



ADULT SKILLS AND EDUCATION SERVICE

SELF ASSESSMENT REPORT

ADULT SKILLS AND EDUCATION
THE CITY OF LONDON
CORPORATION
5TH FLOOR NORTH
WING, GUILDHALL, PO BOX 270
LONDON, EC2P 2EJ
MOBILE: 07920 703087

**Common Council of the City of London
Adult Skills and Education Service**

SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT 2023/2024

**Prepared for: Director of Community and
Children's Services Department of Community and
Children's Services Common Council of the City of
London**

Prepared by: Head of Adult Skills Education and Apprenticeship Service

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CONTACTS

Area	Name	Internal Extension*
Head of Service	Barbara Hamilton	1755
Apprenticeship Quality and Performance	Robin Sengupta	3250
Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)	Karthik Srinivasaiah	3836
Programmes Manager - Service Quality	Simon Tate	3928
Programmes Manager – Safeguarding/Health and Safety	Robin Sengupta	3250
Adult and Community Learning Manager	Rahil Patel	1755
ACL Centre Administrator/Receptionist	Leula Habte	3928
Multiply & AEB Project Manager	Hanan Mujahid	3928
Digital Hub and Bootcamp Project Manager	Hanan Mujahid	3928
Retrofit Bootcamp Project Manager	Simon Tate	3928
DEFRA Programme Development Manager	Stewart McQueen	3928
ESOL & Functional Skills Support	Rahil Patel	3928
Information, Advice & Guidance and Initial Assessment	Catherine Hughes	3209
Finance Administrator & Student Welfare	Suzanne Fox	3918
Additional Learning Support	Jessica Jasper	3027
Examinations Manager	Karthik Srinivasaiah	3836
Course Tutor/Business Admin	Robin Sengupta	3250
Team Administrator	Emily Baiano	3928
Course Tutor/AAT finance/Bookkeeping	Indra Bageja	1212
Seasonal Tutors	<i>via Rahil Patel</i>	1755
Finance and accounts	Tim Brunt	1615
MIS Manager	Darka Bukiej	1615

Summary of Grades

Self-assessment 2023/24	Grade
OVERALL	2
KEY ASPECTS	
Quality of Education	2
Behaviour and Attitudes	2
Personal Development	2
Leadership and Management	2
PROVISION TYPES	
Adult Education Programmes	2
Apprenticeships	2
OVERALL GRADE FROM SELF-ASSESSMENT REPORT	2
OVERALL GRADE FROM LAST OFSTED INSPECTION (<i>June 2022</i>)	2

The Purpose of the Report

This annual self-assessment report aims to self-assess the performance of the Adult Skills and Education Service (ASES) over the past academic year (Sept 2023 – Aug 2024).

Strategic aims

The service aims to offer City of London residents, unemployed/unskilled people and employers outstanding provision that offers learning opportunities for all.

We aim to:

- Develop relevant provision that meets the needs of City of London learners and businesses to include long- and short-term employment requirements.
- Develop effective strategies to obtain direct feedback from learners regarding their training and skills needs.
- Provide a responsive service that utilises learner and employer feedback to ensure continuous improvement.
- To enhance and promote a better quality of life for residents by improving their skills and employability.
- Stimulate effective collaborations, partnerships and subcontracting/framework arrangements.
- To fully support the lifelong learning agenda

Service priorities

- Contribute to the City of London Corporation's strategic priorities.
- Develop effective strategies for delivering ESOL/Functional Skills to support hard-to-reach and disadvantaged learners.
- Improve strategies for supporting increasing numbers of disadvantaged, low skilled and unemployed learners to secure a minimum of a Level 2 qualification in vocational areas including Health and Social Care, Teaching and Learning, Customer Service, Bookkeeping, Fishmongery and Digital Skills.
- Tailor literacy, numeracy and functional skills provision to the specific challenges faced by target groups.
- Continue improving accessibility of the Apprenticeship, Digital Skills Bootcamp and Retrofit Bootcamp programmes for disadvantaged and low skilled learners.
- Deliver a high-quality Internship programme to support SEND learners into employment.
- Continuously improve and develop our online teaching and learning offer.
- Invest in physical and digital learning spaces.
- Develop effective strategies to ensure the Apprenticeship programme extends to qualification levels beyond Level 3.
- Develop high quality marketing and promotional materials to raise awareness of the value of the service.

THE CITY OF LONDON IN CONTEXT

Location and population

The City of London is colloquially known as the Square Mile¹. Located in the heart of London with St Paul's Cathedral at its centre, it is both a city and a separate county of England.

The City of London has 8,583 residents across 5,326 households. Of the residents, 55% are men and 5,800 are aged 16-64. There are 2,628 residents (30.6%) from BAME groups, 17% of which are aged 3 and over do not speak English as a first language.

The City of London Corporation (City) employs over 3,000 people. It pays around £1m per year to the Treasury through the Apprenticeship Levy.

Status and governance

The Adult Skills and Education Service (ASES) is supported by the Strategic Director of Skill and Education, who offers internal guidance and organisational support.

A grand committee of Community and Children's Services and its chief officer provide strategic direction for ASES. Our own steering group meets once per term to challenge and evaluate the service and its operational activities.

Response and Progress since Covid-19

ASES invested in improving the quality of provision and ensuring consistent quality of provision in the face of the pandemic. Our response was swift, focussed and well communicated to apprentices, learners, employers, staff and stakeholders. We rapidly developed our online learning platforms and efficiently communicated key updates via monthly newsletters, tutor groups, open forum meetings and individual weekly communication with apprentices. All apprentices and learners received a high level of support from ASES throughout the pandemic including support with health and wellbeing, mental health, first aid awareness and safeguarding support.

Our ongoing support, guidance and communication with apprentices resulted in zero apprentices leaving their programme during the Covid-19 pandemic period. The majority of apprentices were able to continue and complete their apprenticeship training, and many achieved higher levels than expected and progressed onto higher level apprenticeships. A small proportion of our apprentices started their programme during lockdown and, with ongoing daily communication and support, were able to successfully progress with their learning. Where apprentices have not been able to progress, breaks in learning were initiated ensuring that these apprentices were not disadvantaged.

¹ It is actually 1.12 square miles (717 acres; 2,900 ha) in area

From March 2020 until the end of the Covid-19 restrictive period, all apprenticeship and community learning sessions took place online, supported by clear codes of conduct for online learning, with tutors, apprentices and employers embracing the use of technology. We worked to ensure ongoing enhancement of teaching and learning by delivering a variety of learning strategies. For example, expert online support and workshop sessions for tutors ensured that they had the skills to deliver good quality teaching and learning.

ASES required all tutors have the skills to deliver innovative, exceptional and inspirational sessions, and approximately nine out of ten sessions delivered these high standards. During Covid-19, certain classes could not be delivered online such as Ballroom Dancing, Jewellery and some Family Learning classes. However, through the use of online platforms such as Teams and Zoom, the service was able to successfully teach, record and replay the majority of sessions and maintained online class sizes of between 10-15 learners. Senior tutors provided additional peer support and specialist staff were recruited to work with clusters of tutors to provide specialist curriculum support.

Quality improvement plans were adapted to include the development of the Moodle teaching platform, including training on additional functionality, to support ASES' ongoing plans for blended delivery. Senior tutors and online specialists provided group and 1-2-1 support in the use of Zoom and Microsoft Teams.

ASES recognised the challenges involved in providing practical skills support during lockdown periods, and strategies were implemented by line managers, external providers and learners, where practicable, to continue to support this type of training. Where appropriate, learners' individual learning plans and milestones were reviewed to ensure that they remain realistic for both apprentice and employer.

Staff received both direct and ongoing pastoral support throughout the pandemic to ensure they remain safe both mentally and physically. Initiatives such as health and wellbeing awareness, workshops on mental health awareness, dealing with stress and anxiety, briefings, monthly newsletters, online training sessions and remote social events were all employed to maintain focus and morale.

In late 2020, members of the ASES steering group worked closely with staff, senior managers and other key staff, to run workshops on safeguarding, mental health and managing stress.

Since the Covid-19 restrictions were lifted in early 2022, ASES has taken the benefits from the blanket move to online learning delivery and continues to offer either an online or blended delivery model for over 40% of apprenticeship and adult community learning (ACL) courses. With both ASES curriculum and learners now versed in the use of effective online platforms, this has provided more flexibility for those learners who otherwise may be less able to attend a training course due to locational or mobility restrictions. Many of the ACL courses returned to classroom only due to the practical

nature of the subjects (craft-making, dance etc)

INTENT, IMPLIMENTATION AND IMPACT

The Intent - City Corporation's service delivery

City delivers adult and community learning and skills services to local authority residents, especially those who are educationally or socially disadvantaged or have low levels of skills. In addition to this responsibility, the service supports social housing residents and works with neighbouring local authorities and statutory provision such as schools and FE colleges.

City owns and manages:

- two housing estates within the City (Golden Lane and Middlesex Street) and a further ten across six other London Boroughs providing mainly social housing.
- four independent schools within the City, as well as the City of London Academy Trust, which consists of three primary schools, four secondary schools and a sixth-form college across the City and nearby boroughs.

City consists of four service delivery departments, six corporate departments responsible for central services, and six institutional departments responsible for the City of London Police, the Barbican and City's four independent schools.

Within the City's Department for Community and Children's Services (DCCS), ASES' Head of Service is accountable to the Department's Director and the Director of Strategic Education and Skills. An advisory group of independent members oversees the curriculum strategy and monitors the performance of ASES against a set of key performance indicators. ASES finance/data and operational reports are provided for DCCS, City and the Common Council for review, consideration and feedback for action.

ASES managers, tutors and staff are dedicated to supporting all learners and apprentices to achieve their goals. The legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic is that staff have shown strong acumen to adapt quickly and effectively to the challenges posed by lockdown and other restrictions.

The Implementation

Within the City Corporation's Department for Community and Children's Services, ASES' Head of Service is accountable to the Department's Director and the Director of Strategic Education and Skills. An advisory group consisting of independent members oversees the curriculum strategy and monitors the performance of ASES against a set of key performance indicators. ASES finance/data and operational

reports go to DCCS, the City Corporation and Common Council for review, consideration and feedback for action.

Some of the recent changes in the ASES course delivery are as follows:

- Over 40% of all courses at least partially delivered online using delivery platforms such as Moodle, Teams, Zoom and Google Classroom
- All internal apprenticeship delivery courses offered through a blended delivery method
- Intensive digital staff training offered to all ACL sessional tutors and delivery staff
- Continual digital training development for all ASES staff
- Additional delivery equipment and resources available to all staff
- Revised Adult Skills/ACL course profile (offer) and timetable
- Support offered to all learners to improve their online access.

The senior management team continue to review our curriculum offer, looking at opportunities to further invest in materials that best equip learners to continue to achieve high grades at End Point Assessment. This has included the use of awarding body supportive materials and internal experts, and the adaptation of existing materials so they are appropriate to online examinations.

The service has invested in a range of new online technology, equipment and resources. The past 13 months has provided an important 'testing ground' to assess our ability to deliver workable, accessible online teaching and approximately 98% of the ASES course file now has a proven online delivery record (both apprenticeships and community learning). This period allowed us to test the response of different types of learners to different approaches, and we found that we may need to deliver more practical courses (e.g. Ballroom Dancing) on a face to face basis in fixed community centre locations. In 2023, the service invested in a revamped PC suite, fitted with 14 new static computers, and a further 38 new laptops for use by learners across ASES' contract delivery. The service has also worked collaboratively with Tower Hamlets Job Centre since the last academic year to utilise their fully equipped digital training room (over 20 capacity) to provide facilities for an additional course to be concurrently delivered.

The results of online surveys and discussions with staff, tutors and learners indicate that a more blended approach of online, remote and face to face delivery would and has been most impactful for courses that do not rely on classroom delivery. Therefore, ASES continue towards improving our use of platforms and dedicated teaching and learning technologies and further invest in both hard and software technologies.

ASES has adapted the course file to increase focus on skills development areas such as Employment Skills, Confidence Building, ESOL, Functional Skills Maths and English, Digital Skills, Interview Preparation and Preparing CVs. We will also further invest in increased numbers of Learning Ambassadors to support skills, employment and learning on social housing estates.

In 2021, the service secured and has annually retained the Matrix standard (and successfully retained this award in a full re-assessment in September 2024; this achievement has reinforced our commitment to providing impactful CEIAG (Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance) support to the maximum number of apprentices / learners. The success of apprentices to secure employment for further/higher level apprenticeships, continues to increase.

The adult and community learning numbers experienced a significant increase since the pandemic years; during the 2023-2024 year, the learner enrolments increased to 881 (838 in the previous year). Although the ACL class sizes are small, the number of learners who are completing their learning and progressing onto higher level courses continues to grow. The growth in new ACL learner numbers has been made possible as result the introduction of the training ambassador.

Overall success rates in apprenticeships increased from 55.6% in the 2022/23 year (the national average was 54.6%) to 69.2% in the 2023/24 year (the national average was 60.5%). This notable rise was in part due to the outsourcing of the internal Procurement apprenticeship provision to a vetted specialist Procurement training provider; this apprenticeship programme will continue to be outsourced until such a time as the apprenticeship Procurement EPA structure is revised to discourage 'positive withdrawals' (people achieving the nationally recognised CIPS level 3 certificate required to secure employment/employability advancement, then electing not to proceed with the 6-month lead in time for the less valued EPA certificate). Please see appendix 1 for the 3 year success rates comparison.

Of the 18 successful apprentices, 50% passed with a merit/distinction grade (28% distinction, 22% merit). There is no distinct pattern within the differing grades/subjects; the internally delivered Business Administration continues to perform highest in this area (4 completions, 3 of which were distinctions). The Senior Management Team continue to review how 'pass' and 'merit' results can be improved upon for the 2024/25 academic year.

It is anticipated that the continued widening opportunities to attend apprenticeships with a blended delivery model, accompanied by continuous development and support to learners and tutors that ASES provides in the use and facilitation of online technology, will also support the improvement in future overall success rates.

In June 2022, ASES underwent a full Ofsted inspection and were judged to have maintained their existing grade 2 'Good' rating overall and in all judgement areas. The three recommended areas for improvement that the lead inspector noted within the report were swiftly added to the ASES Quality Improvement Plan, addressed over the following months and remain a key area for continuous improvement monitoring.

Overview of The Provision Types

Strategic plan

Through open communication with local community groups, ASES have developed a strategic plan for the next two years which aims to address the local education and skills needs. For example, our work with Guys and St. Thomas's Hospital, Standard Bank and a number of other London based local authorities has informed our delivery plans for Health and Social Care, Customer Service, Digital Skills, Book-keeping and AAT Finance provision.

Our plan works to support learners' wide-ranging needs, from lifelong learning and professional development to personal satisfaction and improved quality of life. For example, ESOL may also improve general education and address issues like social isolation and loneliness. Community and family opportunities are delivered in partnership with local schools, children's centres and local libraries.

ASES offers adult education and community learning to adults aged 19 and over, and apprenticeships to those aged 16 and over. We target those who are economically active but unemployed, living in the deprived areas within the London Boroughs adjoining the City, particularly those from BAME backgrounds. For community learning, we specifically target is those aged 50 and over, who are economically inactive in the City and its adjoining Boroughs.

Adult Education and Community Learning (AECL)

AECL is funded solely through an annual grant from the ESFA's Adult Education Budget devolved to the Greater London Authority. AECL courses were formerly delivered across four sites within the Avondale Square Estate (SE1 5PD), which is owned and managed by the City of London Corporation (City). These arrangements were cancelled as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and all AECL courses were transferred to online delivery.

In 2023/24, there were 881 enrolments by 425 individual learners (over 2 enrolments per learner) on government funded AECL programmes. Many programmes offer progression routes, which accounts for the high level of enrolments per learner². The overall success rate for these programmes was 89%. Our overall retention rate was 90% while the attendance rate was 82.2%.

² Typically, across AECL in England the ratio of enrolments to learners is between 1.6 and 1.8. City also delivered its City Guides training programme, accredited by the Institute of Tourism Guiding. 28 learners participated, achieving a 89.2% success rate. Learners on this programme are not eligible for government funding.

Also in 2023/24, ASES provided 881 non-regulated AECL courses to 201 learners (over 4 enrolments per learner). 93% of the learners successfully completed the full course programmes.

English and ESOL

ASES internally delivered accredited Functional Skills in English from Entry 1 to Level 2. In 2023/24, 20 learners enrolled and achieved a success rate of 70%. Of the participants, 48% were males and 78% (a significant increase from 45.1% in 2022/23) were from a BAME background.

In 2023/24, ASES also continued delivery of accredited Functional Skills in English from Entry 1 to Level 2 through its subcontract. 49 learners enrolled and achieved a success rate of 83%. Of the participants, 46% were males and 56% were from a BAME background.

ASES also delivered accredited ESOL programmes, with 306 enrolments with 80% of learners achieving a qualification.

The majority of the ESOL learners studied at Level 2 or below and also joined other AECL courses to support them in making a more positive contribution to their communities. Some report that the ESOL support enabled them to access services such as doctors and leisure facilities, while others improve their English to support their children and/or to secure employment.

Mathematics

ASES internally delivered accredited Functional Skills in Mathematics from Entry 1 to Level 2. In 2023/24, 15 learners enrolled on these programmes at Entry 1 to Level 2, of which 92% achieved their respective qualification. Of these learners 8% were men and 88% were from BAME backgrounds.

ASES also continued delivery of accredited Functional Skills in Mathematics from Entry 1 to Level 2. In 2023/24, 47 learners enrolled on these programmes at Entry 1 to Level 2, of which 86% achieved their respective qualification. Of these learners 27% were men and 64% were from BAME backgrounds.

Professional development and employability

There were 356 enrolments in the various health and social care accredited courses – most at Level 2. The overall success rate for these courses was 90%

A learner feedback questionnaire built into the OneFile e-portfolio system enabled apprentices to rate their training sessions; the average score in 2023/24 was 9.25 / 10. Of the responses, all were asked if they had experienced and safeguarding, health & safety or equality & diversity concerns and 100% of learners confirmed they had not.

ASES generates a monthly 'Focus On..' newsletter which provides 5 monthly articles on the key core IAG topics: Safeguarding & Prevent, British Values, Sustainability, Equality & Diversity and Health & Wellbeing. This two page newsletter (often with additional topical content) is distributed to all staff and apprentices. Tutors utilise the newsletter topics to facilitate discussions with learners. Please see Appendix 2 for an example of the newsletter.

Apprenticeships

The City of London Corporation is a Main Provider on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP). It delivers Levels 2, 3 and 4 apprenticeships for City of London Corporation employees funded through its apprenticeship levy, as well as apprenticeships for other levy paying employers.

Apprenticeships are delivered in-house and through subcontractors. Subcontractors are only used to deliver specialist apprenticeship standards and frameworks (where no appropriate standard exists) to City employees where lower numbers of apprenticeships are required annually.

Where apprenticeship subcontracting is required, an External Programmes Manager conducts a robust initial due diligence check on the prospective provider and follows a performance and quality assurance programme throughout delivery (this includes an initial quality monitoring report based around the Education Inspection Framework judgement categories, observations of teaching and learning and monthly performance contact/reporting).

In addition to apprentices funded through ASES, it oversees the onboarding and on programme delivery of Corporation apprentices completing either a level 2 or level 3 apprenticeship with other external subcontractors who draw funding directly from the Corporation's levy fund. In the 2023/24 academic year there were 35 such learners on programme.

The number of ASES funded apprentices on programme in 2023/24 was 59, 56 of whom were City employees. Among the apprentices, 54.2% were female (consistent with 55% in 2022/23), 30% were from ethnic minority backgrounds (down from 41%), with 18.6% aged 16-18 (up from 11.8%). 16.9% of learners declared a Learning Difficulty and/or Disability.

The overall apprenticeship success rates for 2023/24 were 69.2% for apprentices (up from 55.6% in 2022/23) which is significantly above the 60.5% published national average. Of the successes, all but 2 learners achieved at Level 3, with one achievement each at levels 2 and 4.

In previous years, there had been a 'gap' between the ethnic minorities and non-ethnic minorities' performance with non-ethnic minority apprentices outperforming ethnic minority apprentices by 5% in 2021/22. This was dramatically increased to 27% in 2022/23 largely due to them enrolling on Procurement and Accounting programmes and leaving programme after achieving their CIPS / ATT main certificates. In 2023/24

the gap returned to 5%.

Due to interventions made during 2023/24, female apprentice achievement was reduced to 1.1% higher than against male counterparts. This represented a welcome swing towards equal achievement from 2022/23 where female learners had an 11.9% higher achievement rate. The success rate for those with declared Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LLDD) remains at 60% from the last academic year; this academic year, ASES are continuing to use a very advanced SEND initial assessment process, administered by ASES' SEND specialist, which has refined learner barrier identification; as a result, SEND barriers receive a significant amount of additional learning support based on their identified needs. One learner previously unaware of a learning barrier was able to be formally diagnosed based on the SEND diagnostic process and is progressing well with an individualised learning plan.

Our apprentices' learning journeys are managed online. We use OneFile's portfolio and learning software. Every learner has a progress dashboard so they can see exactly how they are progressing, and this provides motivation to complete tasks. Learners can upload evidence, record learning reflections, access resources, send messages and submit assignments online. Tutors and managers can then log in to OneFile to view their learner's portfolio, monitor progress, evaluate learning, send feedback and generate reports. Employers have their own OneFile logins so they can log into the system at any time to view their learner's portfolio.

Digital Skills Hub

In early 2022, ASES were awarded and began delivering a small Digital Skills Hub programme which aims to support Londoners hardest hit by the pandemic into good work in sectors key to London's recovery and long-term economic growth, as part of the London Recovery Programme.

Working with 2 specialist digital skills subcontractors, one of the main aims of the Helping Londoners into Good Work mission is to reduce the employment gap between different groups of Londoners, this includes people who are newly unemployed as well as people facing inequality and who are underrepresented in each sector.

During the 2023/24 academic year, 249 participants successfully completed a digital training course with 98 participants gaining employment, a digital sector work placement or an apprenticeship.

Digital Bootcamps

During 2023/24, after the successful delivery of Wave 3 of the GLA Digital Skill Bootcamps through partnership with 2 specialist digital skills training providers, ASES began delivery of the Wave 4 taking the provision in-house. 110 learners were enrolled on 8-10 week training programmes in either Data Science or Cybersecurity. All of the learners were provided with some work/interview readiness

training and, through an existing network of employers, 79 received a job interview opportunity. Of these upskilled learners, 33 were successful in attaining new jobs. ASES were also informed of their successful bid to delivery Wave 5 Digital Skills Bootcamps starting in late 2024.

Green Construction Bootcamps

In both recognition of the governmental Net Zero 2050 environmental sustainability targets and a related national skills gap, ASES bid for and were awarded a contract to deliver green construction bootcamp training programmes in the late summer of 2024. As part of the mobilisation process, ASES mobilised a partnership with green sector training specialists, The Retrofit Academy, and jointly devised an 8 week hybrid training programme leading to both a level 3 Domestic Energy Assessor and a level 4 Domestic Retrofit Assessor qualification. The first cohort of a planned 7 began delivery in September 2024 with the final cohort due to complete in late March 2025.

Fishmongery (DEFRA)

ASES also recognised a skills gap in local City of London based markets, such as Billingsgate, and mobilised a 2-year seafood awareness programme (part funded by DEFRA) with hands-on training for participants in May 2023. In the 2023/24 academic year, over 600 school children completed the programme at the Billingsgate Food School and this figure is estimated to double before the end of the contract.

In addition, the contract saw the delivery of 90 food industry courses through which over 700 food industry professionals were able to upskill their fishmongery skills. 3 outreach sessions also took place in coastal locations (including Hastings and Aldeburgh) attracting an estimated 1000-1200 members of the public to learn about fishmongery skills such as filleting, portioning and quality attribution. Feedback from parties who attended the DEFRA outreach sessions was very positive (please see appendix 3 for two examples of unprompted written feedback).

Multiply

In April 2022, ASES began delivery of a Multiply program which offers a valuable opportunity for businesses to enhance the skills of their workforce through free numeracy training. In the 2023/34 Financial Year, the program continued successful delivery, out-reaching to deliver 104 learner interventions. The numeracy courses delivered included money management, and wider skills development including job readiness using literacy development training; each learner upskilled on the programme without a Functional Skills maths level 2 or equivalent level of attainment, supporting their development towards achievement of a level 2 qualification.

JUDGEMENT AREAS

Leadership and Management

Leadership and management teams, steering group members and members of the COL department senior leadership team agree our strategic priorities. The curriculum framework for the intent and the implementation of the curriculum is discussed and agreed by the adult skills steering group. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are agreed with the departmental senior leadership team.

The self-assessment review process is strongly embedded within the service. Critical self-assessments and Quality Improvement Projects (QIPs) have helped the service continuously review and improve the learner experience and results over the past three years.

The service has a strong commitment to ongoing staff development and has continued to organise a number of developmental health and wellbeing workshops to support staff to continue improving their skills. Individual and small group training workshops also support tutors with their online delivery skills. A member of staff has been assigned the lead role to support tutors with topics such as British Values and Sexual Harassment.

The introduction of Level 3 Safeguarding qualification for all tutors and staff has helped to upskill staff so they can better support their learners. Safeguarding/Prevent and E-Safety policies have been updated and circulated to staff, tutors and learners. There are 2 link Steering Group members who are responsible for monitoring the Services Safeguarding awareness arrangements. During 2022/2023, the Service had two internally commissioned investigations into the Safeguarding arrangements. The main findings on these audits were for the Service to ensure that the SLA contracted arrangements for external Providers were explicit in terms of their safeguarding responsibilities. In 2023/24, safeguarding has had a prominent role on all monthly progress meetings with subcontractors, and all Service Level agreements now have an extended section on safeguarding specifying the highest level of responsibility and dedication to keeping learners safe committed to by both parties.

A second area to be addressed was the arrangements for staff cover in the absence of the main Safeguarding Lead Officer. ASES now have 4 fully trained Safeguarding Officers, 2 males and 2 females to ensure there are no gender-based barriers to a prospective sensitive safeguarding incident being confidentially reported and subsequently addressed.

An annual Safeguarding awareness and updating training workshop was delivered to provide policy update information for Steering Group members.

The second Safeguarding review raised issues of there being multiple Safeguarding Leads for the external providers. Clarity is needed for apprentices regarding DSL contact details. An action is now in place to support all areas for improvements and an ASES Safeguarding contact card is now distributed regularly to all learners.

The service is on continuous alert for quality improvement opportunities and regularly conducts learner evaluation. Feedback from learners and staff is used to prepare an action plan to support areas for improvement. For example, in one feedback session, a staff member spoke about feelings of stress and anxiety. An internal support session was arranged to help staff develop coping strategies.

The service expects that all learners will achieve good results. We work closely with those who are hard to reach, and our outreach workers focus on promoting skills and learning to those who have not engaged for several years. We provide a very professional Additional Support Service, which has been further refined in 2023/2024. Learners supported through apprenticeships are often keen to gain support beyond their learning journey, such as its impact on their wider development.

Behaviour and attitudes

ASES has four main delivery centres, each maintained to a high standard. Strongly reinforced by tutors, line managers and staff expectations, the behaviour and attitudes of all learners is outstanding. While traditional, the learning and work environments are up to date and generate a sense of pride. High expectations are confirmed during induction and throughout the learning journey.

ASES fully understands that, for many learners, course attendance and learning is not their number one priority. As many are dealing with issues of family commitments, homelessness, low levels of skills and some additional learning support concerns, we give consideration to lower levels of attendance and achievement while consistently enabling improvement.

Wellbeing and Personal Development

Our wide variety of non-accredited programmes are aimed at older learners to stimulate physical activity and dexterity, maintain and develop mental activity and memory, and alleviate loneliness. They cover art, crafts, languages³, history and include walks around the City. Physical courses include Pilates at all levels, Ballroom and Latin Dancing for beginners and improvers. There were 115 participants in 2023/24, the majority of whom attended most if not all of the weekly lessons. A large proportion of learners live within the Golden Lane, Mansell and Middlesex Street Estates, which are owned and managed by the Guinness Partnership and the Barbican Estate. Of the participants 21.8% were men, 35.9% were from BAME backgrounds and 62.6% were aged 60 or over.

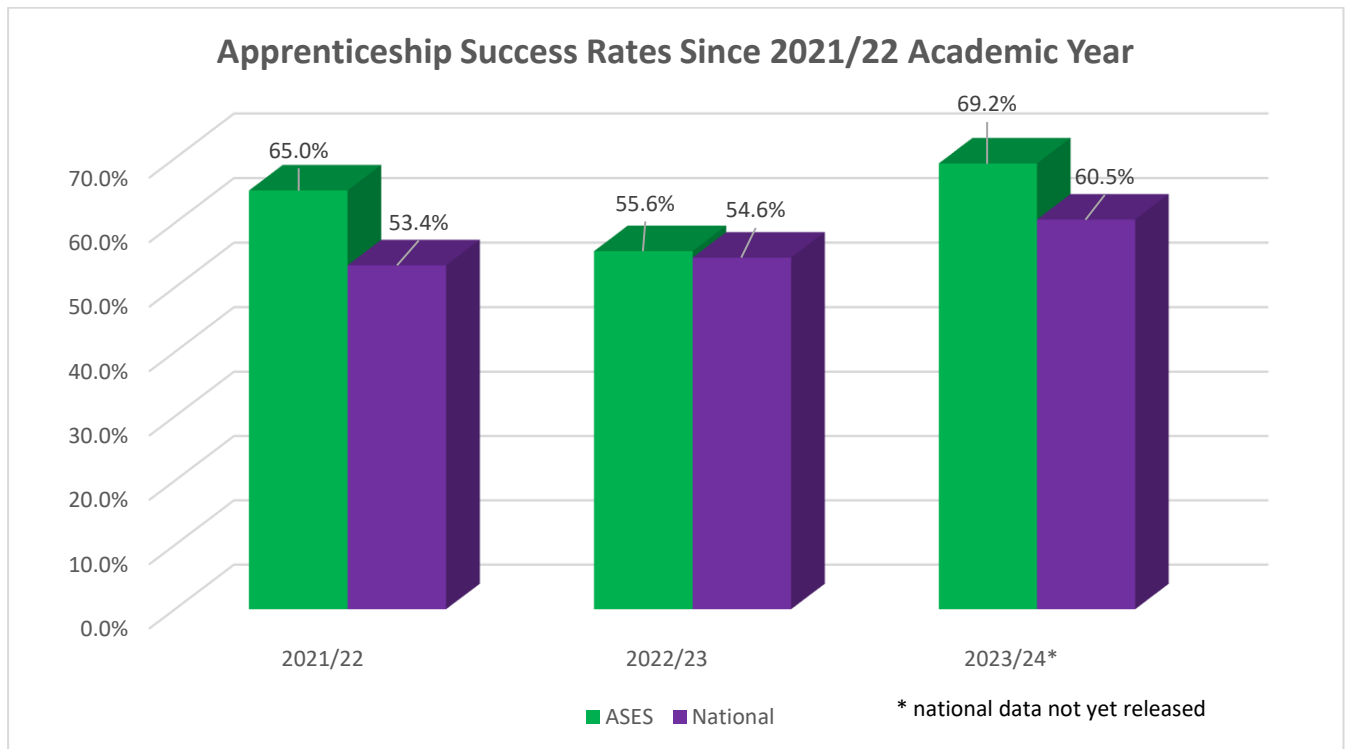
Overall, there were 230 wellbeing and personal development enrolments on these programmes of which 18% were men, 58% were from BAME backgrounds and 48% were aged 60 years and over. The oldest learner was a venerable 92 years old.

Learners of all ages are actively encouraged to engage in discussion. We regularly invite speakers to facilitate discussions with topics such as LGBT, Black Lives Matter and mental health issues.



³ Spanish and French for beginner, intermediate and advanced learners

Appendices

Appendix 2 – Apprenticeship Success Rates for last 3 academic years



Appendix 3 – ‘Focus On..’ Newsletter example

Focus on...Adult Skills & Education Service Newsletter – NOVEMBER 2023				
Safeguarding & Prevent	British Values	Sustainability	Equality & Diversity	Health & Well Being
<p>VULNERABLE ADULTS</p> <p><i>It's not always easy to spot the signs of abuse. Someone being abused may make excuses for why they're bruised, may not want to go out or talk to people, or may be short of money.</i></p> <p>It's important to know the signs of abuse and, where they're identified, gently share your concerns with the person you think may be being abused.</p>  <p>If you wait, hoping the person will tell you what's been happening to them, it could delay matters and allow the abuse to continue.</p> <p>Behavioural signs of abuse in an older person include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> becoming quiet and withdrawn being aggressive or angry for no obvious reason looking unkempt, dirty or thinner than usual sudden changes in their character, such as appearing helpless, depressed or tearful physical signs – such as bruises, wounds, fractures or other untreated injuries the same injuries happening more than once not wanting to be left by themselves or alone with particular people being unusually light-hearted and insisting there's nothing wrong <p>Also, their home may be cold or unusually dirty or untidy, or you might notice things missing.</p> <p>Other signs include a sudden change in their finances, such as not having as much money as usual to pay for shopping or regular outings, or getting into debt.</p> <p>Watch out for any official or financial documents that seem unusual, and for documents relating to their finances that suddenly go missing.</p> <p>If you feel someone you know is showing signs of being abused, talk to them to see if there's anything you can do to help.</p> <p>If they're being abused, they may not want to talk about it straight away, especially if they've become used to making excuses for their injuries or changes in personality.</p>	<p>WHY IS LAW SO IMPORTANT?</p> <p><i>The fabric of society can often feel somewhat frail. The media shows us the chaotic parts of the world that really help us to compare and contrast the world we live in. This article explores the importance of 'law' in this respect a little further...</i></p> <p>What has helped us maintain civility and order in our lives is the enactment and enforcement of the law. Laws regulate society, ensuring that your rightful freedoms are not infringed upon and that your safety and well-being are protected from those who bring harm, intentionally or not. Without laws governing us, people can easily fall susceptible to moral and social pitfalls.</p> <p>The Law Creates and Maintains Fairness</p> <p>Essentially, having law allows for as even of a playing field as one could hope for. While a person can't control certain circumstances in life, such as the family or area they are born into and raised in, they can ensure that they have certain opportunities available to become a functioning member of society. The law</p>  <p>allows for free education through schools, for example. Laws also help remedy unfortunate situations by holding those responsible accountable. The law will protect you and allow you to seek financial compensation in the event of personal injury. Being in an accident to no fault of your own can be severely detrimental to your financial situation. It can put you out of work for a meaningful period of time, and cause emotional trauma. However, having law allows you to pursue financial compensation from the responsible party to</p>	<p>SOLAR PANELS</p>  <p><i>Solar electricity panels, also known as photovoltaics (PV), capture the sun's energy and convert it into electricity that you can use in your home.</i></p> <p>By installing solar panels, you can generate your own renewable electricity</p> <p>How do solar panels work?</p> <p>A solar PV panel consists of many cells made from layers of semi-conducting material, most commonly silicon. When light shines on this material, a flow of electricity is created.</p> <p>The cells don't need direct sunlight to work and can even work on cloudy days. However, the stronger the sunshine, the more electricity generated.</p> <p>Solar PV systems are made up of several panels, with each panel generating around 355W of energy in strong sunlight. Typical systems contain around 10 panels and generate direct current (DC) electricity. Because the electricity used for household appliances is alternating current (AC), an inverter is installed along with the system to convert DC electricity to AC. This electricity can be used throughout your home, or exported to the grid.</p> <p>Are solar panels right for me?</p> <p>Space is a key consideration. The average system size is around 3.5kWp and this will typically take up around 20m² roof area.</p> <p>An unshaded, South facing roof is ideal for maximum electrical output. East or West facing roofs could still be considered, but North facing roofs are not recommended. A system facing East or West will yield around 15-20% less energy than one facing directly South.</p>	<p>DIWALI</p> <p><i>On Sunday 12th November 2023, it's time for vibrant colours, eye-popping fireworks, twinkling lights and delicious food! Ready? Then check out these ten facts about Diwali from the National Geographic...</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Diwali is an important religious festival originating in India. People often think of Diwali as a Hindu festival, but it is also celebrated by Sikhs and Jains. 2) Diwali takes place annually and lasts for five days, marking the start of the Hindu New Year. The exact dates change each year and are determined by the position of the moon – but it usually falls between October and November.  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) The word Diwali (or Deepavali as it's sometimes called) means "row of lights" in an Ancient language of India, called Sanskrit. During this festival, people decorate their homes with lights and oil lamps, called <i>diyas</i>. 4) For many people, Diwali honours the Hindu goddess of wealth, Lakshmi. The lights and lamps are said to help Lakshmi find her way into peoples' homes, bringing prosperity in the year to come! 5) It's also a celebration of good triumphing over evil, and different legends based on this theme are associated with Diwali. In northern India, Hindus celebrate the return of the deities (gods) Rama and Sita to the city of Ayodhya, after defeating the evil King Ravana! 6) In the region of Bengal people worship the goddess Kali, the destroyer of evil forces, during Diwali. And in Nepal (a country bordering north-east India), people celebrate Lord Krishna's victory over the wicked King Narakaasura. 7) But it's not just about lights and legends – Diwali is a time to have fun with friends and 	<p>HEALTH & WELLBEING: THE DIFFERENCE</p> <p><i>Health and well-being; they're buzzwords that we hear a lot about today. But what are they, truly? And how can you achieve them in your own life? For the full article from BetterUp.com, click here.</i></p> <p>While being healthy and well sounds great, figuring out how to generate those qualities is easier said than done.</p> <p>In this piece, we'll discuss the meaning of both health and well-being, how they intersect, and how you can create more of each in your life.</p> <p>What are health and well-being?</p> <p>Health and well-being are connected, but they are two different things. Let's cover them one at a time.</p> <p>First: what is health? Health can be thought of as the state of being free from injury or illness. Physical health means living in a body that is strong, capable, and free of disease.</p> <p>Mental health, meanwhile, means having a mind that is strong, capable, and free of disease. If we are mentally healthy, we can navigate daily life and its setbacks and difficulties without excessive or debilitating stress, frustration, anxiety, or sadness. Taken together, physical and mental health affect everything we do.</p> 

Appendix 3 - Fishmongery testimonies

“I would like to pass on a massive thank you to all chefs involved, they were absolutely amazing and this has been agreed as the best trip the class has been on during their journey at Henry Green. One student asked if it was possible for all three to come and work in the school! Massive thank you.”

– Year 4 Teacher, Henry Green Primary School

“We have embedded these sessions to our scheme of learning for our KS4 year 10 students. The practical and industrial links are so necessary for our students to see and experience. It enriches their learning experience beyond the classroom and is invaluable.”

– Food Technology Teacher, Eastbury Community Secondary School