



## **STRATEGIC PLAN 2015 -2018**

Westminster City Council's vision for Westminster is that it will be a City for All – a City of Aspiration, a City of Choice and a City of Heritage. WAES, a service of the City Council, is an adult college based within the Westminster community, working to embed these wider council ambitions into its strategic plan and the day to day work.

### **Our Values**

The principles that define the way that we work:

- Partnership
- Innovation
- Excellence
- Enterprise
- Community engagement

### **Our Vision**

**To be the best provider of adult learning and skills training in central London.**

### **Our Mission**

***To engage, challenge and inspire individuals, communities and employers through learning.***

WAES provides an excellent, adult learning environment where learners are able to increase their self-confidence whilst gaining qualifications and learning new skills, in a modern, safe and supportive environment. We are committed to providing a high quality, responsive service that will achieve the best outcome for our learners and enable them to achieve their potential. We have excellent, accessible buildings and facilities and committed, knowledgeable and encouraging staff.

Like other providers of adult learning, WAES will continue to face challenges and changes over the next three years. There are ongoing changes to funding, vocational qualifications are being reformed and skills for the workplace are the Government's key priority for publicly funded education and training for adults. It will be essential for WAES to adapt, develop and change to successfully meet these challenges whilst effectively capitalising on new and different opportunities.

WAES will be an innovative, responsive, high performing college that effectively meets the education and training needs of Westminster residents and employers, and the wider London community. London has particular skills shortages which it will be important to understand and work with others to address. The need to train and retrain will continue to be essential for everyone; those already engaged in the employment market as well as those seeking to enter/re-enter employment. WAES must provide programmes that are relevant and appropriate for the London job market to enable learners get into work and progress.

The Government has significantly reduced the funding for adult learning in recent years and further significant reductions are anticipated. These changes will lead to fundamental changes to both the WAES programme offer and methods of delivery.

The focus of publicly funded education and training of adults going forwards is:

- Skills training that will result in people getting into work, with the particular priority being Apprenticeships and Traineeships.
- English and Maths, in particular GCSE
- Loan facilities for adult learners to self fund their vocational training programmes

WAES will develop a programme offer that meets this agenda whilst also meeting the needs of the local community and employers. To retain a diverse range of learning opportunities, WAES will develop the capacity and capability to seek alternative sources of funding whilst at the same time implementing a robust fee policy that properly reflects the cost of delivery. We will continue to identify ways in which to increase efficiencies whilst striving to maintain the quality of experience for our learners.

An innovative and flexible programme offer will be provided to enable learners to progress from basic level programmes to higher level vocational courses and into work. Where it is not possible or appropriate for WAES to provide for this progression, it will work in partnership with other providers and refer learners to appropriate alternative providers.

WAES will continue to provide programmes that support social and community engagement and contribute to the wider, City Council priorities. We will continue to work with vulnerable and disadvantaged members of the community to improve health and wellbeing and provide the first steps into learning for those furthest away from the workplace. This will be developed in conjunction with the City Council through collaboration and joint working, alongside the pooling of resources.

Whilst continuing to focus programmes on the needs of adult learners, we will continue to extend our reach to the 16 - 19 year olds who will benefit from learning in a predominantly adult environment.

Between 2015 and 2017 a national programme of Area Reviews of Further Education will be undertaken. During this same period the London Enterprise Forum (LEP) will be given increased responsibilities for the development, provision and funding of adult skills training in London. WAES will engage positively with both of these developments and contribute to the area review in central London. It is anticipated that the outcome of these initiatives will result in fundamental changes to the number of adult learning providers.

## **Our Strategic Objectives**

### **We aim to achieve six key areas in our strategic plan**

**Successful outcomes for learners**

**Responsive, relevant and innovative programmes**

**Developing the potential of all staff**

**A sound and strengthening financial position**

**Effective partnership working and strategic alliances**

**Excellent support for learners**

### **1: Delivering a responsive, relevant and innovative curriculum.**

We will deliver relevant programmes for learners that provide pathways to employment and meets the needs of employers.

Programmes will be delivered flexibly to ensure that learners are able to access their learning in ways that are appropriate and convenient to them.

#### **Key outcomes:**

1. A curriculum offer that reflects national and local priorities and demand. Increasing apprenticeship and traineeship numbers.
2. Courses delivered using e-learning and other technologies: year 1 – 10% delivered online; year 2- 15% delivered online; year 3 – 25% delivered online.
3. Increase the number of learners who progress into work.
4. Increase the number and range of employers that the Service works in partnership with.

### **2: Successful outcomes for learners**

Provide outstanding teaching and learning that is exciting, motivating, high quality and well managed. Provide support to enable learners to reach their potential and achieve their personal goals.

#### **Key outcomes:**

1. A minimum of 10% annual increase in the number of learners with a positive destination into work or further/higher study.
2. National averages exceeded: year 1 – 80% of curriculum areas; year 2 90% of curriculum areas; year 3 in all curriculum areas.
2. Year on year increase in learner success rates
3. At least 85% of lessons are Good or Outstanding.
4. Ofsted inspection is rated as good or better and we strive to become an Outstanding provider.
5. Increase the opportunities to recognise and celebrate learner success.

### **3. Developing the potential of all staff.**

With the significant changes taking place across the sector it will be important for staff to be creative, innovative and current in their practice. Staff will need up to date knowledge and skills in their area of work and the wider FE sector. Ongoing training and development will enable staff to respond positively and successfully to these fundamental changes.

We will endeavour to maintain a workforce as diverse as the community we serve.

#### **Key outcomes:**

1. All staff will be appraised annually.
2. A minimum of five cross-service activities and projects will be established annually.
3. All staff will undertake mandatory training identified in the Staff Development Policy.
4. The Executive Board will run focus groups to listen to staff views and identify required action.

#### **4: A sound and strengthening financial position.**

We will demonstrate effective use of public funds to offer good value for money and efficient ways of working.

We will continue to review our planning processes to ensure robust budget management, control and accountability.

##### Key outcomes:

1. Maximise income by aligning our provision to the Government's priorities.
2. Reduce dependency on the SFA funding by diversifying and increasing alternative income streams. By the end of this Plan, 40% of income will be non-SFA.
3. Realign resources in line with the Service's income.
4. Position the Service so that it returns a balanced budget and builds on its reserves.
5. Review business processes across the organisation to minimise wastage and reduce costs.

#### **5: Effective partnership working and strategic alliances**

Make a positive contribution to the wider community by further developing partnership work with the City Council, community organisations and employers to meet local needs for education and training.

Develop collaborative and targeted approaches to most effectively help people achieve their potential, improve health and wellbeing and make a positive contribution to their local community.

##### Key outcomes:

1. In partnership with the City Council and its departments, effectively target combined resources to meet the education, training and support needs of vulnerable people in Westminster.
2. Further extend the reach of the Service into local communities to engage with the long term unemployed and those not in employment, education or training.
3. Be recognised by the City Council and the wider local community as the education and training provider of choice.

#### **6: Excellent support services for learners.**

All centres are welcoming and safe for learners.

Staff provide a professional, welcoming, helpful and friendly service.

Comprehensive information, advice and guidance and support will be provided to all learners.

Develop effective mechanisms to inform the Service about learner destinations including progress into work.

##### Key outcomes:

1. Advice and guidance considered high quality by 95% learners.
2. Provision of Learning Support services increases learner success rates.
3. Learner and employer feedback surveys identify the service provided by WAES to be 95% good or better.