



London Adult Education Roadmap

**Summary of consultation and
community engagement feedback**

Final report

October 2021

CooperGibson Research

Contents

Executive Summary	5
What did Londoners say?	5
What did businesses and employers say?	6
What did learning providers and other stakeholders say?	7
1. Introduction	9
Consultation approaches and participation	9
Structure of this report	11
2. Londoners' views (community conversations)	13
2.1 Barriers to access	13
2.2 Accessing learning and job opportunities	15
2.3 Increasing digital access.....	16
2.4 Raising awareness of adult learning opportunities.....	17
2.5 Feedback on the community engagement process	19
3. Business and employer views: roundtable feedback	20
3.1 A changing economic and skills market.....	20
3.2 Employer engagement and support.....	20
3.3 Recruitment issues and quality of new entrants.....	21
3.4 Progression and career pathways	21
3.5 Flexibility in the adult skills system	22
3.6 Raising awareness and appeal of adult education.....	22
4. Stimulate collaboration and partnerships	23
4.1 Responding to local need	23
4.2 Social responsibility and social value.....	24
4.3 Other considerations for subcontracting guidance.....	25
4.4 Supporting a joined-up approach.....	25
5. Facilitate learning that meets London's needs	27
5.1 Use of data and evidence	27
5.2 Utilising existing networks and relationships.....	27
5.3 Other considerations for developing learning packages	28

5.4	Current approaches to developing learning packages.....	29
5.5	Recovery from COVID-19 and wider economic challenges	30
5.6	Basic skills challenges	31
5.7	Wider challenges	31
6.	Prioritise skills that support progression.....	33
6.1	Clear signposting and pathways to and beyond levels 3 and 4	33
6.2	Funding and finance support for level 3 and 4 provision.....	34
6.3	Other considerations to enhance a level 3 and 4 offer.....	34
6.4	Focus on engaging the most in need in relation to level 2 (or below)	35
6.5	Flexibility provision to enhance level 2 (or below) provision	36
6.6	Other considerations for stimulating lower-level provision	36
6.7	Meaningful engagement and collaboration	37
6.8	Other considerations for embedding employability skills	37
7.	Understand the social and economic impact of adult education	39
8.	Embed strong measurement of social and economic impact.....	41
8.1	Flexible data collection processes	41
8.2	Alignment with existing data collection mechanisms	41
8.3	Other considerations for integrating new data on impact.....	42
8.4	Unintended consequences of incentivising outcomes	43
8.5	Parameters and framework for incentivising outcomes	43
8.6	Other considerations for measuring/incentivising outcomes.....	44
9.	Create and expand programmes derived from best practice	45
9.1	Flexibility to adapt provision.....	45
9.2	Clear understanding of needs.....	45
9.3	Provision for marginalised groups.....	46
9.4	Other considerations for future commissioning.....	46
9.5	Building on impactful skills and employment programmes	47
10.	Raise awareness of London’s adult education offer.....	49
10.1	Using local knowledge and relationships	49
10.2	Campaign messaging	50
10.3	Other promotional considerations	50

10.4 Collaborative model for referrals.....	51
10.5 High quality referrals though improved access to information	52
10.6 Other considerations for improving the referral process	52
11. Create a representative and inclusive adult education system	53
11.1 Promoting and sharing best practice	53
11.2 Strong qualifications and professional development frameworks	54
11.3 Recruitment and retention issues in the adult learning provision.....	54
11.4 Other suggestions for an inclusive workforce	55
12. Invest in physical and digital learning spaces	57
12.1 GLA role in promoting and co-ordinating digital access.....	57
12.2 Supporting learners' digital access	57
12.3 Use of community venues to host learning	58
13. General comments and feedback	60
14. Concluding comments	61
Appendix 1: Summary of online consultation questions	62
Appendix 2: Community conversations discussion guide.....	66

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:

- Travel costs, costs of courses.
- Affordability and access to childcare.
- Lack of information about what's available.

Londoners **want adult education opportunities** that are accessible to all:

- Community-based and local.
- Offer flexible delivery.
- 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	A need to re-skill and re-train Londoners to meet emerging skills gaps across sectors. There is a 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, supporting progression and broad personal and social outcomes, as well as employability skills.
Raising awareness and appeal of adult education	Suggestions were to 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, Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (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. Suggestions were:

Accessible	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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.
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<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Locally relevant</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Impactful</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 Augst 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.

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:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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

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:

[Chapter 4](#) - Stimulate collaboration and partnerships

[Chapter 5](#) - Facilitate learning that meets London's needs

[Chapter 6](#) - Prioritise skills that support progression

[Chapter 7](#) - Understand the social and economic impact of adult learning

[Chapter 8](#) - Embed strong measurement of social and economic impact

[Chapter 9](#) - Create and expand programmes derived from best practice

[Chapter 10](#) - Raise awareness of London's adult education offer

[Chapter 11](#) - Create a representative and inclusive adult education system

[Chapter 12](#) - Invest in physical and digital learning spaces

[Chapter 13](#) - General comments and feedback

[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)

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 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

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 through 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 casual 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.

³ Further 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 through 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 digital 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 boroughs 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.