determine how successful outcomes have been for learners. Respondents said this is more resource intensive for providers, and there should be resources available for providers to do this.

- Flexible data collection methods to account for the different types of provision (for example covering accredited and non-accredited learning), settings and learners (for example, experiencing different opportunities and overcoming diverse barriers).

8.2 Alignment with existing data collection mechanisms

Around one-tenth of consultation respondents mentioned that the integration of any new information or data needed to consider providers' existing data collection mechanisms and the potential burden of new requirements. Key points raised included:

- New systems being more burdensome for providers to implement within existing resources.

- Using existing Individual Learner Record data (ILR) before introducing any new data collection processes. Additional data requests should have clear added value, be credible and timely so the data can be used to inform delivery.

- Ease of aligning new data requirements to existing systems of data collection (such as for enrolment, examination entry etc.) and the time providers would need to adjust to any changes.

  The system needs to be provider friendly. A key consideration is the importance of securing longitudinal data often some time after the end of service for the learner to really determine how successful outcomes have been for learners. This is more resource intensive and this has to be reflected in the system and the resources available for providers to operate it. (Local authority)

8.3 Other considerations for integrating new data on impact

Other reported considerations for integrating new information and data on impact areas and learner feedback into future skills delivery included:

- Making data and feedback easily available, accessible and adaptable so that stakeholders value its importance and use it to inform decisions about practice and provision.

- Inclusion of social outcome measures into data collection mechanisms. Suggestions included learners' thoughts on employability, confidence, wellbeing and living independently.

- Recognition of the challenges of data collection particularly longitudinal data collection, collecting data from marginalised learners and the inclusivity of data sets.

- Recognition that the progression through learning for learners will be different due to different starting points and reflecting this in any data collection approaches.

- Consideration of how data will be used to inform future strategic and funding decisions, such as, the analysis of data at a borough, or pan-London level, to inform commissioning and future delivery.

- Accurate, timely and open reports on the impact of AEB within individual boroughs – this would help in providing greater oversight of strengths and gaps.

- Incentivising providers to track outcomes and provider evidence of progression if it is over and above immediate destination data, and making the process for incentives simple.

  New information and data on impact needs to be considered in the same way as other data is used in curriculum design and programme planning - colleges will already have well-developed systems to

review internal data on performance, quality and learner voice and external data on benchmarking and labour market and demographic data. For it to be meaningful any information and data must be credible (evidence based and applicable to the specific situation) and timely (to be accommodated within the planning cycle).
(Representative body)

> **Q5b. What are the key considerations for measuring and incentivising outcomes through future initiatives?**

8.4 Unintended consequences of incentivising outcomes

The potential consequences and impact of incentivising outcomes on other areas was mentioned by around one-fifth of consultation respondents. Concerns were raised regarding incentives encouraging behaviours and practices focused on seeking immediate short-term results (such as delivering provision that is easier to achieve outcomes from, or narrow short-term progression decisions being made for learners that may not be in their best interests). Several respondents mentioned that incentives should not disadvantage any learner, provider or cohort and that this should be analysed prior to implementation.

> *One real issue at a national level has been different programmes around skills and employability displacing and duplicating one another, depending on attached incentives and the priorities of different government department at any given time. The focus in all of this must be the outcome and longer-term opportunities for the learner.* (Independent Training Provider)

8.5 Parameters and framework for incentivising outcomes

Around one-quarter of consultation respondents gave their views on the parameters and framework for incentivising outcomes, these included:

- Establishing an outcomes framework that is broad enough to reflect the wider impacts and benefits of adult learning including a focus on personal, education, and economic outcomes, health and well-being, social integration and improved learner efficacy, not just payment by results (PBR).

- Providing additional funding for outcome payments linked to job entry, promotion and career development.

- Giving social and economic outcomes equal weighting to reduce the likelihood of the social benefits of learning being undervalued.

- Consideration of the geographical focus of an outcome framework, particularly whether it should be local or regionally focused.

8.6 Other considerations for measuring/incentivising outcomes

Other commonly reported considerations for measuring and incentivising outcomes included:

- Recognising the challenges in outcome measurement including the diversity of courses, the time needed to realise outcomes, and the capacity and ability of smaller organisations to collect data.

- Review existing evidence and research on incentive-based outcome models in adult education programmes to understand key learning and best practice in this area.

- Adopting similar measures to those in the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012, that mandates the inclusion of social value in procurements. This would require providers to commit to generating social value in order to access additional AEB funding as a percentage of the total funding that they have received.

- Awarding contracts on the basis of outcomes rather than the number of learners. For example, a proportion of funding could be conditional on providers achieving relevant outcomes and paid out once those outcomes have been achieved.

  Contracts should be awarded or grant funding maintained on the basis of which outcomes have been selected by the provider in agreement with the GLA that reflect their assessed local demands, especially from learners. Multi-year contracts should also be introduced as well as greater weighting to those living in deprived areas in recognition of the time and intensity of support it takes for some people at lower levels to achieve and progress. (Local authority)

- Ease of process for implementation of incentives to minimise burden and bureaucracy.

  Flexibility is key if incentives for outcomes are to be introduced. The GLA needs to work through any proposed incentives with employers and providers to ensure that we do not have unintended consequences, which negatively impact those who most need adult education. The resources required to evidence incentivised outcomes need to be de-bureaucratised and easy to implement for providers of varying sizes. (Other sector body)

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9. Create and expand programmes derived from best practice

This section provides details of learning provider and stakeholder feedback around flexibility, understanding needs of providers, employers and communities, and considerations for future commissioning.

> **Q6a. What are the key considerations that you would like to see in our future commissioning of new adult education provision?**

9.1 Flexibility to adapt provision

Consultation respondents (around one-quarter) thought that future commissioning of adult education needed to offer flexible delivery through:

- Allowing learners to achieve qualifications over a time period that suited both their needs and the needs of employers.

  Flexibility is fundamental for us and our employer partners to ensure that we can adapt our provision to meet employers' needs. At different points of time for different industries, we will need to focus on different skills, different levels of skills and different times taken for learners to achieve the qualification. (Provider)

- Being adaptable and flexible to learners' needs; consideration of modular qualifications, micro credentials and bite-sized learning that may better suit learners who do not feel able to take a full qualification, along with offering remote learning and flexible hours to account for family and work commitments. College representatives, unions and employers in the roundtable discussions in particular, mentioned that they would like to see the expansion of micro credential, bite-sized learning and the flexibility to moderate provision where necessary.

- Allowing providers and employers to develop a curriculum that meets demand at a local level.

9.2 Clear understanding of needs

One-fifth of consultation respondents thought that future commissioning needed to be driven by a clear understanding of need. Specific suggestions included:

- Acknowledging the needs and priorities of providers and employers; identifying skills gaps and funding provision to address these.

- A clearer map of needs, how they are currently being catered for and what can make the greatest difference for those who require the most support.

- GLA considering market trends and current and future local, regional and national economic needs in commissioning.

  Future commissioning should really target gaps in current provision. We have a good and stable provider base, that is meeting a significant level of need, however this is not consistent across all areas. The GLA should also seek to trial new approaches on measuring impact and outcomes through future commissioning. Again, this should be focussed on the areas that are currently not visible within the employment and skills system. (Local authority)

9.3 Provision for marginalised groups

Nearly one in five consultation respondents thought that future commissioning should focus on provision for disadvantaged or marginalised groups. Some thought that specialist provision should be integrated into commissioning arrangements, with possible ring-fencing of funding for specific communities who are less likely to engage with mainstream services. There were a number of potential groups of learners that were mentioned including those who have not had a good experience at school, women, asylum seekers, deaf learners and those aged over 50.

9.4 Other considerations for future commissioning

Other commonly reported considerations around the future commissioning of adult education included:

- Outcome-based commissioning that considers distance travelled for learners as well as social and economic impact of involvement.

- Funding parameters and cycles to best meet learners needs such as, inclusion of non-contact time in funding allocation and longer funding cycles to allow for longer-term planning.

- Development of new programmes or funding to stimulate demands or address key challenges (for example, green tech programmes).

- Prioritisation of funding for level 2 and below provision.

- Greater engagement with community and voluntary sector providers to help design and inform provision.

- The ability for learners to access good quality careers advice and guidance before, during and after programmes of study. Employer representatives in

the roundtable discussions felt that there was little mention of careers advice in the Roadmap and they would like to see an increased focus on this.

- A review of the best-performing programmes in terms of social mobility - job entry, promotion, salary increase - to inform and structure the sharing of best practice.

- The GLA should ensure the commissioning process is based on labour market information and engagement with employers (including SMEs), in order to meet sector specific needs.

- Appropriate due diligence with providers able to demonstrate high-quality provision evidenced by self-assessment reports and Ofsted. This is in addition to being able to demonstrate positive learner outcomes, inclusive provision, and the ability to engage with and provide for a diverse community.

- Colleges and SEND representatives involved in the roundtable discussions would like to see a focus on supporting learners through a learner journey. They suggested the use of mentors to maintain commitment and motivation.

> **Q6b. What are the examples of skills and employment programmes that are especially impactful that future commissioning of adult education in London should take into account?**

9.5 Building on impactful skills and employment programmes

There were many examples of skills and employment programmes that consultation respondents listed. These are shown in the table below. More general comments were also offered around impactful skills and employment programmes including the need for:

- Understanding industry requirements to help evaluate if providers are effective.

- Place-based programmes and cross-sector collaboration (are impactful).

- Re-training schemes for unemployed.

- Expansion of programmes that combine theoretical knowledge with workplace skills.

- Flexible COVID-19 funding.

- Individual programmes with progression to university.

- Qualifications developed by professional bodies.

- Tailored support for the low skilled and digitally excluded.

Impactful skills and employment programmes which consultation respondents thought should be considered for future commissioning	
• Sector-based skills academies. • Programmes that focus on skillsets or sectors needed for the future such as the digital and green sectors. • Apprenticeships and work-experience. • Employment ready programmes such as the Skills Escalator programme. • Kickstart. • Tower Hamlets English for Integration project. • Local authority adult education providers.	• Practical ideas for happier living. • Programmes that have been co-created with learners. • Enhancing Futures. • Find Fusion. • Open University and Uber partnership. • Master classes with industry experts. • Brent Start. • Fatima EU project. • Bridges to support progression. • Services with ex-offenders.

10. Raise awareness of London's adult education offer

This section provides details of learning provider and stakeholder feedback relating to promotion of adult education, using existing knowledge and community relationships and campaign messaging. It also explores views on improving the referral system.

> **Q7a. What are the key considerations for outreach and promotional campaigns about adult education and how can we ensure these effectively engage London's communities and places facing educational disadvantage?**

10.1 Using local knowledge and relationships

Over one-quarter of consultation respondents felt that the relationships and knowledge that local providers and groups had with their communities should be utilised for promoting the adult education offer and for maximising engagement. Suggestions were wide ranging and included:

- Co-developing and implementing promotional campaigns at a local level drawing on local authorities and providers' knowledge of their communities and how best to reach them. This was felt to be particularly important in targeting more disadvantaged communities.

- Using the reputation and relationships community groups have with communities to assist in engagement and promoting the adult education offer.

- Some providers from across the roundtable discussions reported that their feedback showed that learners want information to be accessible and in one place. Information hubs and libraries could be used as one-stop shops for people to access information, advice and guidance on learning opportunities and careers.

- Connecting with local advocacy groups to share why certain communities face educational disadvantage and then aiming to address these barriers in any promotion or outreach activities.

  These hard-to-reach segments need to be identified first and in most cases they are. But one of the problems is how to reach them and keep them engaged. So, unless we invest more in providers and people it is a problem, e.g., with digital infrastructure so we are not faced with a situation e.g., when individuals are using their phones to access learning. So, individuals need to be shown what are the benefits and outcomes and how they will benefit personally. They

need reassurance and guarantees. We need to be flexible in terms of our offer and delivery. Providers know communities best, what to deliver and how to deliver it. (Further education college)

10.2 Campaign messaging

Over one-quarter of consultation respondents thought that the messaging of any outreach and promotional campaigns was important. Respondents thought that the messaging should:

- Be relatable to local people and be learner focused ensuring that the messaging includes what provision is available, the benefits of adult education and a strong clear message about the costs of learning and the entitlement offer.

- Showcase the difference it could make to people's lives; benefits and outcomes and use case-studies and stories to promote these.

- Complement or form part of a wider No Wrong Door approach such as linking to wider employment support provision in boroughs and sub-regions.

- Be consistent across boroughs. The GLA should work with boroughs to ensure that local messaging around adult education is aligned and can be promoted through a range of local services. A co-ordinated, over-arching promotional campaign for London, using the Mayor's name and branding for consistency, was suggested.

    Outreach efforts will need to comprise a broad coalition of stakeholders to advertise and sell the benefits of adult education to diverse audiences. Key messages should focus on understanding the barriers that adults face when engaging with learning. (Representative body)

10.3 Other promotional considerations

Consultation respondents provided other considerations for the promotion of adult education including:

- A flexible, adaptative and accessible campaign approach using a variety of methods and media to ensure good community reach. The timing of campaigns should also be considered (for example to align with recruitment timings).

- Awareness raising should be carried out through further education colleges or schools rather than the GLA as Londoners were more likely to access college

websites which are better at signposting. Some college roundtable participants suggested using local community venues such as libraries.

- Consultation and SEND practitioner roundtable respondents thought that IAG should be provided in a varied range of ways, including in other languages, and be inclusive to the meet the broad range of learner needs (such as those with SEND or for whom English is an additional language).

- Consider good practice examples or guidance on existing effective promotional campaigns.

> **Q7b. How can the GLA work with local partners to create higher quality referrals into and out of adult learning, so that Londoners can access the right opportunities on their journey to work?**

10.4 Collaborative model for referrals

Over one-quarter of consultation respondents suggested that a collaborative model involving various partners and the GLA would help support a quality referral system. Respondents thought this would support greater understanding of the adult education offer and available pathways, which would help support stronger referral networks and alignment of referral systems across partners. Suggestions included:

- A role for GLA to play in building on existing networks and infrastructure to bring partners together and facilitate connections between different parts of the sector, such as, between further education and wider community learning, or through supporting local skills and employment partnerships to help develop strong referral networks.

- Establishing strong links and working relationships with local specialist organisations who engage with marginalised communities.

- Good communication between all partners so there is a clear understanding of the adult learning offer and the available pathways. The model used through the COVID-19 crisis was mentioned as a successful approach (for example, healthcare providers and local authorities being connected to coordinate the response).

- More active listening and outreach to colleges and schools, for example, to build on family learning provision.

    The GLA could set up local and pan-London stakeholder networks, including ESOL providers, ESOL students, local authorities, employment agencies, libraries, GP surgeries, schools etc. Regular meetings of these stakeholders, would allow for matters to be

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considered from a variety of perspectives, ensuring that solutions best benefited everyone. These, together with the website and advice centres (setting up of which is a good pretext for setting up these networks) would make referrals much easier. (Non-governmental organisation)

10.5 High quality referrals though improved access to information

Improved access to information about learning opportunities was mentioned by around one-tenth of consultation respondents. Having sufficient information about the levels of learning, content, learning structure and routes to access was viewed by respondents as being important to generating high-quality referrals. Suggestions for mechanisms or approaches to achieve this included:

- Mapping of community organisations and a directory available to providers to ensure they are aware of available provision and advice centres.

- Improved digital presence of adult learning, such as, through a clearly defined platform or website to support referrals that stakeholders can input into as necessary.

- The provision of local high quality and accessible IAG for adults, that is flexible (online and face-to-face was mentioned), and accessible to all ages and ability irrespective of pathway.

10.6 Other considerations for improving the referral process

Other reported suggestions for creating high quality referrals into adult education included:

- A focus on strengthening or a better utilisation of the No Wrong Door integrated access point.

- Promotion and marketing of adult community learning by the GLA to support referrals and understanding of provision.

- Greater presence of the GLA at a local level, for example through a representative from GLA being assigned to each organisation, particularly smaller organisations.

- More understanding of where there are existing effective local partnerships and referral systems which can be learnt from and potentially built on in the future.

- The GLA building on the quality mark used for the current sectoral academies to help highlight quality adult education, to learners, employers and other stakeholders.

11. Create a representative and inclusive adult education system

This section provides details of learning provider and stakeholder feedback around ways to promote and share best practice in adult education delivery. It also addresses feedback on professional development, recruitment and retention of the adult education workforce.

> **Q8a. What are the best ways for the GLA to promote and showcase examples of best practice in delivering adult education to providers and employers?**

11.1 Promoting and sharing best practice

There were multiple suggestions given by consultation respondents as to how best practice could be promoted or showcased. Examples included:

- Case-studies or learner stories of engagement with adult education, highlighting the benefits achieved; which would be helpful in breaking down barriers to engagement for some learners.

- Marketing and communication campaigns, using multiple methods, such as, through social media, advertising on public transport, direct mail.

- Celebration and show-casing events, or awards, perhaps tying in with existing events such as the Festival of Learning, Family Learning week, Time Education Supplement (TES) Further Education (FE) awards. Webinars or conferences could also be used to disseminate best practice.

- Promotion through community venues, ensuring a strong community presence of the adult learning offer.

- Promotion and championing of wider benefits of adult education including impact studies on sectors, localities and employers.

- An online or central platform for the GLA and providers to share examples of best practice.

- Strategic and overarching focus on showcasing and disseminating of best practice through key organisations such as sector bodies and other providers.

- Introduce kite-marks or beacon status for strong providers to help promote and showcase excellence and best practice in certain areas such as green skills, digital skills etc.

> **Q8b. What are the key considerations for the GLA in supporting a skilled, inclusive and representative adult education workforce?**

Consultation respondents did not mention that providers should have to report on the diversity of their workforce.

11.2 Strong qualifications and professional development frameworks

Around one-quarter of consultation respondents reported on the need for strong qualifications and professional development frameworks to support progression and the growth of learners to become tutors and staff in the workforce. Local and specialist organisations (for example, advocacy groups) were seen as playing a role in supporting under-represented groups to progress onto employment or higher education and in raising awareness on how the adult education workforce could be more inclusive.

Others suggested targeting of under-represented communities to promote and provide professional development opportunities, with a focus on existing (locally grown) learners and staff.

> *Some of the same channels for making links between providers and their communities in recruiting students could also be valuable for encouraging recruitment. Adult community learning providers such as the IALs are deeply rooted in their communities and are well placed to explore inclusive approaches to recruitment and workforce development.* (Representative body)

The SEND representative roundtable participants indicated that it was also important to ensure that employers and adult education professionals were equipped with the relevant knowledge and skills to support learners/employees with SEND. For example, labour market information, a really clear understanding of the relevant disability rights, some of the challenges the SEND group may face when in work or getting into and onto courses, and how to access support. There was also a need to increase the amount of resource in IAG trained SEND specialists.

11.3 Recruitment and retention issues in the adult learning provision

Around one-fifth of consultation respondents referred to the need to address recruitment and retention issues in key sectors (for example, further education teachers). Respondents offered a range of solutions including:

- Addressing low salaries, short-term contracts and causal employment that were a deterrent to recruitment and retention, staff morale and a transient workforce (mentioned in the roundtable discussions and written consultations).

- Reintroducing funding for initial teacher training and volunteer teacher training programmes, possibly using financial incentives such as 'golden handshakes'[3] to recruit teachers into subject areas where there is a shortage.

- Recruiting and training industry lecturers who may not have the teaching skills but can support teaching staff in the delivery of technical skills and knowledge required in certain industries.

- Offer financial support to facilitate the transfer of skills and experience between practitioners and teachers in areas where skills are limited.

  One of the key aspects of this is to ensure that the Roadmap sets London's adult education provision in a stable and valued position. If the sector is viewed as somewhere where one can make a difference to communities and make progress in one's own career then recruitment and retention will be stronger. In promoting adult education to potential students, the GLA may also think about promotion to potential tutors and sector recruitment more widely. (Representative body)

It was suggested by SEND practitioners in the roundtable discussions that there was a need to address recruitment processes in organisations. Some practitioners had supported young people with disabilities who have the relevant qualifications and skills for particular jobs but invariably were not appointed to those jobs.

11.4 Other suggestions for an inclusive workforce

Other reported considerations around supporting a skilled, inclusive and representative adult education workforce included:

- Roundtable respondents across events felt it was important that adults returning to learning could access appropriate interventions and pre-requisite courses, particularly ESOL, that were needed to gain entry to level 1.

- Funding initiatives and assistance to support the workforce, for example making it easier to second industry staff to deliver programmes.

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[3] Furter details about golden handshakes were not provided.

- The effective use of data (such as LMI and community data) to ensure the workforce is representative and to increase understanding of its make-up at a provider level.

- Having a more holistic, joined-up approach to signposting and accessing learning such as the No Wrong Door policy (mentioned by union roundtable respondents). Maximising GLA partnerships and links with providers, existing initiatives and bodies in the sector.

- Addressing wider barriers and their impact on learning such as, the impact of low-quality housing in London and how this can affect learning at home, challenges with securing childcare, lack of digital skills, and being able to deliver ESOL courses that are specific to learners of differing levels of ability (mentioned by roundtable respondents).

- College roundtable respondents thought that seeing ESOL as a distinct area of adult education provision is crucial for protecting, promoting and developing language provision for migrant and language minority communities. Providers reported that demand for ESOL far exceeds what they are able to offer.

- Providing more flexible delivery options for example, allowing learners to access bite-sized pieces of learning (mentioned by a range of roundtable respondents).

12. Invest in physical and digital learning spaces

This section provides learning provider and stakeholder suggestions to improve digital access for London's communities, and the need to improve access to learning though community venues.

> **Q9a. What are the key considerations for the GLA in improving digital connectivity and devices for learners?**

12.1 GLA role in promoting and co-ordinating digital access

Consultation respondents felt that the GLA should have a key role in promoting the issues and challenges around digital connectivity, and co-ordinating activity.

Suggestions included:

- Better co-ordination of digital support across providers. Examples included a Centre of Excellence for learners who may need support, and 'labs' for learners to practice their digital skills.

- Co-ordination of activities across organisations already working on the digital skills and the digital poverty agenda (such as the Digital Access for All mission), including an understanding of where good practice lies.

- Development of a regional strategy for tackling digital poverty and digital literacy.

- Playing a co-ordination role in raising local issues around digital skills, infrastructure issues and improving connectivity with Government departments and technology companies.

12.2 Supporting learners' digital access

Consultation respondents offered suggestions as to how learners could be supported in their digital access, including:

- Financial support and benefits for learners such as loan and learn schemes for devices and dongles, Wi-Fi benefits and a dedicated fund to improve the provision of digital equipment.

- Support focused on ensuring learners have access to devices, connectivity issues are addressed and that there is appropriate support to enhance digital skills (such as digital volunteers).

- Awareness and understanding of barriers to digital inclusion (including financial, technological and lack of motivation) for different groups.

Suggestions included, needs and gap mapping to understand current digital support and where more provision is needed.

- Consideration of flexible delivery and the ability for learners to access online, remote learning.

- The design and provision of relevant digital qualifications and programmes through working with awarding bodies to develop specific job-related digital programmes.

- Effective dialogue and research with communities to understand the issues around digital exclusion and their preferences for how to access learning, such as, whether to utilise a hybrid/blended approach to learning.

- Representatives from the college sector and unions in the roundtable discussions felt that a hybrid model would be preferable to replacing all courses with online provision. They explained that the pandemic had revealed that many adults lack the digitals skills, equipment and space to engage effectively in online learning, therefore, both physical and digital access needs should be addressed.

> **Q9b. What are the key considerations for stimulating more opportunities for accessing physical learning settings for learners who are unable to engage in digital learning or in more formal classroom settings?**

12.3 Use of community venues to host learning

Over one-quarter of consultation respondents thought that community venues should be used to deliver adult education. Venues such as community centres, libraries, empty shops and cafes were viewed as providing an informal learning environment that was better suited to those who found it difficult to access formal learning.

Respondents used words like safe, friendly, welcoming, and accessible to describe these community venues. Other more specific considerations were offered by respondents about the delivery of provision including:

- Flexible delivery times including evenings and weekends and provision of childcare.

- Adjustments to classrooms and learning spaces to make learners feel safe (such as cleaning of the learning environment, outside areas appropriately lit).

- Up-to-date learning resources and equipment to inspire learners.

- Providing a quiet study space for learners who may not have that at home.

- Prioritising physical space and time for those with no or low-level digital skills and in subjects where remote learning is less effective.

- Bringing multiple services together in a single-setting or building, and building on existing initiatives. For example, bringing together employment, skills and other provision into a single physical setting can stimulate more learning opportunities.

13. General comments and feedback

The final question in the consultation asked for any further comments on the plans set out in the Adult Education Roadmap. Feedback included:

- Support for the Roadmap, and particularly locally relevant, joined-up provision, a more outcomes-based approach targeting the AEB at the most disadvantaged Londoners.

- More could be done to make London a lifelong learning City and the GLA should consider adopting UNESCO commission's work on lifelong learning.

- Greater funding flexibility to deliver provision to those who need it most and to be able to respond to those most affected by the economic impact of the pandemic.

- Local borough level commissioning of underspend should be considered.

- Government needs to address the impact of climate change.

- Mayoral term is only three years and GLA should focus on key areas for measurable change by the end of the Mayor's term.

- Development of an action plan for delivering the Roadmap.

- Greater emphasis in the Roadmap on the role of broughs and sub-regions.

- GLA should continue to make the case to central government for London to get its fair share of AEB.

- Consideration of AEB provision for older people.

- Further discussion needed on the state of voluntary sector provision in the city.

Where concerns were raised, these were about:

- The consultation approach and suggestions that there should be alternative or easier ways to feedback and consult with the sector. The timing of the consultation did not allow enough time to compile a collaborative response.

- Minimal reference to the position of boroughs as key partners.

- Divergence between the Department for Education's approach to AEB and the GLA approach is potentially a risk.

- Concerns about emphasis on outcome measurement.

- Yearly allocation of funding can prevent providers from developing progression routes into higher learning or employment and does not support AEB providers to plan subcontracted provision.

14. Concluding comments

The adult education sector representatives and wider stakeholders were generally supportive of the Roadmap's vision for adult learning and training. Although some challenges were raised, these related to specific elements of consultation questions (for example, challenges of working with small organisations, or limited funding), rather than any fundamental disagreement with the direction of travel proposed by the Roadmap.

The development of **locally relevant, needs-based** adult education provision was a cross-cutting theme across the consultation responses. Organisations and communities wanted provision to be developed based on local need, by community organisations and employers and utilising local knowledge and relationships to support the development of a comprehensive, fit-for purpose adult education offer. Utilising community groups, local networks and collaborative partnerships were seen to be key to this.

Accessibility was also key theme; a flexible adult learning offer was mentioned across many of the consultation responses. Organisations and communities were keen that adult education was flexible for learners in terms of: structure (modular, bite-sized learning was a key request), delivery mode (a balance of face-to-face and online learning), location (using non-traditional local venues to host learning), and timing (to ensure access for those with family or employment commitments). Greater flexibility in the use of AEB funding to adapt and respond to local needs and adapt provision accordingly was felt to be important.

Financial considerations were also commonly mentioned, particularly being able to address cost and childcare barriers to encourage learners to access provision; along with ensuring **digital access** through loan schemes, subsidies and skills training. Drawing on the expertise of specialist organisations and those best placed to work with disadvantaged communities was thought to be fundamental to supporting engagement in learning. Understanding the **best way to engage with communities** (such as through local networks and social media), was seen as been fundamental to meeting some of the Roadmap's aspirations around stimulating provision at level 2 and below, and developing outreach and promotional campaigns that were inclusive, relatable and impactful.

Appendix 1: Summary of online consultation questions

Locally relevant adult education

1 – Stimulate collaboration and partnerships

Q1a. What are the key considerations for creating effective guidance on good subcontracting and collaborative working? You may wish to provide comments on the needs of your organisation or community, technical considerations, equality, diversity and inclusion considerations and/or any other feedback.

Q1b. How can partners in London work together differently to develop sustainable infrastructure that supports a more joined-up, integrated skills, careers and employment offer? You may want to consider current barriers to integration and how these can be effectively addressed, and what role the Adult Education Budget can play in this.

2 – Facilitate learning that meets London's needs

Q2a. What are the key considerations for a process that will enable providers and employers to develop learning packages relevant for London's industries? You may wish to provide comments on any gaps at different levels of skills provision, technical considerations for your organisation/business, barriers to effective engagement between providers and employers, equality, diversity and inclusion considerations and/or any other feedback.

Q2b. What are the key processes for how your organisations and its partners develop learning programmes? You may wish to provide comments on how you use analysis of local and national economic, labour market, social and cultural contexts to best formulate and deliver a relevant local curriculum offer.

Q2c. What are the skills challenges for your local area/business/sector both now and in the next 5 years?

3 – Prioritise skills that support progression

Q3a. What are the key considerations for supporting and enhancing a London offer at levels 3 and 4, particularly where it can support the most disadvantaged Londoners to progress into employment in sectors key to London's economy? You

may wish to provide comments on technical considerations, equality, diversity and inclusion considerations and/or any other feedback.

Q3b. What are the key considerations for ensuring the GLA can stimulate provision at entry level up to level 2 that shows positive outcomes for learners, employers and communities? You may wish to provide comments on technical considerations, equality, diversity and inclusion considerations and/or any other feedback.

Q3c. What are the key considerations for employers and skills providers to work together to embed essential employability skills into learning packages? You may wish to provide comments on technical considerations, what best practice looks like, equality, diversity and inclusion considerations and/or any other feedback.

Ensuring impactful adult education is recognised

4 – Develop an improved understanding of the social and economic impact of adult education

Q4. What are the key considerations for developing an improved understanding of the impact of adult education and making use of a new baseline of social and economic impact? You may wish to provide comments on technical considerations, equality, diversity and inclusion considerations and/or any other feedback.

5 – Embed strong measurement of social and economic impact

Q5a. What are the key considerations for integrating new information and data on impact areas and learner feedback into future skills delivery? You may wish to provide comments on technical considerations, equality, diversity and inclusion considerations and/or any other feedback.

Q5b. What are the key considerations for measuring and incentivising outcomes through future initiatives? You may wish to provide comments on technical considerations, equality, diversity and inclusion considerations and/or any other feedback.

6 – Create and expand programmes derived from best practice

Q6a. What are the key considerations that you would like to see in our future commissioning of new adult education provision? You may wish to provide comments on technical considerations, equality, diversity and inclusion considerations and/or any other feedback.

Q6b. What are the examples of skills and employment programmes that are especially impactful that future commissioning of adult education in London should take into account? You are welcome to submit further details of any case studies you reference at AEB@london.gov.uk

Supporting accessible adult education for those most in need

7 – Raise awareness of London's adult education offer

Q7a. What are the key considerations for outreach and promotional campaigns about adult education and how can we ensure these effectively engage London's communities and places facing educational disadvantage? You may wish to include examples of effective campaigns and targeted outreach, how these are designed and delivered? You may also wish to provide comments on technical considerations, equality, diversity and inclusion considerations and/or any other feedback.

Q7b. How can the GLA work with local partners to create higher quality referrals into and out of adult learning, so that Londoners can access the right opportunities on their journey to work?

8 – Create a representative and inclusive adult education system

Q8a. What are the best ways for the GLA to promote and showcase examples of best practice in delivering adult education to providers and employers? You may wish to include thoughts on how your organisation would use this information and how you would like to hear and understand more about examples of best practice that could support your organisation? You may also wish to provide comments on technical considerations, equality, diversity and inclusion considerations and/or any other feedback.

Q8b. What are the key considerations for the GLA in supporting a skilled, inclusive and representative adult education workforce? You may wish to set out organisations, programmes and groups the GLA should engage with and/or provide comments on technical considerations, equality, diversity and inclusion considerations and/or any other feedback.

9 – Invest in physical and digital learning spaces

Q9a. What are the key considerations for the GLA in improving digital connectivity and access to devices for learners? You may wish to provide comments on technical considerations, equality, diversity and inclusion considerations and/or any other

feedback. You may wish to provide examples of how your organisation has previously been able to improve digital access for Londoners.

Q9b. What are the key considerations for stimulating more opportunities for accessing physical learning settings for learners who are unable to engage in digital learning or in more formal classroom settings? You may wish to provide comments on technical considerations, equality, diversity and inclusion considerations and/or any other feedback.

10 – Any other comments

Q10. Please provide any further comments or feedback you may have on the plans set out in the Adult Education Roadmap and/or our proposed approach for setting a direction of travel for adult education in London.

Appendix 2: Community conversations discussion guide

Q1. What are the current barriers to taking part in different classes, courses, and training opportunities in London?

Q2. Where do you currently go to do classes, courses, training or any other type of learning? How about for help getting a job?
Hint: this could be locations in your community/neighbourhood, or further afield across London. We're interested in any kind of learning you might do, big or small, formal or informal. We'd also like to know whether these are the same places you go for help finding and preparing for a job.

Q3. Where would you like to see more classes, courses and training opportunities? How can these be made as accessible as possible?
Hint: this could be specific locations in your community/neighbourhood, or general ideas about where and how learning and training could take place to make it as easy as possible for your community to take part.

Q4. What kind of resources or support would you like to help you find different classes, courses and training opportunities? How about to find job opportunities?
Hint: we are interested in how you look for and find out about different opportunities. We are also interested in how you decide to take part and sign-up to different opportunities.

Q5. What can be done to make sure that people doing classes, courses or training have the right digital devices and access to the internet?
Hint: Digital devices could include smart phones, tablets, lap tops or other digital equipment needed to take part in a class, course, or training.

Q6. What ideas do you have to raise awareness about adult learning opportunities and encourage people in your community to do training, courses, or other kinds of classes?

Q7. How would you describe adult learning to your community to encourage them to take part?
Hint: The definition of adult learning is any learning, training or education completed by those aged 19+. This includes any classes, courses, training, or qualifications – big or small, formal or informal, in a college or in any other location. This could be anything from training for a particular job, brushing up digital and computer skills, taking an arts class in the evening, or learning English as a second language. This

does not include going to university. Taking part in learning opportunities can help you find a job, improve your mental health and well-being, and help you feel more connected to your community.

Skills Roadmap for London
Equality Impact Assessment

1. Introduction

This document is an Equality Impact Assessment for the Skills Roadmap for London. The purpose of the document is to:

- Demonstrate how equality groups and equalities impacts were considered in the development of the Roadmap (Equality groups are groups who share a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010.)
- Set out the impact the actions in the Roadmap have on equality groups and address wider issues of socio-economic inequality, including in the labour market and in the skills/education system.

The Mayor has a legal obligation under the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to:

1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act

2. Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a 'protected characteristic' and people who do not share it by;

    - removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic because of their protected characteristics

    - take steps to meet the needs of people who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of people who do not share it; The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities

    - encourage people who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

3. Foster good relations between people who share a 'protected characteristic' and people who don't by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

This Equality Impact Assessment demonstrates how the GLA is discharging its legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 in developing the Skills Roadmap for London. Equality groups identified as relevant for the Skills Roadmap include:

- Age (younger people)
- Age (older people)
- Disability
- Race/ ethnicity/ nationality

- Religion
- Sex
- Pregnancy / maternity
- Gender reassignment
- Sexual Orientation.

In addition, we have also considered:

- Low Income.

<u>Ambitions of the Skills Roadmap for London</u>

The Skills Roadmap for London sets the direction of travel for skills and adult education in London for the next Mayoral term and beyond, including the £320m per year Adult Education Budget. Tackling the root causes of persistent inequality is at the heart of the ambitions in the Roadmap. Overall the Roadmap aims to ensure skills provision in London is accessible, locally relevant, and makes an impact:

- making skills provision more **locally relevant** means providing a more joined up skills and employment offer which meets the needs of Londoners and the local economy, including businesses and employers
- ensuring skills provision **makes an impact** means ensuring the learning we fund transforms people's lives, leading to positive economic and social outcomes
- making skills provision **more accessible** means ensuring that Londoners who are most in need are prioritised to access AEB provision and other skills and employment support.

2. How equality groups and equalities impacts were considered in the development of the Skills Roadmap

One of the goals of the Skills Roadmap for London is to help tackle the root causes of structural inequality in London, including labour market, skills and health inequality. For this reason, equality groups and equality impacts were considered from start to finish during the year long process to develop the Roadmap. Development went through several stages to: build up an understanding of the barriers and inequalities experienced by those with protected characteristics, design interventions to address those barriers and inequalities, and refine those interventions based on feedback from communities and stakeholders (including organisations representing key equality groups). These stages are summarised in this section.

<u>2.1 Early engagement</u>

Through January to March 2021 the GLA carried out early engagement reaching over 100 organisations and stakeholders to develop draft proposals for the Skills Roadmap (then called the Adult Education Roadmap). Critically, this engagement sought views from stakeholders before any fixed plans, programmes or policies for the Roadmap had been created.

This activity included three roundtables with community organisations, with over 20 people from 18 community organisations in attendance. Specific equality groups represented by these organisations included Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups, disabled Londoners, women and parents/carers, and young Londoners. The organisations also represented key demographic groups not specifically recognised under the Equality Act 2020 (although they may fall within a particular protected characteristic), such as migrants and refugees, veterans, low-income Londoners and Londoners living in poverty. As well as roundtables with community organisations, the GLA held a session with members of the Mayor's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Advisory Group, where members were asked what key equalities issues needed to be addressed and considered through the Roadmap. We also held a session with young people working as peer outreach workers at the GLA, including young people who had special educational needs, were care-experienced, or had an ESOL need.

Both the community organisation roundtables and the sessions with the EDI Advisory Group and GLA peer outreach workers were written up in detail, and then used to inform the first set of proposals for the draft Roadmap. Overall this shows how plans for the Roadmap were shaped by representatives of equality groups from the very beginning, to ensure that proposals would meet the needs of equality groups and address the barriers they experience.

2.2 Public consultation on draft proposals

The GLA ran a public consultation on the draft Skills Roadmap for London (then called the Adult Education Roadmap) between June and August 2021. The consultation ran for 7 weeks and included a written consultation, several targeted stakeholder roundtables, and a series of Community Conversations. The public consultation sought views from stakeholders, including equality groups, to test proposals contained in the Skills Roadmap.

The written consultation invited direct feedback on each of the draft proposals and received 64 responses from stakeholders. This included representative or service organisations for older people, deaf people, rough sleepers and homeless people, women and girls, people with English as a second or additional language, and victims of trafficking. In order to better understand the potential impacts of draft proposals on learners with a disability or learning difficulty, a targeted roundtable was held with 'Special Educational Needs and Disabilities' practitioners.

The Community Conversations were held to hear directly from Londoners about their needs and experiences in relation to skills and employment support provision. 44 conversations took place targeting key equality groups and people at the sharpest end of inequality who could benefit most from participation in adult education, reaching nearly 1000 people who would have been unlikely to participate in surveys or other more traditional forms of consultation. Groups targeted by the Community Conversations included: women, men, older people, children and young people, disabled people, people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups, low-income people, asylum seekers/refugees, faith communities, and LGBTQ+ communities.

Community Conversations were facilitated by community groups. The discussion questions mirrored those included in the written consultation, focused on issues important to Londoners, and were phrased using plain English. Small access grants

were provided to organisations that needed them, to ensure that all communities were able to participate. These grants covered costs such as venue hire, interpreters or translators, and accessibility requirements.

The results of all elements of the public consultation were analysed and summarised by a professional research company called CooperGibson Research. The summary report was used to refine proposals in the Roadmap to produce the final Skills Roadmap for London. The consultation report will be published alongside the Roadmap and this Equality Impact Assessment.

2.3 Considering evidence and commissioning new research and analysis

In order to better understand the barriers and inequality faced by different equality groups across the skills system and in the labour market, the GLA considered a wide range of data, research and evidence, summarised in the table below. The GLA also commissioned several new pieces of research to fill gaps in knowledge and to support development of the Roadmap; these pieces are indicated with a '*' in the table below. This included commissioning peer-led research into the barriers and experiences of adult education for the most disadvantaged communities, as well as intersectional analysis of equality groups' participation in learning. The key insights from this work are summarised by protected characteristic in Section 3.

Research/Data	Description
Skills for Londoners Evidence Base (2018)	- This evidence base was developed in 2018 in support of the Skills for Londoners strategy, London's first Mayoral strategy for skills published in 2018. - The evidence base considered a range of data sources including the Office for National Statistics Labour Force Survey, Annual Population Survey, and other labour market datasets. - The evidence base includes a specific section on inequality in skills and qualifications, covering gender, ethnicity and nationality, disability, and age.
Inclusive London, Mayor's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Evidence base (2019)	- This evidence base was developed in 2019 in support of the Mayor's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. - Through a literature review and analysis of national and London data available to the GLA the evidence base summarises key inequalities in London, including in relation to skills and work. Protected characteristics considered include sex and gender, age, disability and learning disabilities, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, trans, social class and income.
GLA Economics Labour Market Analyses (ongoing 2020 and 2021)	- GLA Economics publish a monthly labour market update summarising key trends in the labour market including around employment, unemployment, jobs, and more recently support schemes relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. - These updates sometimes include analysis of labour market participation of different demographic groups, including

	disabled Londoners, Black, Asian and minority ethnic Londoners, men and women, parents and carers, older Londoners, and young Londoners.
Rapid Review of the Impact of COVID-19 on those with protected equality characteristics in London – the Ubele Initiative, Manchester University (October 2020)	- The GLA commissioned the Ubele Initiative and Manchester University to conduct a rapid review of the impact of COVID-19 on equality groups across social, health, and economic outcomes. - The methodology included a literature review of academic literature, grey literature, and blogs and other outputs from VCS organisations in London and nationally. - It also included over 50 structured interviews with communities, and roundtables with London VCS organisations. - Insights from 275 organisations fed into the analysis in total including the following protected characteristics: race/ethnicity (91), religion (58), age (38), disability (21), children and young people (18), sex (12), gender reassignment (10), sexual orientation (10), pregnancy/maternity (9).
*Adult Learner Survey – Polling by GLA and YouGov (October 2020)	- The GLA commissioned YouGov polling company to ask a representative sample of Londoners about their participation in adult learning, their motivations and interest in adult learning, and the barriers they experience to learning. - The sample included 1052 Londoners aged 18+ and analysis looked at key demographic group differences by age, ethnicity, parent/carer status, and gender. In depth analysis was produced for parents and carers and older Londoners.
*More than just education: A participatory action research project on adult education in London – Toynbee Hall (January 2022)	- This peer-led research was commissioned by the GLA to enable communities with protected characteristics to tell us in their own words about the barriers they experience to participating in adult education and how these could be addressed. - During the project a team of peer researchers worked with communities to identify the research focus and co-design the interview guide. The peer researchers conducted interviews with 51 people across 15 boroughs. - Those interviewed included individuals with protected characteristics or belonging to other key groups, such as: older Londoners aged 50+ (one third of interviews), Black, Asian and minority ethnic Londoners (two thirds of interviews), people with English as a second or additional language (one third of interviews); disabled Londoners (over a third of interviews); special educational needs and disabilities (one third of interviews); people with caring responsibilities (half of interviews); low income Londoners and those with no or low qualifications (three quarters of interviews).

*Intersectional analysis of participation in AEB-funded skills provision (January 2022)	- This analysis was commissioned to gain a greater understanding of the participation of equality groups in AEB-funded provision. In particular, this analysis took an intersectional approach by looking at within-group difference for each equality group and considering people with two or more protected characteristics. - Intersectional analysis means considering how multiple aspects of a person's identity, such as their protected characteristics, combine to shape their lived experience including of inequality. - Key equality groups considered include gender, age, ethnicity, and disability.
*Effective practice in English and maths for adult learners (December 2021) – Learning and Work Institute	- This research aimed to identify barriers to participation and achievement in English and maths for London learners - Research methods included four focus groups with learners, alongside interviews and surveys of providers, a literature review, and analysis of AEB data. - Research looked at support needed for some specific cohorts linked to equality groups, including disabled learners/ learners with learning difficulties, learners with an ESOL need, and learners studying at lower levels.

3. Summary of barriers and inequalities faced by equality groups

Using the insight summarised in section 2, the GLA has identified key barriers and inequalities experienced by people with protected characteristics, particularly in relation to accessing skills provision and participating in the labour market. Our research and engagement work, especially the peer-led research and Community Conversations which targeted people experiencing severe inequality and disadvantage, found that many of the barriers identified were common across people with different protected characteristics. Some of these common barriers included:

- **Cost** – both direct costs of provision and, critically, indirect costs such as travel and childcare were barriers even when provision is nominally free.[1] This is particularly acute for low income groups or those with mobility impairments.

- **Childcare** – childcare is a significant barrier, with a lack of childcare such as creches available at training locations, and inability to afford or find alternative/flexible childcare.[2] This barrier is more likely to affect women, and access to and take-up of free childcare varies by equality group such as ethnicity (described further in the below table).

- **Past experience of trauma** – the lingering impact of trauma, for example at school, can lead to distrust of education institutions and a reluctance to engage with them.[3]

- **Lack of information/ awareness** – people don't know where to find information about skills provision, and aren't aware of wrap-around support/entitlements available to support them.[4] For those experiencing severe inequality and disadvantage, people are primarily reliant on social connections for finding courses.[5]

- **Need for community based provision** – provision is more accessible to equality groups if it is community based, local, and flexible in terms of timing, length and structure.[6] This was also true for English and Maths provision, which is fundamental to

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[1] More than just education: A participatory action research project on adult education in London, Toynbee Hall (2022);
; London Adult Education Roadmap - Summary of consultation and community engagement feedback, CooperGibson Research (2021)
[2] ibid
[3] Toynbee Hall (2022)
[4] Toynbee Hall (2022); CooperGibson Research (2021)
[5] Toynbee Hall (2022);
[6] Toynbee Hall (2022); CooperGibson Research (2021)

basic literacy and numeracy, where non-accredited community based provision that is contextualised to a community context or workplace was found to be most effective.[7]

Specific inequalities and barriers experienced by equality groups have been summarised by protected characteristic in the table below:

Protected Characteristic	Summary of participation in labour market/ skills provision, and key barriers and inequalities
Age (younger)	- Young people aged 19-23 are over-represented in AEB-funded provision compared with the London population. This is especially true for adult skills budget provision.[8] Considering all Londoners, young people (18-24) are much more likely to be currently doing some type of adult learning.[9] - Young people experience a much higher unemployment rate than other age groups. The unemployment rate for young people aged 16-24 in London was 21.9 per cent, compared with a London average of 6.5 per cent.[10] Among young Londoners (16-24), and excluding students, young Black men, Pakistani and Bangladeshi men and women and those of Mixed ethnic background have a relatively low employment rate.[11] - Barriers to employment identified nationally include low attainment levels, poor educational experiences, financial pressures, lack of a permanent address, lack of work experience, low confidence/motivation and a competitive labour market.[12] Lack of skills and poor access to career services are also key barriers facing young people looking for a job.[13] - The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the mental health of young people.[14]

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[7] GLA commissioned research on English and maths provision in London, Learning & Work Institute
[8] GLA commissioned analysis of ILR data, RCU (2021).
[9] GLA YouGov polling, (October 2020).
[10] ONS Annual Population Survey, (July 2020-June 2021).
[11] Mayor's EDI evidence base: ONS Annual Population Survey three-year pooled dataset (2015/17).
[12] Mayor's EDI evidence base: Buzzeo et al (2016) Tackling unemployment among disadvantaged young people.
[13] Mayor's EDI evidence base: REED in partnership (2015) Young people and employment: Our UK Survey.
[14] Ubele Rapid Review.

Protected Characteristic	Summary of participation in labour market/ skills provision, and key barriers and inequalities
Age (Older)	- Older people aged 50+ are under-represented in AEB-funded provision compared with the London population, driven by a significant under-representation in adult skills budget provision.[15] Considering all Londoners, only 6 per cent of older Londoners are currently doing some adult learning, compared to 14 per cent of all Londoners, and older Londoners are less likely to say they are planning to take-up adult learning. Older Londoners motivations for learning are more focused on leisure or personal interest than other age groups; and lack of interest and feeling "too old" were the biggest barriers to learning for the older group.[16] - Older Londoners (50-64) are more likely to have no qualifications, and fewer have degree level qualifications, compared with 25-49 age group.[17] Older Londoners (65 and over) also have the lowest prevalence of basic digital skills at 49 per cent, followed by 55 to 64 year olds at 75 per cent, compared with 96 per cent for those aged 15-34. - Older Londoners (50-64) have a much lower employment rate (71.9 per cent) than those aged 25-49 (83.4 per cent).[18] While early retirement accounts for some of this gap, evidence at a national level suggests less than a third of people out of work in this age group consider themselves retired. The majority do not think of themselves as retired but see it as unlikely that they will ever work again.[19] Barriers to working among this group include sickness and disability, as well as above average rates of informal caring. Research has found that a quarter of working people aged 55 or over with a health condition are considering leaving work.[20] - During the COVID-19 pandemic, the increased isolation and greater likelihood of death compared with other age groups has had a significant negative impact on mental health for older Londoners.[21]

[15] GLA commissioned analysis of ILR data, RCU (2021)
[16] YouGov, (2020).
[17] ONS Annual Population Survey three-year pooled dataset (2015/17).
[18] Annual Population Survey employment rates for (July 2020-June 2021).
[19] Mayor's EDI evidence base: Department for Work & Pensions (2014) Fuller Working Lives – Background Evidence.
[20] Mayor's EDI evidence base: Centre for Ageing Better (2018) Health warning for employers: Supporting older workers with health conditions.
[21] Ubele Rapid Review.

Protected Characteristic	Summary of participation in labour market/ skills provision, and key barriers and inequalities
Disability	• 13 per cent of learners in AEB-funded provision declare that they have a learning difficulty, disability or health problem,[22] this proportion is very similar to the proportion of London residents that indicated on the Census 2011 that their day-to-day activities are limited either a lot of a little by a long-term health problem or disability (13 per cent).[23] • Londoners whose main language is British Sign Language are almost twice as likely to have no qualifications as the London average, and less than half as likely to have a degree level qualification.[24] • Disabled Londoners face disproportionate barriers to accessing adult education, including significant additional costs and some instances where it appears providers have failed to put in place legally required reasonable adjustments.[25] Providers report that often funding is insufficient to fully meet support requirements of learners with a disability or learning difficulty.[26] • The disability employment gap in London is very large at 25 percentage points.[27] The disability pay gap in London is 16.6 per cent, higher than the UK average of 14.8 per cent.[28] National evidence suggests that disabled young people (age 16-24) and disabled women have the lowest median hourly earnings of disabled people. Disabled men from certain ethnic groups face much larger pay gaps, in particular Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Black African disabled men compared to white British non-disabled men.[29] Disabled parents/carers (those in receipt of carers allowance) have relatively lower employment rates than non-disabled parents/ carers (46 per cent compared with 71 per cent). • Disabled people face multiple barriers to finding work and staying in employment. These include: discrimination in recruitment; inaccessible transport to get to and from their place of work;[30] employers failing to make reasonable adjustments at recruitment stage and in the workplace, partly due to a lack of

[22] GLA AEB data release 2020/21 academic year, London Datastore.
[23] GLA commissioned analysis of ILR data, RCU (2021).
[24] Mayor's EDI evidence base: Census 2001 and 2011 and ONS Annual Population Survey three-year pooled dataset (2015/17).
[25] Toynbee Hall (2022).
[26] GLA commissioned research on English and maths provision in London, Learning & Work Institute.
[27] ONS (2020).
[28] ONS (2019).
[29] Mayor's EDI evidence base: EHRC (2017) Being disabled in Britain: a journey less equal.
[30] Mayor's EDI evidence base: Papworth Trust (2016) Disability Facts and Figures.

Protected Characteristic	Summary of participation in labour market/ skills provision, and key barriers and inequalities
	understanding by employers of what reasonable adjustment means;[31] lack of flexible and inclusive working practices[32] (though the pandemic has brought about some positive changes with a shift to more flexible working)[33]; lack of or limited knowledge of available support for disabled staff at work and among their employers.[34] • The pandemic has had a significant negative impact on disabled people, including their mental health and economic status, as a result of greater likelihood of death of disabled individuals from COVID-19, uncertainty around and changes to provision of care, isolation and shielding, and difficulty accessing basic necessities.[35]
Race/ ethnicity/ nationality	• Overall, individuals from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups are either over-represented or equally represented in AEB-funded provision compared with the London population. Black people in particular are over-represented, whereas Asian ethnicities are more in line with population levels. AEB learners belonging to a Black, Asian or minority ethnic group were on average 'more deprived' than those belonging to the White group, this was especially true for Black ethnic groups. Similarly, White learners were more likely than other ethnic groups to be in paid employment. Pass rates across AEB provision are slightly higher for the White group than other ethnic groups, with Black ethnic groups having the lowest pass rate of all ethnic groups.[36] • White Londoners are less likely than Black, Asian and minority ethnic Londoners to say they plan to take up some type of adult learning over the next 12 months.[37] • White Londoners are most likely to be to be educated to higher education level or above, and least likely to have no qualifications (except for the Mixed ethnic group), when compared with Black, Asian and

[31] Mayor's EDI evidence base: PMI Health Group (2016) Disability still seen as a barrier to career progression.
[32] Mayor's EDI evidence base EHRC (2017) Disability rights in the UK: updated submission to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
[33] Ubele Rapid Review.
[34] Mayor's EDI evidence base: EHRC (2017) Disability rights in the UK: updated submission to the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
[35] Ubele Rapid Review.
[36] GLA commissioned analysis of ILR data, RCU (2021).
[37] YouGov, (2020) polling.

Protected Characteristic	Summary of participation in labour market/ skills provision, and key barriers and inequalities
	minority ethnic Londoners. Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British Londoners are the least likely to have a higher education qualification, and the most likely to have a qualification at GCSE/A-level.[38] • The ethnicity pay gap in London is very large at 28.2 per cent compared with only 1.6 per cent for the rest of the UK. The pay gap is significantly higher for Black African (42.6 per cent) and Bangladeshi (45.4 per cent) ethnic groups.[39] The ethnicity employment gap is 12 percentage points, with a higher gap for Pakistani/Bangladeshi (20 per cent) and Black/Black British (15 per cent) groups.[40] For those aged 25-49, across all ethnicities, women in London are less likely to be employed than men. This is particularly the case among Pakistani and Bangladeshi Londoners.[41] • The pandemic has had a disproportionate health and economic impact on Black, Asian and minority ethnic people. These groups have been more likely to contract and die from COVID-19, and pre-existing educational, economic and social inequalities have been exacerbated.[42]
Religion	• Qualification levels vary by religion. Among people aged 25 to 49 living in London at the time of the 2011 Census, London's Jewish population had the highest education qualification with 61.8 per cent of the population holding a Level 4 or above qualification (higher education). This was 13.4 per cent points above the London average. Likewise, they are also one of the religious groups least likely to have no qualifications. Muslims have the lowest higher education qualification level, with one in three holding a Level 4 or above qualification. One in five (21.6 per cent) do not hold any qualifications, the highest of any religious group. It should be noted that Muslims also have the highest 'Other qualifications' at 17.8 per cent. This group also has the largest gap between men and women, with 38 per cent of Muslim men holding a higher education qualification compared to 29 per cent of Muslim women.[43]

[38] Census 2001 and 2011 and ONS Annual Population Survey three-year pooled dataset (2015/17).
[39] ONS (2019).
[40] ONS (2020).
[41] ONS Annual Population Survey (Jan 2015 – Dec 2017). Excludes full-time students.
[42] Ubele Rapid Review.
[43] Census 2001 and 2011 and ONS Annual Population Survey three-year pooled dataset (2015/17).

Protected Characteristic	Summary of participation in labour market/ skills provision, and key barriers and inequalities
Sex (note that most data and research considered looks at gender not sex)	• There are twice as many women as men on AEB-funded adult skills budget provision, and more than three times as many in Community Learning. • Childcare and caring responsibilities are a significant barrier to accessioning skills provision, especially for women (this is discussed in more detail in the next row).[44] • The median gender pay gap in London is 16.2 per cent,[45] with pay gaps being higher for older women and for Black, Asian and minority ethnic women.[46] The gender employment gap in London is historically bigger than the rest of the UK, with the most recent figure at 6.8 percentage points gap.[47] • National evidence has found that key reasons for the gender pay gap include that women are more likely to be in low-paid sectors and insecure employment, and that women make up the majority of low-paid earners, part-time employees, temporary workers, zero-hours contract workers, and part-time self-employed workers.[48] These factors also compound to mean that women have fewer assets and lower incomes over their lifecourse, contributing to a greater incidence of poverty among women.[49] Women do 60 per cent more unpaid care and domestic work than men; this unequal division of unpaid care work in the home both contributes to and is reinforced by gender inequalities in the labour market.[50] • A greater proportion of men in the UK were found to have basic digital skills than women.[51] • During the COVID-19 pandemic there were increases in violence against women and girls, and increased burdens on unpaid carers, the majority of whom are women. Men are at a greater risk of dying from COVID-19, and both men and women report a drop in life satisfaction.[52]

[44] Toynbee Hall (2022); CooperGibson Research (2021)
[45] ONS 2021.
[46] The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Sex Equality (2018) Invisible Women.
[47] ONS 2020.
[48] Women's Budget Group (2020). Women, employment and earnings: https://bit.ly/2R4d4pj
[49] Women's Budget Group (2020) Spirals of Inequality: How unpaid care is at the heart of gender inequalities: https://bit.ly/32YITHz
[50] Ibid.
[51] Basic Digital Skills UK Report, IPSOS (2018).
[52] Ubele Rapid Review.

Protected Characteristic	Summary of participation in labour market/ skills provision, and key barriers and inequalities
Pregnancy / maternity	• Carers and parents of children aged 11 or under are more likely to take up some type of adult learning over the next 12 months, showing they are motivated to participate in adult learning. However caring responsibilities are twice as likely to be a barrier for parents compared with people who are not parents, and are the top barrier for parents.[53] • Despite childcare being a significant barrier, of AEB-funded learners participating in adult skills budget provision, only 720 claimed childcare support vouchers.[54] Similar data is not available for Community Learning. • Childcare and other caring responsibilities are one of the biggest barriers faced to accessing adult education provision.[55] National evidence shows that women are more likely to shoulder these caring responsibilities than men.[56] • London faces challenges around the cost and availability of childcare for under-fives: Bangladeshi, Black and Pakistani children in London are less likely to be enrolled in formal childcare and take-up of the free childcare entitlement for disadvantaged two year olds is lower in London than nationally.[57] • Mothers and female carers (in receipt of carers allowance) have significantly lower employment rates than fathers and male carers (63 per cent compared with 80 per cent). The employment rate of parents and carers is influenced strongly by ethnicity – White and Asian parents and carers have higher employment rates than Black, Mixed or Other ethnic group parents and carers.[58] • The COVID-19 pandemic had a particularly big impact on parental employment, with an almost 5 per cent drop on number of parents in work between summer 2019 and summer 2020.[59] National evidence shows that 46% of mothers who were made redundant during the pandemic cite lack of adequate childcare as

[53] YouGov, (2020).
[54] Individualised Learner Record (ILR) data 2020-21.
[55] Toynbee Hall (2022); CooperGibson Research (2021).
[56] Women's Budget Group (2020) Spirals of Inequality: How unpaid care is at the heart of gender inequalities: https://bit.ly/32YlTHz
[57] Mayor's EDI evidence base.
[58] GLA Economics (GLAE) Parents and Carers Evidence Base 2020.
[59] Beneath the headline's analysis 2020.

Protected Characteristic	Summary of participation in labour market/ skills provision, and key barriers and inequalities
	the cause, and that 70% of women with caring responsibilities who requested furlough following school closures in 2021 had their request denied.[60]
Sexual orientation/ Gender reassignment (note that data and research considered looks at LGBTQ+ groups)	• There is a dearth of data pertaining to labour market and skills outcomes for LGBTQ+ groups, as this is not currently collected or published by the ONS. A question has been included in the 2021 census around sexual orientation, which will help support future analysis on this group. • Representative groups for LGBTQ+ people were engaged in the community conversations, so common barriers identified at the start of this section apply to this group. Experiences of trauma may be particularly relevant for this group, as national evidence shows that LGBTQ+ people often experience bullying in school settings as a result of their protected characteristic.[61] • There is national evidence about workplace discrimination experienced by LGBTQ+ people, including having to hide their sexual orientation and experiencing physical attacks.[62] • The pandemic has had a negative impact on the mental health of LGBTQ+ groups, with reports of increased tensions from isolation being boxed in with families away from external communities of support, leading to increases in domestic violence.[63]
Low-income	• 38 per cent of learners in adult skills budget provision are in paid employment.[64] Adult skills budget learners are on average more deprived than compared with the London population. Deprivation of community learners mirrors that of the London population.[65] Around 50 per cent of the learners in adult skills budget provision were eligible for the disadvantage uplift in 2020/21, and 6 per cent of learners received learner support funding.[66]

[60] Autumn Budget Briefing: Women and employment in the recovery from Covid-19, Women's Budget Group (2021): https://wbg.org.uk/analysis/autumn-budget-2021-women-and-employment-in-the-recovery-from-covid-19/

[61] School report, Stone Wall (2017): https://www.stonewall.org.uk/school-report-2017

[62] LGBT in Britain Work Report, Stonewall (2018): https://www.stonewall.org.uk/lgbt-britain-work-report

[63] Ubele Rapid Review.

[64] Based on internal GLA analysis of 2020/21 AEB data in London.'

[65] RCU analysis, (2021).

[66] Based on internal GLA analysis of 2020/21 AEB data in London.'

Protected Characteristic	Summary of participation in labour market/ skills provision, and key barriers and inequalities
	• Income inequality is higher in London than elsewhere – after housing costs the top 10 per cent make 10.6 times as much weekly income as the bottom 10 per cent.[67] 1 in 6 employees in London are low paid, earning an hourly rate of pay below the London Living Wage. London's low paid jobs are concentrated by sector: 64 per cent of jobs in hospitality, and 41 per cent in retail and wholesale, are low paid. Almost three quarters of low paid jobs in London are in these two sectors. Low pay is also more prevalent among part-time workers: more than half of part-time employees are low paid, versus less than a quarter among full-time employees.[68] • Low pay is more common among employed Pakistani/Bangladeshi Londoners, almost half of whom are paid below the London Living Wage. More than a third of employees who are Black or of 'Other ethnicity' are also low paid. Other groups at greater risk of low pay include disabled Londoners and people with low or no qualifications.[69] • By social grade, 91 per cent of adults in the AB socio-economic category have basic digital skills compared to 60 per cent in the DE group.[70] Higher social grade (ABC1) Londoners are much more likely to be currently doing some type of adult learning.[71] • Skill or qualification level is a key predictor of earnings, employment, and likelihood to participate in adult learning.[72] Those with no/low qualification level can be trapped in poor quality employment, especially in the London labour market which is highly skilled.[73] An estimated 1.36 million (21.3 per cent) London residents aged 16-64 had achieved their highest qualification at NVQ level 2 or below in the 12 months to December 2020.[74]

[67] Income Inequality data, (2020): https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/income-inequality
[68] Mayor's EDI evidence base.
[69] London's Poverty Profile, Trust for London (2017).
[70] IPSOS (2018).
[71] YouGov, (2020).
[72] YouGov (2020); Adult Participation in Learning survey, Learning and Work (2021).
Learning ladders: the role of adult training in supporting progression from low pay, Social Mobility Commission (2020): ; Post-18 Education: Who is Taking Different Routes and How Much do they Earn?, Centre for Vocational Education Research (2020).
[73] Skills for Londoners Evidence Base (2018).
[74] ONS annual population survey (2020).

4. Summary of impact on equality groups of actions in the Skills Roadmap for London

Pillar	Actions in the Skills Roadmap	Impacts on equality groups
Locally relevant skills	1. **Collaboration and partnerships** Foster a more integrated skills and employment system, including with other public services and support, by: • investing in the setup of Integration Hubs to support the 'No Wrong Door' approach • publishing information about provision we fund to enable provider collaboration, including AEB-funded providers' delivery plans. Publish new guidance for providers to stimulate collaboration and partnerships, including through good subcontracting.	• These actions will improve collaboration and partnership between AEB-funded learning providers and community organisations/ specialist and smaller learning providers. This will have a positive impact on equality groups because our research and engagement work has shown that these types of organisations are effective at engaging and supporting the most disadvantaged Londoners across equality groups, including Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups, older Londoners, young Londoners, women and men, disabled Londoners and low-paid Londoners. • These actions will also improve coordination between learning providers and other support services such as pension/debt advice, health services, or housing services. This will have a positive impact on aforementioned equality groups because it will help address some of the wider barriers to learning identified. It will also improve signposting and referrals into skills provision, helping address the lack of information/ awareness of the skills offer identified across equality groups. • Overall these actions will help increase participation in learning for equality groups, meaning they experience the positive social and economic benefits of learning and thereby reducing labour market and other inequalities for people with protected characteristics.
	2. **Meeting the needs of London's businesses and employers and helping Londoners into good jobs** Boost collaboration between business and skills providers in	• These actions seek to improve employment outcomes for those who participate in AEB-funded provision by ensuring qualifications equip people with the skills needed for available jobs in their local area. Given that women and Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups are over-represented in AEB provision, this will help address inequality in the labour market experienced by these groups at a population level.

Pillar	Actions in the Skills Roadmap	Impacts on equality groups
	London and develop a programme of support to help providers work with employers. Regularly share data and information to support skills planning.	• Combined with the focus in other areas of the Roadmap on increasing participation for disabled people and older people, these actions will also have a positive impact for these groups.
	3. Learning that supports progression Continue to focus London's AEB on, and highlight the importance of, learning at Levels 2 and below, especially where evidence shows positive social and economic outcomes. Support and strengthen progression to higher level learning from Level 2 and below.	• Provision at level 2 and below is key for those with low or no existing qualifications, a group where people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups, older people, disabled people and low-income people are all over-represented. These actions seek to prioritise and improve outcomes of provision at this level. This will have a positive impact on aforementioned equality groups because it will help to improve both employment and social outcomes of those participating in provision at Level 2 and below. • Qualifications at Level 3 and above are especially important for the London labour market which is highly skilled, and enabling people with lower skill level to progress from lower levels of learning to Level 3 and beyond will help them access higher quality jobs which in turn will help address labour market inequality such as pay gaps. This will have a positive impact on aforementioned equality groups who are over-represented at low skill levels. • The AEB is a fixed pot of money, so there is a risk that increasing the offer at Level 3 and above could reduce the number of people able to participate at Level 2 and below. This could have a potential negative impact for aforementioned equality groups in turns of numbers able to participate at Level 2 and below each year. However, this is balanced against the positive impact of creating opportunities for progression at Level 3 and beyond that were previously not available and which will have a strong positive impact for those that do participate at Level 2 and below. Overall this will provide a greater positive impact but for a smaller number of people each year. To manage this risk and balance the positive and negative impacts the GLA

Pillar	Actions in the Skills Roadmap	Impacts on equality groups
		will track take-up of provision across equality groups and consider the outcomes from their participation in learning using the London Learner Survey and other data/research/engagement.
Making an impact	**4. Measuring the social and economic benefits of adult education** Create a new baseline of social and economic impact data for adult education, publishing the findings from the London Learner Survey in 2023. Through the London Learner Survey, work towards collecting representative data across all our funded providers. Use social and economic impact data to inform future skills policy and delivery in London.	• These actions will allow us to measure the economic and social outcomes for learners with protected characteristics participating in AEB-funded provision, including their progression to further learning, their employment outcomes, and changes to their well-being, self confidence, and sense of belonging. This will have a positive impact for equality groups because it will enable the GLA to better assess the impact the provision it funds on people with different protected characteristics and to develop policy and programmes that better respond to the needs of equality groups.
	5. Evaluation and best practice Assess the impact of changes introduced since delegation of the Adult Education Budget through a multi-year impact evaluation. Build on lessons learned from our commissioned research and evaluations to develop and expand	• These actions will help gather, disseminate and mainstream best practice in skills delivery, including around improving participation, achievement and outcomes for all equality groups. This will have a positive impact for equality groups because it will help providers across London engage with people with protected characteristics more effectively and will help ensure GLA funded policies and programmes target and support equality groups in the most effective manner. An example of this would be ensuring that the findings from the GLA commissioned peer-led research into the barriers experienced in accessing adult education by equality groups are incorporated into policy and practice across London.

Pillar	Actions in the Skills Roadmap	Impacts on equality groups
	programmes based on best practice.	
Accessible skills	**6. Raising awareness of London's skills and learning offer for adults, especially among those who need it most** Deliver a long-term marketing and community outreach programme for adult education in London. Increase understanding of London's adult education offer by partners and employers to boost referrals into adult education and skills provision. Improve coordination of English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and fully fund courses for asylum seekers.	• These actions seek to increase participation in learning by the most disadvantaged communities across equality groups, especially those with no/low qualifications and low-income Londoners. People on low incomes and with no/low qualifications are more likely to be Black, Asian or minority ethnic, disabled, older (in the case of no/low qualification), or younger (in the case of low income). These actions will therefore have a strong positive impact for equality groups because participating in learning will help unlock the positive outcomes that in turn will help address labour market inequality and other social inequality experienced by these groups. • The marketing campaign will specifically address the lack of awareness and information that was identified in our research and engagement as a barrier common across equality groups. The campaign will be designed to target those with no/low qualifications, those earning below the living wage, young Londoners, older Londoners and disabled Londoners. This will have a positive impact for these groups by helping boost their participation in learning. • Our research has shown that it is often the groups who stand to gain the most from learning who are least likely to engage (no/low qualifications, low income, disabled Londoners, older Londoners). The community outreach programme will provide extra support to help boost participation for these groups, including older Londoners, disabled Londoners, Londoners with English as a second or additional language, and Londoners who are digitally excluded. This will have a positive impact for these groups by helping boost their participation in learning. • Fully funding provision for asylum seekers will have a positive impact on this group by making provision that is vital for social and economic integration free. Asylum seekers overwhelmingly belong to Black, Asian or minority ethnic groups.

Pillar	Actions in the Skills Roadmap	Impacts on equality groups
		• Actions to improve coordination of ESOL provision will have a positive impact for those with English as a second or additional language, who mostly belong to Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups, by making it easier to find and enrol in appropriate provision and improving wrap-around support for provision. This could include childcare which will have a particularly positive impact for women.
	7. The role of adult education providers as Anchor Institutions and good employers in their communities Expect City Hall-funded adult education providers to be 'Good Employers' that meet or are working towards the Mayor's Good Work Standard. Expect adult education providers to be inclusive organisations that are representative of the communities they serve and are located within. Expect adult education providers to set out their plans for achieving net zero-carbon estates by 2030. Introduce a quality mark across Mayoral priority sectors and showcase best practice.	• Actions to encourage learning providers to work towards the 'Good work standard' will help address labour market inequality by improving working conditions including pay and progression opportunities. This will have a positive impact on equality groups more likely to experience low pay and poor working conditions, including Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups, women, disabled Londoners, low-income Londoners, young Londoners, and older Londoners. • Actions to encourage learning providers to be more inclusive will increase representation of equality groups in the further education sector workforce. This will have strong positive impact for equality groups both in terms of increasing their employment in the further education sector, and in turn helping make skills provision in London more accessible and inclusive of diverse communities, as adult learning institutions will be more representative of the communities they serve.

Pillar	Actions in the Skills Roadmap	Impacts on equality groups
	8. Investing in physical and digital learning spaces As part of the London Recovery Programme's Digital Access mission, work with partners to improve the digital infrastructure of London's adult education services, improving digital connectivity and access to devices for learners. Encourage more co-location of learning with other activities and services to help create multiple opportunities for people in both physical and digital learning spaces, in a way that fits their complex lives and helps address issues of exclusion.	• These actions seek to ensure availability of both physical and digital learning spaces, recognising the importance of each for different equality groups. • This will have a positive impact for equality groups for whom co-location of learning in community venues / local community based provision is particularly important, such as older people, people with mobility issues, people with mistrust of mainstream settings, people on low-income, and people who are digitally excluded. Offering provision in community settings, where on-site childcare may be available, will have a positive impact on women. • These actions will include work to better understand the impact of increased remote learning on learners and to improve the online learning offer. This will have a positive impact for equality groups who our research suggests may benefit from the flexibility of online provision, such as parents and carers, some disabled people, and people working multiple or inflexible jobs. It will also enable us to better understand the impact of remote learning on equality groups. • Access to devices is an issue for many equality groups, especially those which intersect with low income such including Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups, women, disabled Londoners and young Londoners. These actions will have a positive impact on these groups by helping ensure devices and connectivity are available to support learning.