

# IMPACT REPORT

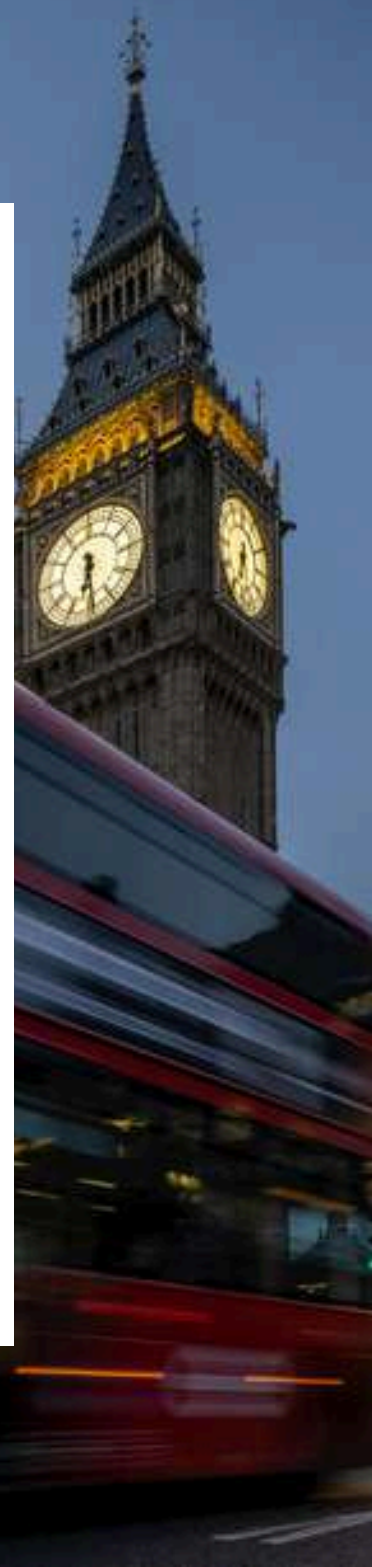


Adult Skills, Education and  
Apprenticeship Service 24/25



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# OPENING STATEMENT

The Adult Skills and Education Service (ASES) is central to the City of London Corporation's commitment to lifelong learning. Our inclusive programmes tackle skills gaps, improve employability, and support London's economy. We provide opportunities for individuals of all ages, backgrounds, ethnicities, and experiences to develop their potential and create meaningful career and education paths.

We integrate inclusion into all aspects of our delivery through collaboration with local community organisations to support the most marginalised individuals in accessing services, providing learners with disabilities access to assistive technology and adapted resources, enabling individuals to engage successfully with courses.

Education is more than acquiring qualifications or skills - it can open career pathways, improve health and wellbeing, build stronger communities, and profoundly transform lives. The City of London is rich in talent, and we take pride in designing initiatives and programmes that harness this potential, helping everyone maximise their capabilities.

ASES delivers services and activities that have a far-reaching influence beyond the City's boundaries. Our team's extensive partnerships with local stakeholders enable our learners to access a diverse cultural network and specialist organisations that can deliver services to meet their needs. ASES collaborates with diverse industries, including digital and green technologies, and seafood, to offer pathways for underrepresented groups, including care leavers, the long-term unemployed, and young adults.

We deliver targeted programmes, such as our ESOL courses, which help learners strengthen their English language abilities, enabling them to navigate UK systems, access services, and secure employment. Likewise, digital skills are increasingly in demand, reflecting key growth areas for London's employers. Our new Digital Hub will prioritise underrepresented groups from some of the most deprived parts of London and equip participants with the knowledge needed to enter these expanding sectors, ensuring education and career progression upon completion.

ASES supports a wide range of learners, from local retirees to recent refugees from Ukraine and Afghanistan, helping them integrate into their communities and achieve their personal and professional goals. To continue delivering high-quality training, we will focus on securing appropriate training spaces to meet the needs of learners in the year ahead.

**Barbara Hamilton MBE**

Head of Adult Skills, Education and Apprenticeships



# INTRODUCTION

**The City of London Corporation's Adult Skills and Education Service (ASES) is a specialist provider committed to harnessing education to drive economic growth and inclusive personal advancement. Operating in London's dynamic environment, we deliver skills, education, training, and employability programmes to meet the needs of learners, employers, and the wider economy.**

We deliver services and activities in the heart of the community such as in our Golden Lane Community Centre and new Digital Hub based in Cheapside. Our work includes offering nationally recognised qualifications, vocational training programmes, and professional development opportunities to both employed and unemployed individuals, including the most disadvantaged. We collaborate with employers to ensure our provision aligns with workforce demands, exemplified by our Apprenticeship, Digital, Cyber Security, Data Science training, and Green Retrofit courses, which address both current and future skills gaps.

We partner with local community and voluntary organisations, schools, libraries, and children's centres across London to offer a diverse range of services and ensure we can engage and recruit the most isolated individuals. These include family learning courses, literacy programmes, employment skills training, and activities for older adults. Our programmes support learners from all backgrounds, from helping refugees integrate to facilitating apprenticeships and providing employed individuals with Continuous Professional Development support.

Our employability services, including our Connect to Work programme, focus on removing barriers to work. We organise regular sector-specific employer forum events, bringing together organisations to inform us of current and future vacancies as well as skills gaps that we can meet by embedding relevant provision into our curriculum. We have also delivered SEND-focused events at Mansion House, which enables learners to gain industry insights and advice directly from employers. We connect learners with job opportunities that meet their career aspirations through our extensive network, which includes Heathrow Airport Animal Reception Centre, Epping Forest, and the City of London Police.

Recognising the cost-of-living challenges, we tailor programmes to support learners in overcoming economic and personal obstacles, equipping them to succeed in work and life. Our offerings also include ESOL courses, ranging from basic English to IELTS preparation, and initiatives that allow parents to learn alongside their children, supporting family-wide education.

Our approach integrates arts, culture, and commerce, leveraging opportunities available in the Culture Mile and beyond to enhance both learning and employment outcomes. In the next 12 months, we aim to expand access to further training facilities, ensuring we continue to meet the needs of our diverse learners.

## Outreach

Outreach is central to our mission, with a focus on individuals most at risk of poverty, exploitation, and social exclusion. Our Community Champions, embedded within the communities they support, address barriers faced by learners in London. Operating across ten City of London housing estates in seven boroughs, they adapt their methods to meet the specific needs of each community effectively. The 10 City of London housing estates across seven boroughs include:

- City of London: Golden Lane and Middlesex Street
- Southwark: Avondale Square
- Tower Hamlets: Dron House
- Islington: Isleden House, Holloway and York Way
- Hackney: Windsor House
- Lambeth: William Blake
- Lewisham: Sydenham Hill.



# VISION, MISSION AND GOALS

Our **vision** is to be the leading provider of inclusive and excellent lifelong learning, adult education and employment experiences.

Our **mission** is to equip adults –particularly Londoners–with the skills, confidence, and experience needed to thrive in their diverse communities and careers.

## OUR GOALS:

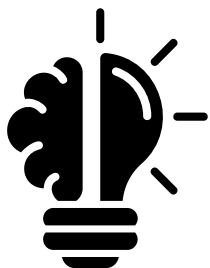


Enrich people's lives through the transformative power of lifelong learning



Deliver unique educational experiences tailored to the specific needs and aspirations of our learners

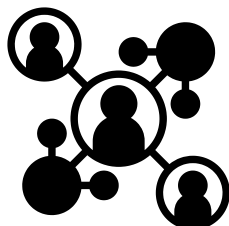
# OUR GOALS:



Equip learners with the practical skills, qualifications and work experience to tangibly improve their employment prospects



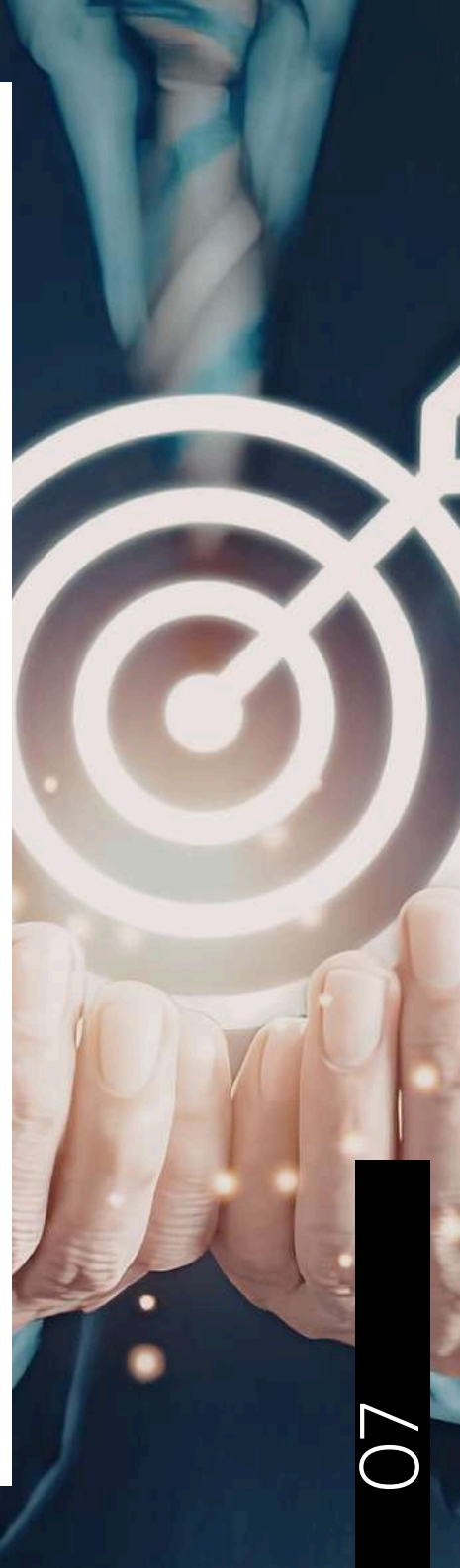
Lead by example by embedding policies and procedures that reflect the highest standards of equality and diversity, ensuring our workforce mirrors the multicultural community that we serve



Harness our vast network of employers across a diverse range of sectors to maximise opportunities for our learners



Deliver a world-leading environment celebrating the relationship between skills and employment, education and industry.



# INCLUSION

ASES recognises that adult learners arrive with a diverse range of backgrounds, experiences, needs, and barriers to learning. We are committed to ensuring that all learners – including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or temporary or situational barriers – are welcomed, supported, and enabled to thrive, succeed, and move into meaningful next steps (employment, further learning, progression). We have established systems and processes, embedded in our Inclusion Policy and everyday activities, to set out our approach to identifying, removing, and preventing barriers, promoting belonging, high expectations, and equitable outcomes. These include:

## **Having high expectations for all of our learners**

We believe that every learner can progress, succeed, and achieve, regardless of barriers. We set ambitious learning aims, target high aspirations, and expect staff to plan for the full participation of all learners.

## **Tailored support and interventions**

We provide differentiated teaching, learning materials, adjustments, and additional support (one-to-one, specialist input, mentoring, assistive technologies) to ensure learners can engage, progress, and achieve. We do not lower expectations for any learner; instead, we provide the routes and support to meet them.

## **Inclusive curriculum and learning environment**

Our programmes and learning environment are designed to promote belonging, remove barriers to participation, ensure accessibility (physical, digital, pedagogical, language), and encourage full participation. Adaptations are made thoughtfully so that all learners can access the curriculum and progress to the next stage.

## **Promotion of equity and reduction of disparities**

We monitor and track outcomes for learners with barriers (including SEND, disadvantaged learners, those with low prior attainment, temporary barriers) and take action to address any gaps in participation, progress, or achievement. We aim for equitable outcomes and successful destinations.

## **Learner voice and belonging**

We ensure that learners are engaged, their views listened to, their feedback acted upon, and that they feel valued as members of our learning community. We foster an inclusive culture, free from discrimination or harassment.

## **Partnership working**

We work with specialist services, subcontracted partner providers, employers, support agencies, and families (where relevant) to provide holistic support that addresses both learning and non-learning barriers (e.g., health, welfare, digital access, caring responsibilities).

## **Continuous improvement and accountability**

We review and evaluate our inclusive practices, support mechanisms, and outcomes; we use data and qualitative evidence to identify strengths and development needs; we embed inclusion into strategic planning, leadership, governance, and operational delivery in line with inspection expectations.

## **Training and awareness**

All staff, tutors, and support personnel receive training in inclusive practice, identification of barriers, SEND awareness, initial assessment processes, differentiated teaching and reasonable adjustments, and in promoting a culture of belonging and high expectations.

ASES is committed to creating an inclusive learning environment where every adult learner – regardless of prior attainment, background, barrier, or need – has the opportunity to access, engage, progress, and succeed. We will embed high expectations, early and accurate assessment, tailored support, inclusive teaching and learning practices, and rigorous monitoring of outcomes. Inclusion is not an add-on; it is integral to everything we do and central to our mission of enabling adults to achieve, progress, and transform their lives.

# APPRENTICESHIPS

Apprenticeships provide a practical pathway for people to gain skills, qualifications, and income while beginning new careers. At the same time, employers can address their workforce skills gaps by tailoring training to their specific needs.

ASES has created wide-ranging apprenticeship opportunities across sectors by leveraging its strong connections with businesses and cultural organisations. Our team matches candidates to suitable roles, aligning their skills and career goals with employers' requirements. Apprentices gain qualifications as well as direct, hands-on experience.

We have placed apprentices in roles such as Human Resources, Customer Service, and Business Administration within the City of London Corporation. Additionally, we have placed candidates with employers such as ICBC Standard Bank.

Collaboration with groups like Cheapside Business Improvement District has further expanded our reach, helping us to secure new and varied apprenticeship opportunities every year.



**100%**

success rate Accounts of Finance Assistant Level 3 2024/25

**100%**

success rate Event Assistant Level 3 2024/25



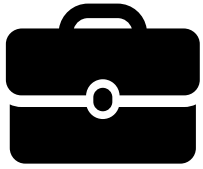
**90.9%**

success rate Business Administrator Level 3 2024/25

**87.5%**

success rate Customer Service Practitioner Level 3 2024/25

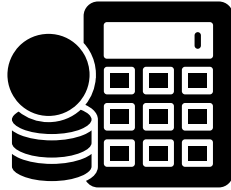
# OUR EVER-EXPANDING APPRENTICESHIP OFFER CURRENTLY INCLUDES:



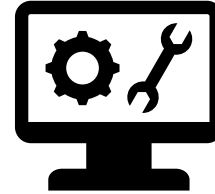
Business  
Administration



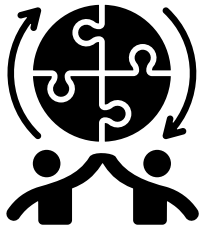
Customer  
Service



Finance



IT



Culture/Arts  
Management



Creative  
Learning



Education



Association of  
Accounting Technicians



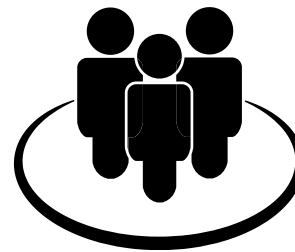
Procurement



Horticulture



Animal Care



Human  
Resources

# CASE STUDIES

ASES is delighted to celebrate the outstanding achievements of four dedicated apprentices across the departments of ASES DCCS, Chamberlains, Responsible Procurement and Markets who have each successfully completed the Level 3 Business Administrator apprenticeship with Distinction. This remarkable milestone highlights their commitment, professionalism, and growth throughout their journey with the City of London Corporation.

## Chamberlains Apprentice

His journey began with a desire to gain hands-on experience while continuing his education. Drawn to the City of London's rich history and opportunities, he excelled in building organisational and communication skills, demonstrating enthusiasm for learning and teamwork working in the Remembrance team.

"My experience as a City of London apprentice has been very positive and rewarding. I have gained valuable hands-on experience, built confidence, and learned how a large organisation operates day-to-day.

## Responsible Procurement Apprentice

He chose the apprenticeship route to gain work experience while studying the L3 Business Administrator apprenticeship programme. He thrived under the support of his Chamberlain department in the Responsible Procurement and ASES training teams, leading to his new role as Responsible Procurement Officer.

"I have had great support from my line manager, apprentice tutor and their teams. I am proud to be continuing my career within the Responsible Procurement team."

## Markets Apprentice

His apprenticeship with the City Surveyor's Department at Billingsgate Market was an inspiring growth journey. After completing his L3 Business Administrator apprenticeship programme with Distinction, he secured a full-time position as Market Administration Officer and plans to progress further.

"The supportive environment and variety of tasks helped me grow both professionally and personally. I am proud that my work contributes to the community."

## ASES DCCS Apprentice

He exemplified dedication and ambition throughout his apprenticeship, developing strong communication and business operation skills working as a business administrator within the ASES team. Having completed his apprenticeship successfully, he has also secured a full-time position within the Corporation.

"The apprenticeship has given me confidence, real experience, and the chance to work alongside talented professionals while learning every day."

# ADULT COMMUNITY LEARNING AND INTERNSHIPS

Our Adult Community Learning activities seek to improve community cohesion and reduce social isolation and poverty by re-engaging local people and communities with learning, education and employment.

We recognise that many learners are impacted by disadvantage, such as those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), people with low skills and/or low wages, disadvantaged families, people from UK minority ethnic (UKME) backgrounds, recent migrant communities and refugees. We therefore target those facing such barriers and provide tailored support and training to help them engage with education and employment opportunities and fulfil their potential.

We also provide an accredited pathway for 16-24-year-olds with Education, Health and Care Plans, and support young people who are unemployed or at risk of not being in employment, education or training (NEET) into apprenticeships.

Delivered in local community settings within environments conducive to positive learning and adapted to cultural preferences, our courses are embedded with safeguarding, equalities and British Values content. Our delivery includes:

- Humanities
- History
- Health and Wellbeing
- Digital Skills
- Art, Crafts and Textiles
- Jewellery
- Pilates
- Professional Development and Employability
- English and Maths
- Health and Social Care
- Languages
- London Tour Guides.

## Highlights

**84.9%**

**RARPA success**

**94.2%**

**Retention rate**

**711**

**enrolments with six months left of the academic year**

**98.1%**

**Pass rate**

**92.1%**

**Achievement rate**

### Case Study

*'Managing my role as a supervisor at Heathrow alongside my English lessons has been challenging, but it's worthwhile. Strengthening my English skills has given me new opportunities, and I grow more confident each day.'*

**Adult Community Learning Participant, 2024/25**

# ESOL AND FUNCTIONAL SKILLS

English language and maths skills are essential for integration, progression, and participation in the community. Those who lack these skills risk social isolation, financial hardship, and exploitation.

Recognised as a leading ESOL provider in London, we target our courses at those with the greatest need. Our programmes equip learners with the skills they need to take an active role in UK life, from using public services to finding employment. We also teach higher levels of ESOL and IELTS, enabling people to gain the qualifications needed to work in business or enter further study.

## PRE ENTRY ESOL

Most providers only offer entry-level ESOL, which assumes some basic English knowledge that many new arrivals do not have.

Our pre-entry ESOL, delivered at no cost, is staffed by multilingual teachers who have personal experience of learning English. We co-design this course with local partners to meet specific needs, such as offering women-only classes, matching learning tasks to job goals, or supporting those who newly arrived with topics like using local transport.

# ESOL AND IELTS

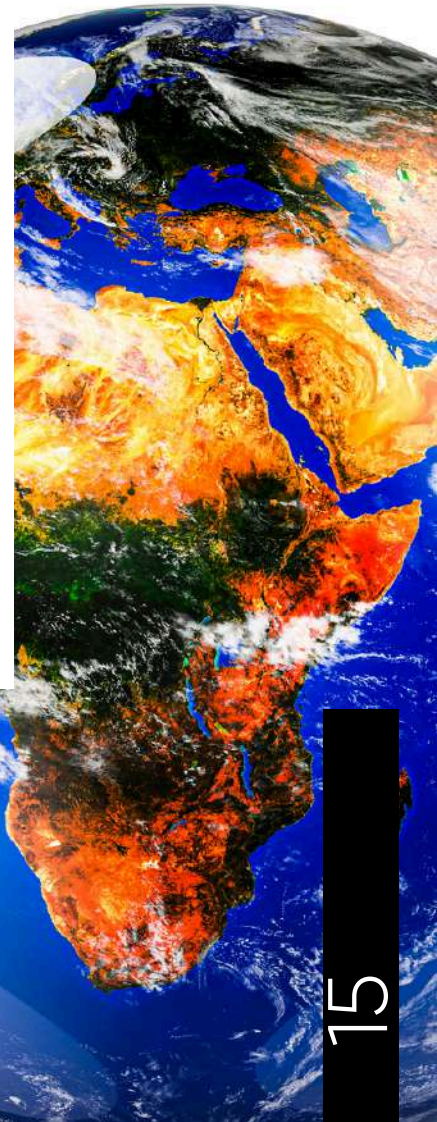
We teach learners whose first language is not English through a blended model, combining digital resources with classes held at locations including the Guildhall, The Aldgate School, and Portsoken Community Centre. This makes it easier for people with children or caring responsibilities to attend.

For those pursuing NHS employment, we run a specialist course focused on NHS job language, helping learners gain the vocabulary needed to perform well and advance at work.

We have a strong working relationship with local Jobcentre Plus teams, which enables us to support people who want to improve their English for job searching, further training, or personal growth.

With input from local community partners, our ESOL teaching staff, who have themselves learned English, deliver individualised support. Our courses meet the needs of learners from beginner through advanced levels, helping them progress.

Our IELTS programme is aimed at people needing higher-level English for work, business, or higher education in the UK.



# FUNCTIONAL SKILLS

Our Functional Skills courses address real-life modern challenges for Londoners, with topics such as cost-of-living and budgeting included in the curriculum. This practical focus helps learners gain the everyday skills required for work and daily life.

- Basic IT gives learners the practical ability to use technology at home and work.
- English supports learners in developing reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills for further study, work, and day-to-day situations.
- Maths builds critical numeracy skills needed for jobs, education, and daily living.

## HIGHLIGHTS:

**510**  
**ENROLMENTS**

**89%**  
**COMPLETION**  
**RATE**

**441 PARTICIPANTS HAVE**  
**COMPLETED THEIR COURSE**  
**SUCCESSFULLY IN 2024-25**

"As someone who recently arrived in the UK, I found it difficult to communicate and adjust to a new society. The City of London Corporation gave me a place to improve my English and meet new people. This helped me find a job and continue my education."

*Functional Skills Level 1 Learner*

"I used to find it hard to say how I felt or what I thought, especially when looking for a job. After starting the ESOL course with the City of London Corporation, I found the lessons well planned and the resources useful. The class included people from many backgrounds, which made it interesting. The tutor was extremely patient and answered all the questions I had and changed the lessons to fit our needs. I felt much more able to take part and be confident to ask questions without fear of judgement. I would strongly recommend this ESOL course to anyone who wants to get better at English."

*ESOL Skills Learner*

# CONNECT TO WORK

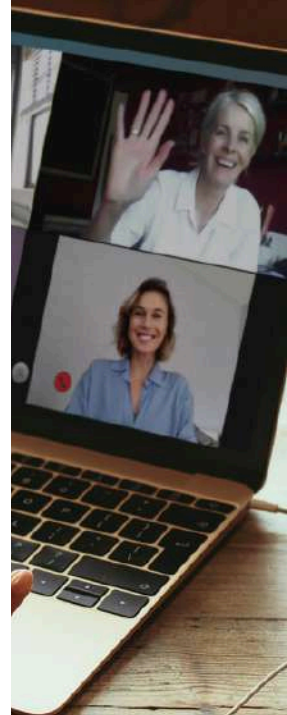
ASES delivers the DWP Connect to Work programme across the Central London Forward region. The Connect to Work programme aligns with the City of London Corporation's Corporate Plan, which prioritizes economic growth, enhancing social and economic inclusion, reducing poverty, improving access to opportunities and workforce diversity, and demonstrates ASES' commitment to fostering an inclusive and resilient economy.

This initiative supports individuals with disabilities, complex barriers, or those at risk of job loss to secure employment or remain in work. At a time of economic strain and rising living costs, we are focusing on sustainable employment and creating paths to long-term careers. Our team provides tailored support that equips jobseekers with critical skills, offers personalised career guidance, and connects them with potential employers.

We deliver workshops, training, and one-to-one coaching to help participants enter the workforce. Topics include CV writing, interview preparation, and workplace behaviour. Participants can also access sector-specific field mentoring in industries with high workforce demand, such as finance, technology, and hospitality.

As part of the programme launch, ASES hosted an event attended by over 60 local employer representatives. Discussions enabled employers to have a direct influence on our future provision and focused on the importance of collaborative efforts to reduce unemployment and ensure opportunities are accessible to all.

The programme is supported by a range of stakeholders committed to providing individuals with the best opportunities to offer accessible roles. These include established referral processes with organisations such as JobCentrePlus, GPs, London Probation, Community and Volunteer Centres. These partnerships provide participants with direct routes into work placements. Employers participating in the programme have benefited from access to a diverse talent pool and support in identifying suitable candidates. The programme simplifies the recruitment process, helping jobseekers and employers achieve lasting success. Businesses also receive advice on building inclusive workplaces that encourage employee retention.



# CASE STUDIES:

*I joined the City of London's Connect to Work Programme on 4 August 2025 after four months of unemployment. My daughter attended appointments to provide Spanish translation, ensuring I could take part in all discussions. We built a Vocational Profile and a six-week Action Plan and I attended weekly appointments. We wrote a new CV, set up a professional email, and registered with CV Library and Reed.co.uk for local cleaning job alerts. With this support from the City of London staff, I identified an Early Morning Cleaner vacancy at the City of London and submitted my application, successfully applying in September 2025.*

## **Connect to Work learner**

*I joined the City of London's Connect to Work Programme in September 2025, seeking work after unemployment. I had high stress and anxiety, affecting my confidence in job applications. However, I had fantastic support from the City's staff, providing me with weekly appointments to update my CV, practise interview techniques, and submit applications. We completed a Better Off in Work Calculation, showing how I would earn more in employment than on benefits, which increased my motivation.*

*I wanted to work for the NHS and we held a disclosure meeting to discuss sharing my health concerns with employers. I was supported by the City team to apply for a Personal Assistant role to Clinical Radiology Leads at St Thomas' Hospital, was interviewed and offered the job. I started my new role in January 2026 and continue to receive fantastic post-placement support from the City team to help me settle.*

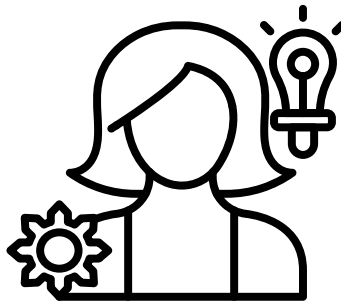
## **Connect to Work learner**

# CARE2WORK YOUTH TRAILBLAZER

ASES has been delivering a government funded programme aimed to support Care Leavers aged 19-25 residing in the Central London Forward area to progress towards and move into sustainable work; high quality education and training; and to increase their confidence and employability.

ASES has been working with key stakeholders such as JobCentrePlus and our internal Care teams to identify cross-referral mechanisms that enable us to engage and recruit eligible individuals successfully onto the programme. As part of our service, we have been delivering tailored, holistic support to ensure a smooth transition for individuals to their next step. These activities have instilled improved confidence and motivation for individuals to identify pathways that meet their education and work aspirations.

We have also worked in partnership with the Funder and other delivery partners to build capacity through helping boroughs and other stakeholders to innovate, to work together, and to learn from each-other regarding best practice in supporting these participants access education, training and employment.



# UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND (UKSPF)

ASES has been delivering our "Jumpstart to Success" programme under UKSPF funding since 2024 and were granted further contract extensions in April 2025, October 2025 and April 2026 as a result of highly successful performance. This programme is a collaborative initiative led by ASES alongside seven other Local Authority Adult Learning divisions and innovative grassroots providers, dedicated to supporting young people aged 16-24 in Central London who are categorized as NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training).



**1,750 Starts**

against a target of 1,500



**699 Progressions**

into Education, Employment, or Training, against a target of 600

Recognising the unique, modern challenges faced by young people, the programme provides individually tailored mentorship and guidance. It focuses on enhancing personal development, boosting self-confidence, and building the motivation necessary for young people to overcome barriers to success. By addressing the specific needs and circumstances of each participant, "Jumpstart to Success" creates a structured pathway for young people to re-engage with education, secure meaningful employment, or access training.

Our partnership aims not only to help young people gain practical skills but also to foster a sense of purpose and empowerment. Through this supportive network, the programme strives to unlock the potential of young Londoners, helping them to navigate challenges and transition toward brighter futures in the workforce or academic settings.

# UK SEAFOOD SKILLS FUND AND TRAINING SCHEME

Part-funded by DEFRA and delivered with City Corporation's Wholesale Markets team, we delivered specialist seafood courses at the renowned Billingsgate Market.

We created a curriculum blending digital and business expertise with hands-on seafood training. By offering tailored courses, we supported unemployed individuals enter the sector, modernize the industry, and upskill the current workforce. This combination of digital, business, and practical seafood skills represented a key step in advancing the food industry.

The reopening of the Billingsgate Seafood School marked a turning point for learning and innovation in the seafood sector. We built a skilled, adaptable workforce equipped for today's competitive market and the school provided newcomers with essential industry skills while enabling existing traders and employees to expand their expertise. This ensures their success in an evolving sector.

## Project goals:

- Repurpose the former Billingsgate Seafood Training School spaces to train 350 learners
- Develop courses covering technical skills across the seafood supply chain, from catch to plate
- Raise awareness of seafood careers among young people and schoolchildren.

## Highlights:

**160 commercial courses delivered, training to over 1,400 professionals in selecting, preparing, and cooking seafood.**

**Over 1,200 schoolchildren have attended seafood learning sessions at the Billingsgate Market pilot food school.**

**6 coastal outreach events held in locations including Hastings, Bangor, Aldeburgh, and Leigh-on-Sea, educating hundreds of people on UK seafood.**

**Revitalised the former Billingsgate Seafood School site, securing significant commercial bookings well beyond the project's March 2025 conclusion.**

## Post Project and Legacy

As a result of the successes of the programme described above, the programme has provided a legacy that will ensure local individuals continue to benefit from our Seafood training scheme. Legacy activities include the following:

- Over 30 commercial Industry days booked and delivered at the school post project end date (31<sup>st</sup> March 2025) in 2025 with a strong pipeline of industry courses booked well into 2026.
- The Billingsgate Seafood school was delighted to received funding from Thames Free Port to deliver some educational programmes in Primary and Secondary Schools, from Autumn 2025 until March 2026. This work is a continuation of the Schools Seafood Education programme, delivered as part of the Defra project. This also includes outreach activities delivered in schools, acknowledging that not all schools can co-ordinate a visit to Billingsgate and we will be sourcing future work placements for participants.
- Funding was also secured to produce a "Get into the Seafood Industry" Film, which showcases the vast employment opportunities there are in the Seafood Sector. This will be promoted at every School engagement event.
- Continuous Professional Development (CPD) evening class for teachers from two Primary schools in February and March 2026.
- Courses for the public have also continued at Billingsgate, delivered by our dedicated trainer.
- Inspired whilst supporting our DEFRA project, she published a book in October 2025 "The Great British Seafood Revival".
- Creation of a Fishmonger Apprenticeship available to local residents.

## Testimonials:

*'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!'*

**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**



# DIGITAL HUB

In December 2025, the ASES team established a physical and virtual Digital Hub in Cheapside. Led by highly qualified, experienced and dedicated staff, we have been providing unemployed, employed and younger local residents, especially those from deprived backgrounds, with the tools, knowledge, training, and support needed to improve digital skills that align with current and future job requirements and ensure individuals are equipped to compete in the modern job market. The Digital Hub will also foster community engagement and enhance both their employability and social mobility. Our Digital Hub has created a space for residents from a wide variety of social backgrounds, including underrepresented and the most disadvantaged communities, to come together and collaborate, innovate, and share learning.

As digitalisation continues to transform everyday life, it is essential that the local community is empowered to access and engage with digital technologies. While its businesses thrive on cutting-edge technology, many residents living in the City and surrounding boroughs lack access to essential digital resources due to high levels of deprivation. By addressing digital exclusion through the creation of our Digital Hub, working with local stakeholders such as libraries, we can be best placed to support the reduction of loneliness, poverty, and other socio-economic challenges while improving skills and civic engagement.

We have promoted community engagement through group skills workshops that foster collaboration and mutual understanding, supporting learners to build their soft-skills such as confidence, motivation, adaptability, active listening, time management, leadership, teamwork that encourage active participation in civic life.

The hub will serve as a cornerstone for building a digitally inclusive society, ensuring all residents can benefit from technological advancements, and by investing in this initiative, ASES has strengthened its commitment to inclusivity, social mobility, and resilience.

In the future we propose to partner with local employers to create digital apprenticeship opportunities that support talent development and economic expansion in the City.

# GREEN RETROFIT PROVISION ON CITY'S HOUSING ESTATES

In 2025 ASES rolled out a Green Construction training programme for Londoners, predominantly coming from unemployment and disadvantaged backgrounds, in recognition of the national skills gap in the retrofitting market. The primary training programme delivered was a Level 3 Domestic Energy Assessor (DEA) qualification.

The Corporation manages thousands of residential properties which either require or will require energy efficiency assessments and certification ratings (EPCs) to inform retrofitting improvement works; currently, all this work is subcontracted out.

Post training, the ASES and Housing teams have been working collaboratively to arrange for an inaugural programme of internal EPC assessments using a brokerage system, managed by ASES, that employs its training alumni to conduct the work. The Housing Team have access to nationally available funding for the project.

Accompanied initially by an experienced EPC trainer/assessor, this will give the newly qualified alumni valuable paid work opportunities. The first programme has run from 23<sup>rd</sup> November to 5<sup>th</sup> December 2025 and enabled 5 newly qualified assessors to complete 30 property assessments.

Upon successful completion of the initial programme, a wider collaborative Retrofitting programme will be rolled out in conjunction with further training courses that will enable the expansion of the brokerage and wider completion of housing assessments. There are also initial plans to offer the service to adjacent London Authorities.

# CREATIVE COURSES

ASES offers a range of creative courses that enable learners to develop their artistic skills and realise their potential. These programmes focus on equipping individuals with practical abilities and confidence to express their creativity across various mediums. These include:

- Art courses
- Jewellery
- Sewing
- Pilates
- Ballroom dancing
- Digital Skills

## CASE STUDIES

*'I attend the Wednesday morning art class as a beginner, though I've been practicing for a while and enjoy working with different media. The topics are engaging, but we're encouraged to experiment. It's a lovely group with talented, skilled people, and while it's competitive, I really enjoy coming every week'.*

**Learner participating on our Art course**

# ENGLISH LANGUAGE INTEGRATION PROGRAMME

ASES delivers a programme to support informal, community-based English language provision to local residents, in partnership with VCS organisations. The programme supports a variety of refugee and migrant cohorts, focusing on those from Afghanistan, Ukraine and Hong Kong.

Our team delivers activities helping learners to develop their English in a contextualised way.



# 'YOU SAY, WE DID'

**'You Say':** One of our Care Leaver learners has a significant hearing impairment and is registered deaf. She expressed a strong motivation to achieve Functional Skills qualifications in Maths and English, having previously found school and college environments extremely challenging. In particular, large group settings and classroom-based learning were experienced as inaccessible, contributing to heightened anxiety and disengagement from education. The learner also experienced severe anxiety in relation to loud environments and large groups, and identified her ideal learning environment as calm, quiet and, where possible, one-to-one. In addition, due to her disability, she lacks confidence using public transport, which presented a further barrier to participation.

**'We Did':** Through our Trailblazer programme we were able to design and deliver a highly tailored, person-centred learning offer that directly addressed these barriers. Drawing on our strong partnership with Hackney JobcentrePlus (JCP), we secured access to a quiet, private room within the JCP building. This location was within walking distance for the learner, significantly reducing travel-related anxiety and removing the need to use public transport.

We engaged our learner with a highly experienced and skilled tutor, with expertise in delivering Functional Skills in a one-to-one setting, who is also based locally in Hackney. Working closely with the learner's social worker, we carefully planned session times around her existing commitments to ensure consistency and sustainability of engagement.

The learner was offered weekly one-to-one Functional Skills sessions in both English and Maths, delivered in a safe, calm and accessible environment. This personalised approach enabled the learner to engage with learning in a way that respected her needs, reduced anxiety, and supported her confidence and progression.

**'You Say':** Learners requested a need for greater confidence, professional communication skills and exposure to real corporate environments.

**'We Did':** We delivered targeted employer-led engagement to demystify corporate careers and build learner confidence. This included facilitating learner attendance at professional development sessions hosted by LinkedIn at the LinkedIn Experience, alongside structured preparation support covering personal statements, professional communication and interview confidence. Learners were supported to engage with corporate professionals in live settings, strengthening both confidence and professional behaviours.

**'You Say':** Learners requested an honest insight into corporate recruitment and what employers really look for.

**'We Did':** We facilitated 'Conquering Corporate: Your Pathway to a Corporate Career', a dedicated employer engagement and networking event for learners across Coding, Data and Cyber Security pathways. The session focused on real recruitment processes, expectations and workplace realities. Industry professionals shared lived experience rather than theoretical advice, providing clarity on how candidates are assessed, what matters in recruitment decisions and how mindset and preparation influence outcomes.

On the day, learners were expected to dress professionally, arrive prepared and actively engage with employers. The event focused on honest discussion rather than generic advice, covering what "corporate" actually means in practice, how recruitment decisions are made, and how candidates can present themselves effectively.

Keynote speakers included industry professionals and a recruitment CEO, Parvyez Salam, who provided clear insight into what employers look for, what is less relevant, and why mindset and communication matter. One-to-one networking sessions allowed learners to ask specific questions and receive personalised guidance. Testimonies from professionals at EY and alumni from King's College London reinforced that background should not limit future career potential.

The event was delivered in partnership with ETRA Talent Recruitment, PROTECH Training, Tower Hamlets Council and WorkPath.

**Impact:** Learners demonstrated strong professional engagement throughout the event, asking informed questions and actively building connections with employers. Feedback showed increased confidence, clearer understanding of corporate career pathways and improved awareness of recruitment expectations. Several learners reported follow-up conversations with employers and, in some cases, interviews already underway, indicating immediate progression outcomes.

**You Say:** 'We would like access to digital skills courses that build our confidence, improve our employability and help us use technology effectively in everyday life and work.'

**We Did:** We designed and delivered a high-quality digital skills programme, led by an experienced tutor, offering practical and relevant training that improved learners' confidence, employability and ability to use digital technology both professionally and independently.

**You Say:**

Employers wanted candidates who understand workplace expectations, not just technical skills.

**We Did:**


We embedded structured presentation skills and public speaking development across programme delivery to strengthen learners' professional communication and workplace readiness. Learners took part in guided presentation exercises focused on clarity, confidence, tone, body language and audience awareness, mirroring expectations in workplace meetings and client-facing environments.

To reinforce this, we delivered mock interview sessions designed around real employer recruitment processes. Learners practised articulating technical skills in a professional context, responding to competency-based questions and demonstrating behaviours expected in the workplace. Feedback was provided on communication style, professionalism, confidence and interview technique, helping learners understand how employers assess candidates beyond technical ability.

This activity ensured learners were supported to translate technical knowledge into clear, confident communication aligned with employer expectations.

**Impact:**

Learners showed increased confidence in presenting themselves professionally, improved ability to communicate their skills and greater awareness of workplace behaviours. Employers reported stronger engagement from learners during interviews and events, and learners reported feeling better prepared for professional environments and recruitment processes.



**You Say:** 'We would like more information about employers, the types of roles available, and opportunities to speak directly with employers to understand how to access jobs.'

**We Did:** We arranged for employers, including Amazon, to attend sessions and speak directly with learners about roles, recruitment processes and expectations, and supported learners to attend employment fairs to engage with employers, explore opportunities and build confidence in approaching the labour market.

# CELEBRATING DIVERSITY

ASES is dedicated to reflecting the diverse nature of the communities we serve in our programmes. We recognise the varying needs of our learners and strive to adapt our inclusive activities, accordingly, e.g. running a SEND-specific employer event at Mansion House to inform them about supported Internships. Our primary focus is to combat underrepresentation while simultaneously ensuring equal opportunities for everyone, thereby creating an inclusive environment.

## DIVERSITY HIGHLIGHTS

### Apprenticeships

**37%**

Global Majority

**18%**

Declared Disability / Learning Difficulty

### Adult Community Learning (ACL)

**62%**

Global Majority

**18%**

Declared Disability / Learning Difficulty

**40%**

Aged 50+

We aim to welcome and celebrate an increasing number of learners in the coming years, enhancing both our organisation and the surrounding community.



**CITY  
OF  
LONDON**

**ADULT SKILLS AND  
EDUCATION SERVICE**

**City of London Corporation, Guildhall,  
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