

Self Assessment Report Summary 2013-2014

Outcomes for learners

Grade: 2

Key Strengths

- Overall success rates for learners are outstanding in both non-accredited provision at 95.30% and 90.60% in accredited provision
- Overall retention is outstanding at 98.19% in non accredited provision and 95.8% in accredited provision
- Overall achievement rates are outstanding in both non-accredited and accredited provision, 97.06% and 94.6 % respectively
- Employability programmes have outstanding success rates with 36% of learners progressing onto other provision offered by Bury Adult Learning Service in year, 80% of trainees on traineeship programmes moved into employment and 38% started apprenticeships. 19.5% of learners referred by Work Programme providers, who attended provision during 2013-14, have moved into employment
- Community based provision keenly focussed on developing skills that support employability and progression into further learning
- Learner feedback clearly identifies that learners achieve their learning goals, acquire new skills and increase their confidence in learning
- No significant achievement gaps overall between males, females, people with disabilities or people from disadvantaged areas; participation of learners from priority wards (58.13%)
- Learners' work in visual arts of a very high standard with learners demonstrating the acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding to produce outstanding pieces of work

Key Areas for Improvement

- BME learners (24% of learners in ASB provision) success rate is 84.4% which is below the overall success rate of 90.6%
- ESOL overall success rates is 1.8% below national benchmark
- The overall success rate for 16-18 learners (22) is 77.3% which is 4.6% above the benchmark for similar providers but 3.7% below national benchmark. There were 2 learners in ESOL who both withdrew from provision and had a nil result. Excluding these 2 learners the overall classroom based success rate would have hit national benchmark
- Learner progression and destination data is inconsistent and does not present a clear measurement of progression for all learners. In 13/14 there was a 61% return of destination data which identified 32.23% learners as continuing learners, 3% part time work, 8% full time work, 1.5% FE, 1.1% HE and 1.56% Voluntary work. Since 12/13 and thereafter to the current year, 22% of learners have progressed to higher levels of learning. 127 learners from 13/14 have progressed to a higher level in 14/15. However neither the destination nor progression produced from Goldmine includes progression through entry levels
- Measuring outcomes to quantify the impact of community learning provision is not fully developed
- With growing emphasis on getting people into work, employer engagement needs to be developed to increase opportunities to provide learners with work experience /placements as integral parts of their learning programmes or as progression opportunities

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Grade: 2

Key Strengths

- Teaching, learning and assessment across all areas are good with outstanding teaching evidence in many areas. 97% of Teaching and Learning Observations graded good or better
- Committed well qualified and highly motivated staff who have excellent subject knowledge used effectively to enhance the learner experience
- Where the percentage of responses to learner surveys was high or discussion groups and flashmobs used to gather feedback from learners, learners expressed very high levels of satisfaction with the quality of teaching
- Strong commitment to continuous professional development that impacts on teaching and learning
- The promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion within most curriculum areas is good. Learners have a good understanding reinforced through tutors and curriculum content
- Effective learner induction and initial assessment inform the development of personal learning plans that support the learning to achieve their learning goals
- Learners feel well supported in their learning and value the care and support that tutors give to help them achieve their learning goals
- Assessment practice on accredited programmes is of a high standard and internal verification processes are supported by excellent external verification reports from awarding bodies
- Matrix assessment was carried out in 13/14 and the Matrix standard achieved

Key Areas for Improvement

- Learner progress is monitored and learners are set appropriate targets and receive constructive feedback throughout their learning. However the recording of learner progress is inconsistent in some areas and targets not sufficiently SMART to effectively measure progress
- Some curriculum areas had low responses to learner surveys and although those who did respond were extremely satisfied with the quality of teaching and learning; the service is working to increase learner feedback
- Internal assessment has highlighted opportunities to promote and integrate English and maths better in some curriculum areas
- There is effective use of ICT in some curriculum areas but it is inconsistent
- A more systematic approach to referring learners across the Service to other curriculum areas that support employability and develop learners skills is needed

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Grade: 2

Key Strengths

- There is a clear strategy in place for improving outcomes for individuals and local communities based on a strong ethos of widening participation and social and economic regeneration. 58.13% of learners in Adult Skills provision come from priority wards and retention, success and achievement rates are high
- The Service contributes effectively to a range of corporate objectives and departmental strategies within the Council in particular in the areas of digital inclusion, mental health and wellbeing, community cohesion and economic regeneration through the delivery of learning that supports skills for employment, everyday living skills, confidence building and personal development, and active citizenship
- Effective budget and resources management with funding targets met year on year
- Good use of local, regional and national data to inform the planning process
- Effective curriculum management has led to an increase in the overall success rate for 19+ learners of 4.1% from 12/13 and retention and achievement and success rates are all above national benchmark
- The promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion is good. EDI training is mandatory for all tutors and there are high expectations that all learners will achieve their full potential within the Service. Retention, success and achievement data are regularly monitored to identify any underachievement amongst specific groups of learners and actions taken to address any areas of concern
- Learners feel safe and are supported by very effective arrangements for safeguarding
- Good partnership arrangements in place within both the community and voluntary sector and other departments within the Council to support the development of flexible, responsive provision
- Learner achievements are recognised and celebrated through a wide range of events and activities, supported by the Leader of the Council and other senior managers.
- Challenging funding targets achieved in Adult Skills provision with learning programmes focused on key government priorities including the successful introduction of Traineeships in partnership with other Council departments
- Very effective management of Brighter Futures Big Lottery Funded project which is targeted at people in non settled accommodation, people with mental health needs, people with alcohol and substance abuse issues, ex offenders. The project takes a holistic approach to learning, volunteering, wellbeing and employment with progress in learning playing a key role. Impact of the project on participants lives is clearly demonstrated through improvements in wellbeing, self confidence and achievement of qualifications and/or progression into further learning

Key Areas for Improvement

- A more rigorous system for the performance management of tutors has been developed but this needs to be fully embedded to assess the impact on teaching and learning
- Enhance the quality assurance process for observations to improve feedback to tutors and subsequent individual development planning and follow-up
- Increase in participation in learning from people living in priority wards is good in specific areas but not sufficiently developed across the Service, particularly in Adult Safeguarded Learning overall (ASL). In ASL 34.4% of learners came from priority wards, which is a 2.4% decrease on the previous year. In ASB provision, participation is at 58.13% There is a slight decrease in new learners enrolling on courses although the percentage is still high at 79% in ASB provision and 60% in ASL provision
- A Community Learning Partnership is in place to ensure a more coordinated approach to the planning and delivery of learning and links closely to economic development priorities for the Borough. However there is room to improve the work of the group
- Engagement with local businesses requires further development in line with the current strategy to ensure that the curriculum offer meets their needs and develops skills that are valued in the workplace
- More stakeholder involvement in the SAR process to influence improvements and help shape provision
- The Service needs to align its operational practice within the new department structures to support and strengthen governance and accountability

Overall effectiveness

Grade: 2

- Challenging improvement targets are set and following a dip in success rates in 2012-13, overall retention, achievement and success rates for 13/14 are good to outstanding. In most areas of learning, retention, achievement and success rates are above national benchmarks. Success rates for ESOL learners have improved but are still below national average by 1.8%
- Analysis of participation data in all areas of provision has identified that there is good participation in skills based provision (ASB) from people living in priority wards and in family learning but the shift to increase participation in other areas of ASL provision needs to be improved. The introduction of a small number of workshops (16) run as private enterprises by tutors particularly in the areas of arts and crafts and languages, has allowed funding to be moved over to targeted provision
- Learners' achievement of personal outcomes including building confidence and improving social and employability skills is good. Learners enjoy their courses and progress well towards their learning goals. However there are still improvements needed in capturing progress and achievement in some areas, particularly within non-accredited provision
- Work with employers is not sufficiently developed partially due to the large proportion of SMEs in the Borough; this impacts on curriculum design and opportunities for work experience and placements for learners

- Good progression opportunities are available in most curriculum areas with personal progression clearly demonstrated in much of community learning non-accredited provision. However the collection of progression and destination data needs to be improved
- No significant achievement gaps amongst specific groups of learners
- Teaching and learning across all provision is good to outstanding and grades are confirmed through the standardization/moderation process. Further development however is needed in the monitoring of lesson observations and ensuring that feedback to tutors clearly supports good action planning and professional development
- Learners express high levels of satisfaction with the quality of teaching and learning.
- Equality, diversity and inclusion are managed well both within the curriculum by tutors through good teaching and learning practice and within leadership and management ensuring that all learners can participate effectively in learning and succeed. All tutors have received EDI training
- Curriculum planning is effective in most areas and takes into account local needs.
- Robust approach to quality assurance is evident through the processes implemented by managers. Managers continually monitor performance to identify any concerns
- Feedback from learners on all aspects of their learning experience is good. However, although the percentage rate of learner survey returns have increased by 3% from 50% to 53%, there are still some curriculum areas where returns are lower. The use of flashmobs (speaking to learners unannounced as they leave classes) has supported the gathering of learner views and provided managers with a more accurate understanding of quality and performance
- There is very strong corporate commitment from senior management and elected members to provide effective governance of the Service. However the Service needs to align its operational practice within the new department structures to support and strengthen governance and accountability