



Learner Handbook 2009-10

Introduction

Thank you for enrolling on a course with Leicester Adult Skills & Learning Service. This handbook will provide you with a range of information and advice to help you get the most out of your course. We do hope you enjoy studying with us.

This booklet can be made available in other formats; please ask for assistance. If you haven't already received one, please ask for a course information sheet, or look on our website www.lasals.co.uk

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Welcome to our Service

Leicester Adult Skills & Learning Service has a comprehensive network of learning centres across the city, including central and neighbourhood centres, community centres and schools.

We will:

- Engage with learners and potential learners
- Widen participation in learning
- Provide targeted learning in priority areas and to priority groups
- Continuously review and develop our curriculum offer
- Emphasise and celebrate achievement
- Provide opportunities for progression

Our core business is to provide:

- Return to learn and first rung learning opportunities
- Programmes up to and including Level 2 (GCSE level)
- Accredited and non-accredited learning opportunities
- Courses that prepare people for work
- Opportunities for families to learn together
- A broad and balanced range of programmes

What can you expect from us?

- Clear and impartial information and advice to help you choose from the range of courses available to you.
- To be treated with courtesy and respect and without unfair discrimination.
- A clean, welcoming place to learn.
- Accessible and safe accommodation.
- A high quality learning experience which is well planned, stimulating and challenging.
- To be taught by tutors who are knowledgeable, experienced and qualified.
- To be able to identify and work towards your learning goals.
- To be actively involved in planning and reviewing your learning and development.
- Appropriate feedback on your progress.
- Support in overcoming any barriers which might affect your learning and development.
- Access to suitable resources for learning.
- To know how to lodge a complaint if necessary.
- To have an opportunity to express your views.

Adult Learners Entitlement Policy 2002

What do we expect from you?

- To contribute to learner feedback and consultation processes to help us improve our service.
- To attend regularly and to inform us of any unavoidable absence. There is a clear link between attendance and success (accredited courses have specific requirements, usually 80% minimum attendance). We may contact you if you are absent to see if we can help you overcome any barriers to returning to your course.
- To raise matters promptly with your tutor if you have any problems with the class or with the course work, in order that we can provide the necessary help.
- To observe the health and safety requirements of the course and of the centre.
- To treat staff, fellow learners and other users of the centre with courtesy and respect. Not to behave in a way which is likely to cause offence, discriminate against or cause harm to others, or bring the Adult Skills and Learning Service into disrepute.
- Not to be disruptive to the learning session or other learners in the setting e.g. when using mobile phones or under the influence of alcohol or recreational drugs.
- Not to access internet material which is offensive, inappropriate or illegal.

Funding and Fees

Leicester Adult Skills & Learning Service receives the majority of its funding from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC).

The grant we receive from the LSC enables us to subsidise the fees we need to charge learners. Without this subsidy, fees would have to be significantly higher.

Many learners will still be able to get free classes or help with fees; we will discuss this with you when you come to enrol.

If you receive one of the standard means-tested benefits you pay nothing for an 'accredited' (qualification-bearing) course and just 30% of the fee for non-accredited courses.

If you receive certain non means-tested benefits you only pay 30% of the fee for any accredited or non-accredited course.

In addition, if you don't receive benefit but have a household income of less than £15,276 pa you could qualify for assistance from our Learner Support fund. This funding can also be used for assistance with childcare, exam fees and certain materials. Ask at your centre for information.

For information on the cost of your course, see our course prospectus or website www.lasals.co.uk

Your course information sheet will tell you about any extra costs such as exam fees.

If you have a query about fees, please ask staff at the relevant setting (contact details on pages 14-15)

Supporting Learners

Information and Advice

Before, during and after courses, we will provide all adult learners with free and impartial information and advice about learning opportunities.

Our information and advice service aims to be:

- Professional, friendly and confidential
- Comprehensive, accurate and up-to-date
- Appropriate for your individual needs and circumstances

Where we are unable to provide a service to meet your needs, we will refer you to organisations and/or individuals who may be able to help.

Choosing the right course for you:

- Please ask for a prospectus and/or course information sheet or visit our website www.lasals.co.uk
- Talk to our friendly staff about choices and opportunities
- Telephone the free helplines for advice on learning and work:
Careers Advice – freephone 0800 100 900
nextstep Leicester – freephone 0800 0850 330

Throughout our programmes we will promote equality and tackle discrimination.

We will support learners, wherever possible, by providing:

- A fair fees policy targeting help to those in need
- Easily accessible local provision
- Childcare
- On-programme support

Learner Support Fund

If you are in receipt of certain benefits or on a low income you can apply to the Learner Support Fund for assistance with the cost of:

- Exam fees
- Childcare
- Essential course books

Support on course

If you have a disability or other support need we can provide the extra help you need to get the most out of learning.

Ask your tutor or the setting manager for more details.

Leicester Learns

The Service has an Online Learning Environment called “Leicester Learns” which provides access to course materials outside of normal class times. The system can be accessed from any computer with an Internet connection by visiting the Leicester Adult Skills & Learning Service website at: www.lasals.co.uk

All our learners can sign up on Leicester Learns so log on and see what’s available. Your course may have a section on the system, or for more information ask your tutor.

As the system develops, more courses will have resources and activities online.

Learners who may require additional support with their learning can also find some useful resources on Leicester Learns.

The City and Highfields Multi-access Centres (MACs)

- Do you need help finding work?
- Are you having difficulty finding a job because you lack experience?
- Do you need help developing your skills and training?
- Do you need help completing job applications and preparing for interviews??

Visit the Multi Access Centres where you can get support to help you find work. Personal Advisors will be there to provide friendly informal one to one support to help you find a suitable job, or training to improve your skills. Our dedicated staff will provide access to CV support, help with job applications and interview preparation.

Employer Engagement Officers work with employers locally to source a variety of vacancies at different levels. There are also voluntary work opportunities to help you gain valuable work experience. Both centres provide advice to access a wide range of other valuable services within the city and local community.

You can either phone to make an appointment, or drop in the next time you are in the area. For more information or to make an appointment please contact:

City Multi-Access Centre 0116 229 2258
Leicester Adult Education College, Wellington Street, Leicester LE1 6HL

Highfields Multi-access Centre 0116 253 1053
96 Melbourne Road, Leicester LE2 0DS

Latest information can also be found at www.multiaccesscentres.com

Quality Matters

Leicester Adult Skills & Learning Service is committed to continuously improving the quality of the learning and teaching we provide. One of the ways we assure the quality of our programmes is by visiting classes to observe the activities taking place. The class you attend may be visited by a member of the local or central management team. We will watch some of the lesson, talk to the tutor and may speak to learners about your experiences, what you are learning and how you are progressing. We are not there to make judgements about any individual learner but we are interested in the session as a whole. We will try to disrupt the lesson as little as possible but we are keen to capture a real feel of the learning taking place.

We are also dedicated to recognising and celebrating the progress and achievement of our learners. We aim to encourage learners to set goals and reflect upon their achievements.

At the start of the course your tutor will talk to you about what you want to achieve on the course and will complete some simple paperwork with you to record this. During the course your tutor will discuss and record your progress with you and at the end of the course your achievements will be recorded. You will also have the opportunity to talk to your tutor about what you might like to do next. We have tried to keep the paperwork we use simple and effective and we are always looking for new and innovative ways to recognise and record learning.

Health and Safety

We believe that learners enrolled with Leicester Adult Skills & Learning Service are entitled to learning that takes place in a safe, healthy and supportive environment.

Please take a minute to read these Health and Safety guidelines:

- Always make sure you are aware of the evacuation procedures for the room you are using, especially if you are in a different room from usual.
- Always treat fire bells seriously and evacuate the building in an orderly manner by the nearest exit.
- Do not return to the building until given the instruction by the staff in charge.
- As an adult learner you must follow the health and safety procedures and instructions given by your tutor. If you are unsure, please ask for assistance before you proceed.
- If you observe anything which you feel is a risk to the health and safety of staff, other learners or members of the public, please make sure you bring it to the attention of a member of staff.

Learner Involvement

Leicester Adult Skills & Learning Service is committed to the meaningful involvement of learners, past, present and future, in the development and quality improvement of the service. As the service evolves, we will embed the principles and practice of learner involvement and personalised learning throughout the organisation.

The service has created a Learner Responsiveness section that has a key priority to involve learners and stakeholders in shaping the city's adult learning experiences.

They will:

- build upon the service's existing strong community connections through the support and development of local adult learning forums.
- develop a system of learner representatives who will play a key role at local and service-wide levels in the quality improvement and decision making processes.
- undertake regular consultation with learners using a variety of interesting and innovative methods
- regularly feed back to learners and staff on the outcomes and actions taken as a result of Learner Involvement.

If you would like to be more involved, please ask your tutor or adult learning staff in the setting for more information. Your views are important to us.

Comments, Compliments and Complaints

Leicester Adult Skills & Learning Service aims to offer a high quality learning service to all our learners. If you would like to acknowledge good service, please use one of the report forms available from Reception.

Occasionally things will go wrong, but we can try to do something about it if you tell us the problem. To help us improve the quality of our service, please follow the complaints procedure outlined below:

Stage 1 – Speak to one of the Adult Skills and Learning staff at your setting.

Stage 2 – For serious concerns, please use the report form available from reception and return it to the Learning Zone manager indicated on the form. You will get a reply within 10 working days.

Stage 3 – If you are not satisfied with the response or the action taken, you should ask for your complaint to be passed to the Senior Manager Learner Responsiveness. They will investigate and aim to respond within 10 working days.

Stage 4 – Should you remain dissatisfied with how local officers have dealt with the complaint, you should write to:

The Head of Service,
Leicester Adult Skills & Learning Service
A1 New Walk Centre
Leicester

For accredited courses, awarding bodies require learners to have access to the examinations complaints procedure, which is available at enrolment.

Contact details

- 1 Abbey Primary Community Wing**
Bruin Street, Leicester LE4 5LB ☎ 0116 261 2327
- 2 Babington Community Technology College**
Strasbourg Drive, Leicester LE4 0SZ ☎ 0116 222 1632
- 3 Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre**
Rothley Street, Leicester LE4 6LF ☎ 0116 2221097
- 4 BRITE Centre**
Braunstone Avenue, Leicester LE3 1LE ☎ 0116 233 3164
- 5 Crown Hills Community College**
Gwendolen Road, Leicester LE5 5FT ☎ 0116 273 9260
- 6 Fullhurst Community College**
Imperial Avenue, Leicester LE3 1AH ☎ 0116 240 5622
- 7 Hamilton Library and Learning Centre**
20 Maidenwell Road, Leicester LE5 1BL ☎ 0116 221 2791
- 8 Highfields Centre**
96 Melbourne Road, Leicester LE2 0DS ☎ 0116 253 1053
- 9 Judgemeanow Community Centre**
Marydene Drive, Leicester LE5 6HP ☎ 0116 241 7234
- 10 Leicester Adult Education College**
2 Wellington Street, Leicester LE1 6HL ☎ 0116 233 4343
- 11 Linwood Centre**
Linwood Lane, Leicester LE2 6QN ☎ 0116 283 7222
- 12 Moat Community College**
Maidstone Road, Leicester LE2 0TU ☎ 0116 261 9556
- 13 New Parks Community Centre**
St Oswalds Road, Leicester LE3 6RG ☎ 0116 222 1072
- 14 Sir Jonathan North Community Centre**
Knighton Lane East, Leicester LE2 6FU ☎ 0116 270 5920
- 15 Soar Valley Community College**
Gleneagles Avenue, Leicester LE4 7GY ☎ 0116 258 2890

Learner Information Audit

Please take a few moments to complete the Learner Information Audit in order to help us improve the service to you. Either photocopy or tear the page from your Learner Handbook and pass to your tutor or reception or there is a copy on the website which you can complete and return.

Course Title

1. How did you find out about your course? (please tick one and follow directions)

Learning in the City prospectus - Continue to Q2

LASALS Website - Continue to Q7

Other

2. Did you receive a prospectus through your door? Yes No

Please complete the first part of your postcode LE

3. Was it easy to find the course you were looking for in the prospectus?

Yes No

4. Was there sufficient information about your course? Yes No

5. Was the information accurate? Yes No

6. Is there anything else you would like to see in the prospectus?

Website

7. Was it easy to find the course you were looking for on the website? Yes No

8. Was there sufficient information about your course? Yes No

9. Was the information accurate? Yes No

10. Is there anything else you would like to see on the website?

Thank You for taking the time to complete this survey.

LASALS Staff : Please ensure completed surveys are returned to Marketing and Communications Dept. at LAEC Wellington St.



Leicester Adult Skills & Learning Service
A1 New Walk Centre, Leicester