

Warwickshire County Council

Adult and Community Learning Accountability Agreement 2025/26

www.warwickshire.gov.uk/adult-community-learning-5



Statement of Purpose

Warwickshire County Council's Adult and Community Learning Service (WACL) provides learning opportunities for adults across Warwickshire, supporting residents to improve their lives and outcomes, enabling them to engage in their local communities and contribute to the economy of the county. The service was recognised by OFSTED as being a 'Good' provider of education and skills at its last inspection in 2022.

The service actively supports the strategic objectives set in Warwickshire County Council's (WCC) Council Plan (2022-2027), Warwickshire Education Strategy 2024 – 2029, the three priorities identified in Warwickshire's Economic Growth Strategy, the draft Warwickshire Careers, Skills and Employment Strategy 2025-30 and also the objectives set in the West Midlands and Warwickshire Local Skills Improvement Plan 2023.

In addition, as WCC is a non-constituent member of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA), the service takes account of WMCA's Regional Skills Plan.

The service supports all of these plans by:

-  **improving educational outcomes**
-  **improving health and wellbeing and maintenance of health**
-  **combating social isolation and improving social cohesion**
-  **supporting people towards further learning and, where relevant, work**

Service Vision

We are highly responsive to the needs of our residents, their communities, employers and the local economy, through the delivery of high-quality learning opportunities in accessible locations across the county.

Service Strategic Aims and Objectives

The service will:

-  **1 Support a strong local economy**
-  **2 Support better opportunities and outcomes for adults living in Warwickshire and their families**
-  **3 Enable residents to live healthy, fulfilling and independent lives**
-  **4 Support local communities to be inclusive and engage those with highest needs**
-  **5 Support the development of a greener and more sustainable future.**



Context Setting: Local, National Priorities and Needs Analysis



Warwickshire is a growing County with an **estimated population of 617, 860** residents living and working in a diverse range of towns, villages and rural areas.

Overall Warwickshire is considered affluent, and the quality of life is generally good, but there is variation both across and within the five Districts and Boroughs. Six Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) rank in the **top 10% of most deprived LSOAs nationally**, all of which are in the north of the county.

Warwickshire has a strong economy with good growth and high levels of employment. **The employment rate between January 2024 and December 2024 was 81.4% compared to 75.4% nationally in the same period.**

Educational attainment in Warwickshire is high and the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training is lower than the national and regional average, but longstanding disparities remain within the County.

For the period **January 2024 to December 2024**, **5.5% of Warwickshire's population aged 16-64 had no formal qualifications compared to 6.7% nationally.** Furthermore, **52.6% of the population are qualified to at least Level 4 or higher, compared to 47.6% nationally.**

One of the challenges in Warwickshire is to increase the number of adults with a **least a level 3 qualification**. Currently some areas, such as Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough, have comparatively **high levels of adults without any qualifications, and large numbers of the workforce have little more than level 2** (e.g. GCSE grades 9-4 or A*-C; level 2 NVQ, intermediate apprenticeship)

(Source: DfE via State of Warwickshire dashboard).

Service Data

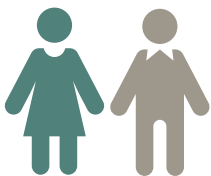
In 2023/24 the service had **2855 enrolments**. **78% of learners were female and 22% male.**

Learners living in each of the three most deprived deciles of the IMD participate at rates higher than the Warwickshire population average (**in total, 14.2% of the Warwickshire population and 20.8% of learners**). Of the learners aged below 66 declaring their highest level of qualification, **56% were below Level 2 and 67% below Level 3.**

(Source: ONS annual population survey 2025).

Context Setting:
Warwickshire

Estimated
POPULATION
617,800



6 LSOAs
RANK IN THE TOP 10%
of **most deprived** LSOAs nationally

WARWICKSHIRE
employment rate **81.4%**



compared to **75.4% nationally**

HIGH
educational attainment



with **no formal qualification**

Qualified to at least **LEVEL 4**

52.6% Warwickshire

47.6% Nationally

INCREASE
of adults
with a **least a**
level 3
qualification



NUNEATON & BEDWORTH BOROUGH
has **HIGH LEVELS** of adults
without **any qualifications**
large numbers of the workforce have **LITTLE MORE THAN LEVEL 2**
(e.g. GCSE grades 9-4 or A*-C; level 2 NVQ, intermediate apprenticeship)

(Source: ONS via Nomis/State of Warwickshire dashboard).

Local Priorities

Warwickshire County Council recognises the key role that adult learning has in supporting its residents. The Council's Plan has three strategic priorities, and the service works to support all three:

1 **We want Warwickshire to have a thriving economy and places that have the right jobs, skills, education and infrastructure.**

WACL provides support to individuals who want to acquire skills they need for the modern workforce. This includes those in work in need of new skills, people who are economically inactive or individuals new to Warwickshire; providing employment and careers support, aligned with the Warwickshire Economic Growth Strategy; helping people progress towards further learning and employment by developing essential skills, in line with the Local Skills Improvement Plan; and supporting communities and businesses to develop digital skills needed in an increasingly digital economy

2 **We want to be a County where all people can live their best lives; where communities and individuals are supported to live safely, healthily, happily and independently.**

Community learning offers a range of opportunities for families and individuals to learn skills and behaviours that support family cohesion and healthier lifestyles. Crucially, community learning provides mechanisms to reduce isolation, support mental health recovery and foster community interaction. It contributes to social cohesion by supporting the most vulnerable and disadvantaged adults to enjoy life, achieve, and live independently. Community learning helps to improve educational outcomes and contribute to the best start for all children, through family learning and intergenerational support. This approach supports the Council's Community Power model and promotes the health and independence of our communities.

3 **We want to be a County with a sustainable future so that our generation ensures future generations can live well and reap benefits of a sustainable and thriving Warwickshire.**

WACL can provide courses which can help individuals and families to navigate the changes and challenges which will impact on the world of work as well as our communities.



National Priorities

Nationally, Post-16 Education and Skills policy, in conjunction with wider post-18 skills initiatives are a critical element of the Local Government agenda with many references made to the importance of skills through key Government policy documents such as the 'Industrial Strategy'.

The DfE's Skills for Jobs: lifelong learning for opportunity and growth established distinct missions in support of the wider Creating Opportunity objectives around education and skills, with the specific aim for skills stating:

By 2030, the number of people successfully completing high-quality skills training will have significantly increased in every area of the UK. In England, this will lead to 200,000 more people successfully completing high-quality skills training annually, driven by 80,000 more people completing courses in the lowest skilled areas.

WACL plays a vital role in supporting adults to upskill and prepare for further study, particularly those with qualifications at Level 2 and below. By equipping individuals with the foundational skills and confidence needed to advance in education and employment, WACL contributes directly to national priorities.

The wider set of missions within The Skills England report will enable the recognised benefits of acquiring skills and education to be broadened to include other missions, such as improving healthy life expectancy, pride in place and wellbeing. This wider recognition of the benefits of learning will reinforce the value of 'First Step' community learning, bringing it closer to social prescribing models and contributing to the wider 'Health in All Policies' approach being developed within WCC.

There is also a renewed emphasis on the importance of increasing the overall number of workers within the economy with a minimum of a Level 3 qualification.

Taken together, these national approaches indicate that WACL will need to continue developing its focus on building accessible learning pathways that raise aspiration and enable the acquisition of life changing skills, qualifications and/or wider benefits such as improved health and wellbeing. Learning pathways will clearly identify learners' starting points and support progression to positive destinations. In order to increase its contribution to the national skills priorities, the service will continue to increase its understanding of the skills needs/demands within the local economy and how those needs can be met, including offering more essential skills up to and including Level 2 in English and Mathematics and up to and including Level 1 for Digital.



Approach to developing the Annual Accountability Statement

In January 2024 and March 2025, WACL undertook a review of county wide local, regional, and national data on skills, employment, and health. This analysis was supported by Warwickshire County Council's Business Intelligence service and Economy and Skills Team. The findings informed the strategic direction of the service and helped shape its key priorities and target outcomes, along with local priorities identified in Warwickshire's Economic Growth Strategy, the regional priorities from The West Midlands and Warwickshire Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), developed in collaboration with the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce (the designated Employer Representative Body) and national priorities from the Skills England report, the UK Industrial Strategy, and the Plan for Change.

WACL used the Further Education (FE) Provider Dashboard to support the development of its Accountability Agreement. This tool provides valuable insight into learner demographics, progression, and outcomes, helping to ensure that planning is data-driven and responsive to both local and national priorities.

This strategic direction builds on the foundation of the service's Statement of Intent 2022–2025, which was developed through a similar review process in 2022, endorsed by the service's advisory board, and reviewed to ensure continued relevance.

The advisory board includes representatives from national and local organisations across education, employment, health, and the voluntary sector. The Board is chaired by the Council's Portfolio Holder for Education. The Accountability Agreement 2025-26 was endorsed by the WACL Advisory Board in March 2025, and by The Executive Director for Children & Young People in June 2025.



The Council has excellent relationships with employers across the county and strong links with local colleges and private training providers. There is a clear understanding of each other's priorities and target groups, enabling a collaborative approach across the county with clear progression routes.

Strategic Links and Partnerships

Advisory Board members represent Department for Work and Pensions, National Careers Service, University of Warwick, Chamber of Commerce (LSIP and ERB), Council departments: Education, Libraries and Economy & Skills, Warwickshire Community and Voluntary Action (WCAVA).

Community organisations and venues.

Voluntary sector organisations.

Other Council departments e.g. Warwickshire Supported Employment Service; Children and Family Centres, Family Information Service, Education Services, and Warwickshire Migration Team.

Primary and secondary schools across the county, particularly in areas of highest needs.

Contribution to national, regional and local priorities

Service strategic aims and objectives	Impact and/or contribution towards national, regional and local priorities for learning and skills	Priorities impacted and reason for objective
 1 Support a strong local economy	To meet national, regional and local priorities, and to support a strong Warwickshire economy, WACL will continue to: • Embed employability skills and progression routes into all curriculum areas, including Connect to Work and WorkingWell. • Increase access to Careers Advice & Guidance from the National Careers Service (NCS) at three enrolment sessions and through 1:1 interviews at learning centres across the county. • Support individuals to gain employment opportunities, including self-employment and further learning and progress to better jobs. • Focus on people living in the most deprived neighbourhoods in Warwickshire (IMD lowest 30%). • Maintain engagement with economically inactive residents aged 19-24 years at 4.1%, and 50-59 years at 13%.	Supports the national, regional (LSIP) priorities to increase the number of residents in work, reducing dependency on public services and developing essential skills for employment, especially digital, numerical and communication skills.
	ACL will maintain provision that supports the local economy and meets the needs of unemployed adults: • Provide English, maths, ESOL, IT qualifications, and community learning programmes for 1,740 people. These programmes will be flexible, contextualized, available online, and offered year-round. • Collaborate with local employers like the NHS to refer individuals needing language, English, maths, and digital skills to secure employment. • Promote four courses by Coventry and Warwickshire Health and Social Care Employability Academy for NHS and social care jobs. • Support entrepreneurs and business start-ups with two Business and Branding courses to prepare individuals for self-employment by increasing confidence, developing communication skills, and enhancing social media proficiency. • Work with National Careers Service and JCP to promote local job fairs. • Collaborate with WCC's Economy & Skills Team (Skills Hub) and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to offer provision to meet the needs of local businesses and the essential skills learners need to progress into employment. • Pilot three introductory level 1 programmes to prepare learners for work or further learning as community interpreters, learning support/teaching assistants, and ESOL tutors. • Increase achievement rates on adult skills funded programmes from 82.7% in 2023-24 to 85.5% in 2024/25.	Supports the national, regional (LSIP) priorities to increase the number of residents in work, reducing dependency on public services. Supports the Council Plan priority thriving economy and places.

	ACL will continue to: • Maintain partnership with the Warwickshire Employability & Skills Team to provide skills development in response to employer requests. • Support adults with learning disabilities and/or autism and refer learners with mental health barriers to Connect to Work and WorkWell programmes. • Collaborate with Warwickshire Supported Employment Service (WSES) to offer three Preparation for Employment courses for adults with autism and learning disabilities.	These courses support national and regional priorities to improve life opportunities for individuals.
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2 Support better opportunities and outcomes for adults living in Warwickshire and their families.	We will: • Align curriculum design with local knowledge, skills, and behaviours that employers need, and LSIP priorities, to equip learners with the skills needed to thrive in the local economy and meet the evolving demands of employers.	Supports the national, regional (LSIP) priorities to increase the number of residents in work, reducing dependency on public services. Supports the Council Plan priority thriving economy and places.
	• Use Tailored Learning funding to maintain learner numbers at 115 for Independent Living Skills and Active Learning programmes for adults with disabilities and/or learning difficulties. • These programmes will deliver the skills needed to support personal development, increased independence, and employability, preparing individuals for employment or further learning, and supporting independent living. • Offer three Work Readiness courses for people with learning difficulties and disabilities to prepare them for employment. • Maintain learner numbers who self-declare a disability at 600	These courses support Council priorities and develop core transferable skills that support independence and reduce dependency on other public services

3 Enable residents to live healthy, fulfilling and independent lives.	ACL will use Skills and Tailored Learning funding to support older adults and community wellbeing: • Maintain participation in the adult and community learning programme for people aged 60+ at 29% to improve health and social wellbeing, reducing isolation and inactivity, ensuring they remain engaged and active within the community. • Use Tailored Learning Purposes and Outcomes data to analyse individual achievements and community impacts from 2025-26. • Provide learning opportunities that engage and build confidence, support health and wellbeing, and develop stronger communities. • Collaborate with the Public Health team to identify three priorities, groups, or learning opportunities across the county, focusing on high-need residents to participate and progress. • Work with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to meet the needs of benefit claimants taking their first steps back into work, staying informed about changes to benefits and consultations, particularly those focusing on supporting individuals on their health journey back to work and reducing long-term sickness. • Support individuals with mental health or health-related barriers and refer those seeking work to the Connect to Work and WorkWell programmes.	Supports council engagement priorities, 'Warwickshire is a great place to live and work'. Supports Warwickshire's Health and Wellbeing Strategy to help people improve mental health and wellbeing in our communities. Supports Warwickshire Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2021-26. Supports Public Health outcome Prevention: keeping people and communities healthy to help reduce the demand on our local health services. This aligns with the draft Warwickshire County Council (WCC) Employment & Skills Strategy).
4 Support local communities to be inclusive and engage those with highest needs.	The First Steps (Community Engagement and Learning) team will: • Use Tailored Learning funding to engage and build confidence and develop stronger communities for 700 learners in community based First Steps provision, offering classes at convenient times and locations (community centres, libraries, Family Centres) or online. • Maintain diverse provision in general interest, languages, arts and crafts, creative and well-being to reduce isolation, improve health, and develop knowledge of other cultures. • Support progression from First Steps provision by developing qualification and progression pathways where appropriate, that enable residents to advance into further learning and gain the skills and qualifications that will improve their life chances. • Use Tailored Learning Purposes and Outcomes data from 2025-26 to analyse achievements and community impacts.	Supports Warwickshire Education Strategy, Creating Opportunities and Warwickshire County Council priorities. National priority: upskills and prepare learners; and develop progression routes.

	The Family Learning team will collaborate with schools, children and family centres and other stakeholders, using Tailored Learning funding to improve outcomes for children and families: • Equip 650 parents and carers to support children's learning through Family Learning provision. • Raise early achievement in literacy and maths by targeting families who live in super output areas that fall within the 30% most deprived areas nationally. • Prioritise work in the most deprived areas of Warwickshire, ensuring 30% of Family Learning engagement supports families in the lowest 30% IMD areas (compared to 14.2% of the Warwickshire population who live in these areas).	Supports the WCC priority to improve attainment in Warwickshire schools. National priority: upskills and prepares learners.
	The Family Learning team will work in partnership to: • Enhance and expand work with the University of Warwick to develop learning pathways for individuals without level 3 qualifications to progress to degree level programmes, including Early Childhood. Child and Family: Mental Health, and Child and Family: Health and Wellbeing.	National priority: upskills and prepares learners.
	The Digital and Employability team will promote inclusion and develop essential digital skills: • Use Tailored Learning funding to develop short IT courses that increase confidence and support digital inclusion. • Engage digitally excluded residents by collaborating with the DWP Over 50s Champion and Disability Employment Advisor to support older adults and adults with disabilities in their employment journey. • Support returning to the workforce by delivering Essential Digital Skills Qualifications at Entry Level 3 and Level 1, and signpost learners to colleges for higher level digital training and qualifications. • Increase enrolments on digital courses from 247 in 2023/24 to 275 in 2025-26.	Supports the national, regional (LSIP) priorities to increase the number of residents in work, reducing dependency on public services and developing essential skills for employment, especially digital. Supports Warwickshire Education Strategy Creating Opportunities and the national priority Digital & Technology.

	The ESOL team will: • Use both Skills and Tailored Learning funding to develop essential English language skills (ESOL) for over 370 people from pre-entry to level 1, embed employability and work readiness skills, and signpost learners to other provision for wider skills development. • Continue to work with WCC's Migration team to support the integration of people from minority heritage backgrounds (including Afghanistan, Hong Kong, Syria, Ukraine) through a comprehensive language and life skills programme that responds to local needs across the county and to address social exclusion and improve employability.	Underpins national, regional and local priorities by upskilling people from minority heritage communities, enabling them to integrate into their local communities across the county.
	The English and maths team will: • Build on the success of the Multiply project to extend English and maths provision by offering four engagement and short Tailored Learning essential skills opportunities across the county. This approach aims to attract individuals with barriers to learning, such as shift workers, carers, and those with multiple jobs. • Increase learner numbers on Maths and English courses from 219 in 2023/24 to 250 in 2025/26. • Improve achievement rates in Functional Skills English and Maths courses to meet national qualification achievement rates, aiming to raise English achievement rates from 48.1% to 72.1% and Maths achievement rates from 52.5% to 70.6%.	English and maths provision underpins all national, regional and local priorities and gives residents the skills and qualifications they need to secure jobs, progress at work and lead independent lives

Support the development of a greener and more sustainable future	5	ACL will take proactive steps to promote environmental sustainability and foster the development of green skills across its curriculum. • Embed sustainability topics across all curriculum areas, including Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in teaching, learning, and working practices. • Engage and increase confidence, preparing individuals to develop the essential skills required to move into work. • Collaborate with stakeholders to identify essential skills and pathways to greener qualifications, raising awareness of 'green' careers.	This supports the Council, LSIP and government sustainable commitments and the Warwickshire Economic Growth Strategy.

Council Statement:

On behalf of Warwickshire County Council, it is hereby confirmed that the plan as set out above reflects the agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by Nigel Minns, the Executive Director for Children & Young People on 2nd June 2025.

The Warwickshire County Council Adult and Community Learning Accountability Agreement will be published on the Council's website within three months of the start of the new academic year.

Links to supporting documentation:

[Warwickshire County Council, Council Plan 2022-2027](#)

[State of Warwickshire Dashboard - InstantAtlas Warwickshire](#)

[Director of Public Health annual reports – Warwickshire County Council](#)

[Warwickshire's Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2021-26](#)

[West Midlands and Warwickshire Local Skills Improvement Plan May 2023](#)

[Warwickshire County Council Adult and Community Learning Service latest Ofsted report](#)

[Warwickshire County Council Economic Growth Strategy](#)

[Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-26 - WCCC-1350011118-2972](#)

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