



Hillingdon Adult and Community Learning

SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT

2019-20

Date submitted: December 2020

1. Overview of the service

Hillingdon Adult and Community Learning (HACL) service works towards the following mission: that 'every learner receives an outstanding learning experience that supports them towards a clearly identified and ambitious goal and encourages their economic, social and emotional wellbeing'. Although the service attracts adults from all walks of life into a wide range of provision, it particularly targets low-skilled, low-paid residents, those facing disadvantages and those living in deprived areas of the borough.

The learner profile in 2019-20 was:

Residency	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Hillingdon resident	4610 (91.2%)	4798 (92.8%)	3566 (90.9%)
London resident	318 (6.3%)	256 (5.0%)	301 (7.7%)
Out of London resident	123 (2.4%)	116 (2.2%)	58 (1.5%)
Total	5051	5170	3925

The service had a successful Ofsted inspection in December 2019 resulting in a Good judgement (Grade 2). Inspectors were impressed with the provision overall, stating that,

'Learners look forward to attending their classes. Whatever type of course to attend they learn much that helps them in their daily lives, their wellbeing or in their search for a job or further training. Many greatly develop their self confidence and esteem. Learners say that the centres are great places to learn and they would recommend them to their friends. Learners feel safe and are safe wherever they study. They benefit from learning in an environment where there is mutual respect whatever background they come from.' (Ofsted Inspection Report, 2020).

HACL officers work very effectively as a team. They are committed to the service's aims and to supporting residents to achieve their goals. Staff work hard to put learners first and their significant effort to adapt to online learning so swiftly and effectively during the Covid-19 lockdown was the critical factor in so many learners achieving their qualifications in July. All 62 staff members surveyed by Ofsted said they were proud to work for the service and thought it was well led and managed.

Inspectors also highlighted areas where the service could improve: inconsistent correction of learners spelling, punctuation and grammar; improved capture of progression data; and increased support and challenge by senior managers to further improve the quality of education provided. These are reflected later in this report and work is underway to address them.

The service regularly bids for additional projects to develop the course offer and provide support to residents. In 19-20 these included the Strategic Investment Pot (education and careers advice and support for learners to overcoming barriers to learning), the Talk English project (for residents with low levels of English to begin speaking and listening in English) and work to develop and upskill childminders, in partnership with local authority colleagues.

In March 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdown interrupted the provision. Learners on 85% of qualification-based courses benefited from their swift and efficient transfer to online delivery, utilising the groundwork that was already in place by using existing online platforms to enhance their learning.

Other classes also transferred online, including many language and arts classes but not all of these could continue and some learners were reluctant to transfer to online learning which was clearly seen in the poor achievement rate in IT. Learners on floristry qualifications could not access flowers so their courses were paused and resumed in September 2020. Classes scheduled to run in community venues in summer term had to be cancelled but some new online outreach courses were introduced such as e-safety for parents and a digital skills course for carers.

Adults with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) were unable to adapt to online learning sufficiently to continue their classes. When the centres were closed in March, these courses were also closed, leading to a 25% achievement rate for LDD courses. Tutors for these courses kept in contact with learners and completed training and preparation work for safe re-opening and introduction of blended delivery in September 2020.

Service Headline Data	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Enrolments	5051	5170	3925
Retention	93%	92.6%	84.7%
Pass Rate (results of those who stay until the end of the course)	95.5%	96.6%	92.9%
Achievement Rate (results of those who left before the end of the course)	88.9%	89.5%	78.6%
Underpinning data			
Qualification courses and non-regulated ASB	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Enrolments	2423	2236	1992
Retention	93.4%	93.6%	79.2%
Pass Rate	95.0%	95.9%	92.0%
Achievement Rate	88.7%	89.8%	73.0%
Community Learning: Personal Development courses	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Enrolments	1816	1351	1012
Retention	94.6%	92.2%	93.0%
Pass Rate	93.6%	96.9%	95.9%
Achievement Rate	88.5%	89.9%	89.2%

Community Learning: Targeted Outreach	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Enrolments	722	1512	921
Retention	93.2%	92.1%	86.9%
Pass Rate	93.6%	96.9%	93.4%
Achievement Rate	88.5%	89.4%	81.2%

Achievement rates across the service were good in 19-20, although they present a mixed picture. Results were good for most learners who adapted to online learning and continued with qualifications at a range of levels, particularly for those on vocational courses. There was no significant difference in achievements between learners living in the north and south of the borough, however lower retention rates had an impact on results in other areas leading to varied and nuanced rates within and between curriculum areas and provision types.

2. Overall Effectiveness

2.1 Key Strengths

- Leadership and management is good. Leaders, managers and staff use their expertise well to ensure that residents can access and engage in learning and achieve their goals, despite the challenges in 2019-20 leading to curtailed provision for some learner groups. Committed, highly-skilled staff; a culture of flexibility and 'going the extra mile'; and a determination from learners who continued their learning led to sustained, high quality education for learners.
- Good financial and resource management enables the service to provide a high quality service to residents. The service made highly effective use of externally-funded projects to provide additional services to residents and to overcome barriers to learning. As a result 47 tutors were trained to deliver courses and provide support effectively online; learners benefitted from the development of new systems that provided online initial assessment; and residents accessed individualised, online education and careers advice supported including 1-1 telephone placements in classes, ensuring they could make informed decisions whilst staying safe. Funding targets were met at 97%, significantly above the London average of 88%.
- The quality of education is good. Teaching staff work hard to meet the needs of learners, building their skills and knowledge and adapting their sessions to new delivery modes and assessment methods to ensure the best possible chance of success. The long-term development of online learning expertise within the service enabled the very effective transition needed during lockdown. Learners benefited from a focus on digital skills through bespoke courses and electronic portfolios. Tutors and managers with experience in running online sessions put in rapid online support to their peers.

- Support for learners is very good. Learners benefit from targeted support based on accurately identified needs at enrolment and support is put in place where needed during courses. Good use is made of skilled learning support assistants and volunteers to support learners and well-established pastoral mechanisms provide individualised support for learners struggling with their mental health and wellbeing. These existing systems were adapted during lockdown and worked well together to support achievement contributing to a pass rate of 92.85%.
- A range of good progression routes underpin the overall programme. The focus on building the basic skills of low-skilled learners and encouraging them to progress into vocational training and employment also encourages them to try new things. For example, increasing numbers have trained as volunteers, who report benefits in their own self-esteem as they support their peers.

2.2 Improvements made in year and their impact on learners

Learners benefited from an effective programme of improvements in-year, including:

- The refreshed course offer for adults with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) was embedded and pre-employment workshops were begun to help learners raise their expectations and consider new horizons. A pilot programme for high needs learners was embedded into the wider LDD provision, maximising integration for learners whilst ensuring the specific support they needed was in place.
- Well-adapted course delivery targeted at learners with emotional health and wellbeing issues and some family learning courses allowed them to continue learning online during lockdown. Learners reported that this continuity significantly helped them maintain their wellbeing during the uncertainties of the lockdown period.
- New systems were created and others adapted to support online learning, such as online learning walks and shared folders where electronic evidence could be uploaded, marked and returned to learners supported managers well to maintain high quality provision. The introduction of online individual learning plans, shared between learners and tutors, effectively supported ongoing communication between the two.
- Support for learners in moving to online learning was strong and a system was put in place to immediately contact learners who were struggling. 414 tutor referrals enabled learners who were struggling to receive support to access online learning. Across the service 57% of learners said that their digital skills improved while on their course and this figure was higher for courses which ran during summer term 2020.
- A new online initial assessment process was devised and successfully introduced in July 2020, with learners completing assessment and receiving IAG online for most subjects and by telephone for ESOL learners. Consistent initial assessment and start of course advice throughout the year ensured that learners joined the right course. 94% of learners stated that they received good information before joining the course which helped them to make decisions.
- Learners completing qualification courses benefitted from new initiatives that supported them to progress into the next level of qualification as they finished their courses. This ensured that learners' next steps were confirmed swiftly and efficiently, negating the need for them to return to the centres in the summer to enrol and beginning to address

Ofsted progression concerns (see below).

- New webpages were designed and the learner portal was updated ready for summer enrolments. Residents could more easily access information about the course offer online, could ask questions and receive 1-1 support and enrol electronically, maximising the efficiency of enrolment procedures and minimising the need to visit centres.

2.3 Areas for improvement in 2020-21

- Targeted professional development is required to ensure that feedback from tutors consistently helps learners improve the standard of their writing including their spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Existing measures to robustly and effectively capture the impact of the curriculum on learners' lives should be strengthened. Improved progression data will help managers to better understand the learner journey and plan for learner progression over longer periods of time.
- Senior leaders should put in place arrangements that provide the support and challenge managers need to improve further the quality of education provided.
- Sustainable new models are needed for areas of provision and activities that didn't transition well during the pandemic, including ALDD courses, outreach, IT, volunteering and enrichment activities.

Personal development, behaviours and attitudes, including learners' feedback

Learners have reported good progress in their own personal development, behaviours and attitudes to learning during 2019-20. Despite the upheaval of the Covid-19 lockdown, and partly because of it, learners felt proud of their achievements. In addition to increased confidence, learners on low level qualification courses developed the skills to participate successfully in online sessions by learning how to behave in online meetings and became more autonomous learners, for example by using online self-study resources that were tracked by tutors.

Attendance remained high, and learners demonstrated their commitment to learning whilst managing multiple personal responsibilities during lockdown, such as childcare while schools were closed. However, as mentioned above some learners were either unable or reluctant to continue and retention and achievement rates fell as a result. Despite the challenges, many learners appreciated that continuing learning online gave them a sense of some normality and personal progress. The following comment from a learner is typical of what learners told staff during summer term 2020.

'Staying at home while learning online was the best thing and it was a great experience....If I will be given the opportunity to do more courses I will love to do so. It was my motivation during the lockdown and it kept me busy. Now the course is about to finish and I will miss the online learning.' (Learner feedback, June 2020)

Learners actively participate in, and benefit from, a range of events and initiatives throughout the year. They have a strong voice in influencing both curriculum design and the quality of education through individual feedback and through course representatives and the learner council. In Parliament Week, 2019, 505 learners elected 15 learners onto the Learner Council which engages in a range of organised activities throughout the year from feedback about fire

and lockdown drills, to carrying out Secret Shopper exercises and improving advice and guidance mechanisms provided by the service. Groups of learners took part in events including debates, diversity celebrations and visits to Parliament.

What learners say about their experiences in HACL

There was an extremely high response rate to the annual learner survey, with 1215 learners taking part.

- 98% (1190 learners) said they felt safe and respected in their class
- 96% (1163 learners) said their teacher gave helpful feedback
- 94% learners said that the information they received before joining the course was good and helped them make decisions.
- 96% learners agreed that they have made progress and developed their knowledge and skills
- 60% learners said they set an individual social skills goal and they achieved it and 59% learners said they set wellbeing and work skills goals and achieved them.

Questions about the online learning experience were added to the survey in the summer term. Most of the learners said that they benefited from online learning and improved their digital skills.

346 learners took part in a separate survey conducted by Ofsted. Of those,

- 98% recommend us to friends.
- Nearly all say they're getting the help they need, with comments such as:
'Good teachers who explain things well'
'Well organised, helpful pace of work'
'Helpful and patient teachers'
'Respectful'
'Increased confidence'.

Additional comments included:

'I look forward to going to class'
'I have learned so much that I use at home and at work, and using technology helps every day'.

Appendix 1 - Summary of Provision for Academic Year 2019-20

97% of our funding allocation was achieved in 19-20 against a London average of 77%.

Provision type	ENROLMENTS			RETENTION RATE			PASS RATE			Overall Qualification Aims Rate (QAR)		
	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Qualifications	2406	2203	1992	93.3	93.7	79.4	95.1	96.1	90.7	88.7	90.1	72.0
Personal Development	1816	1351	1012	92.6	92.1	93.0	97.2	97.6	95.9	90.0	89.9	89.2
Targeted Outreach	722	1512	921	94.6	92.2	86.9	93.6	96.9	93.4	88.5	89.4	81.2
Overall Totals	5051	5170	3925	93.0	92.6	84.67	95.5	96.6	92.85	88.9	89.5	78.62

Curriculum Area	ENROLMENTS			RETENTION RATE			PASS RATE			Overall QAR		
	17-18	18-19	19-20	17-18	18-19	19-20	17-18	18-19	19-20	17-18	18-19	19-20
Childcare	231	480	498	92.6	91.0	92.4	97.2	98.9	97.9	90.0	90.0	90.5
Counselling	49	54	34	87.8	83.3	79.4	100.0	97.8	100.0	87.8	81.5	79.4
H&SC	27	55	87	92.6	100.0	91.9	92.0	90.9	93.4	85.2	90.9	85.8
Total for curriculum area	307	589	619	91.9	91.2	91.6	97.2	98.0	97.4	89.3	89.3	89.2
Floristry	331	228	243	97.6	96.5	90.9	98.8	98.2	99.1	96.4	94.7	90.1
Horticulture	66	59	150	93.9	100.0	98.7	83.9	98.3	99.3	78.8	98.3	98.0
Total for curriculum area	397	287	393	97.0	97.2	93.9	96.4	98.2	99.2	93.5	95.5	93.1
Art	526	467	260	93.2	93.1	92.3	97.6	96.8	96.2	90.9	90.1	88.8
Languages	688	503	351	91.6	89.7	92.6	97.3	96.0	93.5	89.1	86.1	86.6
Leisure	192	240	47	94.3	93.3	91.5	94.5	97.8	95.3	89.1	91.3	87.2
Total for curriculum area	1406	1210	658	92.5	91.7	92.4	97.0	96.7	94.7	89.8	88.7	87.5
Total for IT curriculum area	228	82	95	96.9	91.5	86.3	94.6	98.7	79.3	91.7	90.2	68.4
English	372	335	457	90.1	93.7	87.3	91.9	91.1	87.0	82.8	85.4	75.9
ESOL	624	621	469	94.1	93.6	86.0	95.1	96.0	87.7	89.4	89.9	75.4
Maths	374	268	311	88.8	93.3	91.5	95.8	97.6	91.5	85.0	91.0	83.7
Total for curriculum area	1370	1224	1237	91.5	93.5	87.9	94.4	95.0	88.4	86.4	88.9	77.7
Total for ALDD curriculum area	470	444	290	96.2	94.6	29.0	98.7	99.5	88.1	94.9	94.1	25.5
Family English, Maths and Language	100	301	52	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	90.4	100.0	100.0	90.4
Multi-generational family learning (WFL)	498	539	385	91.4	87.0	82.9	90.5	97.2	95.0	82.7	84.6	78.7
Total for curriculum area	598	846	437	92.8	91.7	84.9	92.3	98.3	94.3	85.6	90.2	80.1
Total for Emotional Health and Wellbeing area	275	374	196	90.5	91.7	79.6	92.8	93.3	91.7	84.0	85.6	73.0