



The London Borough of Merton  
**MAL Subcontracting  
Rationale 24-25**

**Patricia Carlisle**  
Merton Adult Learning  
July 2024

## Introduction

Merton Adult Learning operates a commissioned learning service at venues across the borough through a range of delivery partners. We work in partnership with representatives from these organisations to agree and monitor contractual arrangements, quality assurance, performance, curriculum intent, implementation of quality of teaching and learning, and outcomes for learners.

Within this document 'Partners' refers to delivery partners listed on the Merton Adult Learning Approved Provider List (APL).

This rationale applies to all subcontracting activity supported with funds supplied by the Greater London Authority (GLA) and/or the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

This rationale is reviewed annually, or earlier should there be a significant change to guidance or policy.

## Context

In 2015 Merton Council decided that the adult learning service contract out the delivery of provision and implement a commissioning model. From 2016-17 the initial subcontracted delivery of courses under this model began.

Merton Adult Learning (MAL) continues to operate a fully subcontracted service, working with a range of partners.

In August 2022 an Approved Provider List of 11 learning partners was created that enables MAL to call off a variety of contracts from suppliers who can provide various unique and/or standard provision that meet our strategy and the skills needs of Merton residents.

## MAL subcontracted service

Subcontracting enables MAL to:

- Provide a service that is delivered by a carefully selected range of experienced and quality focussed partners that have a proven track record of improving the skills and opportunities of learners.
- Deliver a wide curriculum offer that enables learners to improve their skills and progress on to their next steps in employment, further learning and/or improved lifestyle.
- Reduce inequalities across Merton by focussing much needed delivery within community venues in the east of borough.
- Have greater employer engagement generated by partner specialisms which highlight live vacancies, and ensure skills needed to work in local and national organisations are included within the course delivery.
- Maximise the use of the funding grants received from the GLA and ESFA.
- Quickly adapt provision and delivery when needed.

All subcontracted activity follows the guidelines and funding rules of the GLA and ESFA, and an external subcontracting assurance review is completed annually.

MAL liaises with members of the Merton Commercial Services team on the procurement of suppliers to ensure all subcontracting requirements of Merton are complied with.

A copy of the MAL Subcontracting Funding Retention and Charges Policy and the annual actual Funding Paid and Retained can be found on our [website](#).

The MAL service is reviewed by Merton Council Scrutiny Panel annually.

Leading the MAL team are:

Patricia Carlisle, Service Manager.

Anthony Hopkins, Head of Libraries, Heritage and Adult Education Service

## **MAL strategy**

The London Borough of Merton is committed to providing high quality and sustainable adult learning to improve the social, economic, health and wellbeing outcomes of our residents. We will deliver this through a strategic investment approach: commissioning provision to the best providers in the field and by developing sophisticated evidence-based approaches to what we deliver.

We aim to reduce inequalities across the borough by focussing a significant proportion of our investment on those most socially and / or economically disadvantaged whilst providing a broad range of learning opportunities to develop all of our resident's skills.

To deliver our strategy, the following objectives have been developed:

- Further develop our evidence-based approach to commissioning to ensure the fullest return on investment.
- Further develop collaboration and partnerships across the employment, voluntary and health sectors to embed the work of adult learning in the community.
- Deliver a significant proportion of our courses in priority areas in the borough to address inequalities.
- Increase the range and quality of courses in employability and ensure that a thread of employability and life skills is weaved into all courses.
- Adapt courses to address employer's future workforce needs and progress more residents into good work including skills for the green economy.

- Embrace technological developments and support residents through the delivery of courses that increase digital opportunities and enable residents to get online safely and confidently.
- Deliver courses to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents and reduce social isolation.
- Provide popular courses and continue to develop our curriculum to fit the skills needs of residents.
- Deliver provision for families to encourage intergenerational learning.
- Provide targeted courses for adults to improve literacy and / or numeracy skills to enable learners to participate more fully socially and / or economically.
- Further develop the range of courses for learners with learning difficulties and / or disabilities to enable them to live as independently as possible to improve their wellbeing and life chances.
- Tailor the learning journey for all learners from beginning to end so that they progress onto new opportunities.
- Deliver excellent teaching and learning that is learner focussed and enables residents to progress.
- Work collaboratively with providers to ensure that best practice is shared and embedded in course provision.

Underpinning our objectives are the following core values for delivering adult learning:

- Provide a broad range of accredited and non-credited courses to meet market demand and based on evidence and intelligence of future needs.
- Make full use of national, regional and local data to understand, target and track the delivery of our services to different parts of the resident population to ensure the widest reach of adult learning.
- Ensure all courses are delivered in the borough.
- Courses are delivered in an inclusive and welcoming environment in high quality venues that are easy for people to access whilst ensuring the safeguarding of all our learners.
- Embed appropriate assessment and selection processes to ensure that course criteria match learner needs and they progress appropriately following course completion.
- Learn from, and contribute to, best practice around the country in the field of adult learning and actively seek to embrace new approaches.
- Continue to improve the quality of education and develop enhanced systems to manage quality and improve feedback from our learners.

- Clear pathways are established, recorded, and monitored to enable progression of learners onto new courses, employment opportunities and / or improved health and wellbeing as appropriate.
- Market our services to the community through a variety of different methods and ensure a strong thread of localism is embedded into our course offer.

## **MAL subcontractors**

2024-2025

- South Thames College Group (Merton College)
- Richmond and Hillcroft Adult Community College (RHACC)
- Global Solution Services (GSS)
- Adult Training Network (ATN)
- TEC Training GB Limited
- The Training Place of Excellence Limited

2023-2024

- South Thames College Group (Merton College)
- Richmond and Hillcroft Adult Community College (RHACC)
- Global Solution Services (GSS)
- Adult Training Network (ATN)
- Learn English Together in Merton (previously MHTS)
- Need 2 Succeed
- TEC Training GB Limited
- The Training Place of Excellence Limited

The MAL Approved Provider List:

- South Thames College Group
- Richmond and Hillcroft Adult Community College
- Global Solution Services
- Adult Training Network
- MI ComputSolutions
- Learn English Together in Merton
- Need 2 Succeed
- Ripe Enterprises
- TEC Training GB Limited
- The Training Place of Excellence
- Twin Training International Limited