



Children's Services

IDEA STORES

1. Executive Summary

Lifelong Learning Service Idea Stores exist in order to deliver educational provision to target groups including discrete community groups. A key part of this the annual quality cycle, culminating in the production of the annual Self Assessment Review (SAR). This involves a considerable amount of analysis and assessment of progress against public performance indicators.

We are funded to provide a range of programmes. These focus on areas of particular need, including disabled people and people with learning difficulties, young and elderly people, families from minority ethnic communities, people for whom English is not their first language and targeted courses in local priority Business sectors.

The curriculum is delivered in the following programme areas -

1. Creative and Performing Arts
2. ICT, Business & Languages
3. Health, Sport & Fitness
4. Community Learning and Crèche Provision
5. Family Learning

Our service users come from a diverse range of ages and we have targeted programmes aimed at

- Families with children aged up to 16,
- 16-19 year olds
- Adults aged 19+
- Adults aged 55+.

The Bangladeshi and Somali communities also have bespoke programmes with the objective of widening participation in learning. Men, traditionally under-represented in adult learning, have some targeted programmes and discrete provision exists for Special Needs and other disabilities.

A main focus of the Lifelong Learning Service is to widen participation in adult education and learning. Therefore, it is a key duty of the Service to promote race equality to ensure that local people have access to appropriate learning opportunities.

All the equality target groups are represented within the service users, however, the service does not capture information on learners' sexual orientation and faith. Therefore, these aspects are not assessed. Specific policies exist to address disadvantage caused by poverty, for example the fees policy and funding arrangements that are targeted at people on low incomes.

Teaching staff are either fully qualified or under-going teacher training. This means they are expected to apply high standards of professional conduct. The service also has monitoring measures to check that the teaching staff run courses that are inclusive and accessible to all members of the community. It would be considered professional misconduct if any member of teaching staff did not actively deal with issues around racial and other discrimination. Such issues would be dealt with through the racist incident reporting procedure and the complaints procedure.

Many classes include strong elements of mutual support amongst learners that extend beyond ethnic, cultural and religious parameters. This fosters a sense of camaraderie between learners and is actively encouraged by the teaching staff, who themselves are representative of diverse backgrounds. This is underpinned by a fees policy that actively encourages people on low incomes to participate by offering reduced or 'nil' fees.

2. Data Collection & Consultation

Data Collection

- 2001 Census Data
- Local Government Office (LGO) / Mayor's Office data
- QLS Management Information System
- Learner Satisfaction Surveys (Annually until 2006; now done termly) – analysis at course, programme and service level).
- Service Annual Self-Assessment Report – attached as appendix
- Learning & Skills Council (LSC) Learner Voice Survey
- LSC National, London-wide and local data – Local LSC web site
- Examination Data
- Classroom Observation Reports
- Course File Audits
- Individual Learning Plan (ILP) analysis
- Benchmarking
- Curriculum Financial Monitoring
- Curriculum Audit Reports
- Meeting Minutes – stores on the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and by curriculum teams
- Tutor Self – Evaluation and Course Reviews – subject to termly audit and held by curriculum teams / Quality Assurance Manager
- Tutor Staff Profiles
- Staff Development Records – held centrally and by curriculum teams
- OFSTED / ALI Inspection Reports (**O**ffice for Standards in **E**Ducation, **A**dult **L**earning Inspectorate)

Consultation

- Learner Satisfaction Surveys (up to 05/06 annual, now termly).
- Classroom Observation Reports
- Student feedback Records
- End and start of course Student Survey records
- LBTH Healthy Lifestyles Team Meetings
- Tower Hamlets PCT Mental Health Meetings
- Bromley by Bow Centre Meetings
- St Matthias School Sports Hall Meetings
- Idea Store Canary Wharf Learner Consultation Report
- Meetings with Tower Hamlets College
- LAP Area(s) Consultation
- Local needs analyses as new Idea Stores are proposed and brought on line
- Marketing surveys – questionnaires etc
- Consultation with local communities and business re: enterprise courses
- "Link Age" – a 'Head Start programme for the 50+
- Regular meetings with local union representatives

Learner satisfaction surveys are asked at the start of courses (LSS1) and (LSS2). These include questions about the quality of information, advice and guidance, buildings and the crèche. Questions also cover issues such as the personal learning goals of learners (and if they were met), reasons why someone does a course and whether they are happy with the feedback and support given whilst on the course. This also includes indicators about why someone chose to do the course in the first place and what they plan to do next.

In the final term of 05/06, 1102 questionnaires were returned. This represents an average of 4 per course (although not all tutors distributed the forms before the end of their programme). In 06/07 the forms are being issued each term and fed back to managers during the year in order to improve outcomes for learners.

- Overall, satisfaction with all elements was 83%. This is higher than previous years.
- Across the provision there was an enormous variation in the reasons why someone decided to follow a programme. The overwhelming reasons why someone chose to do a course were to gain new skills and knowledge (52%) and to pursue a personal interest (49%). Improving employment prospects (15%) and gaining a qualification (14%) were relatively minor reasons.
- The following comments related to questions scaled 5 (very satisfied) to 1 (very unsatisfied), with 3 being an 'average' score:
 - **93% felt the course was inclusive.**
 - 90% felt the tutor helped them to get the most from it.
 - 89% felt the course improved their ability to study.
 - 86% felt the course materials were of a high quality.
 - 87% felt the tutor had understood their personal learning style.
 - 90% felt the lessons were varied and interesting.
 - 82% thought their personal objectives had been met.

However –

- 79% thought the advice they received prior to the course was adequate.
- 71% felt that the quality of advice for their next course was satisfactory.

Hence, information advice and guidance is 'flagged up' as a potential area for improvement.

3. Key Findings

Gaps in information:

- Faith and Religion and Sexual Orientation – this information is not requested of learners.
- White other – does not currently capture diversity of European ethnicity.
- Additional Support- inaccuracies appear in the disability data collection as learners do not appear to declare at enrolment.
- We do not currently monitor ICT access of learners and this may impact target groups.

Action needed:

(Include short-term measures to be taken to provide a baseline where no or little information is available)

- Tighter monitoring of learner access to ICT.
- Staff training to support the completion of the enrolment form sections relating to the Equalities Agenda.
- Engagement with various groups – local Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual (LGB) people, Bangladeshi and other Muslim groups – in order to provide some data that represents these groups.
- Improve the link between learner declaring the need for additional support at enrolment and the teams / staff responsible for providing the support.

Possible Barriers -

Gender:

- Men and women participating together in some areas of provision
- Muslim Women - barriers include participating in exercise and health courses like complementary therapies with male learners/staff

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Race:

- Bangladeshi learners Race

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Disability

- Learners with physical disabilities, older learners, learners with health concerns

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Age

- Barriers include access at older sites (no lift at Shadwell restricts access to some curriculum provision)

All Equality Strands:

- Time and location of courses
- Childcare, Crèche times and locations
- Transportation (Especially for technical courses at Bethnal Green)
- Cultural differences between target community groups Race
- Knowledge of Borough
- Teaching and learning styles
- Some equipment (e.g. older laptops) is not always 'fit for purpose'
- Lack of knowledge and awareness of specialist equipment by staff and learners
- The primary focus of LLS / IS is to widen participation. This involves the generation, on-going review and implementation of a 3 year Plan for the LSC (as measured by impact measures and regular audit). This plan clearly shows how the Service will reach the local population.
- There are also issues around the older 'adult-education' buildings regarding access for disabled and elderly people. 'Reasonable Adjustments' have been made, but the older buildings are limited by their original construction and previous uses / changes. This has the affect of limiting access to parts of the curriculum. Where changes meet 'value for money' criteria, adjustments have been made.
- In order to improve access, the Service is gradually moving to new purpose build sites – Idea Stores (IS). These are 100% accessible and fully compliant with current legislation. Four Idea Stores are now operational.

4. Conclusions & Recommendations

Areas requiring further attention?

1. The monitoring of student enrolment data especially additional support
2. Linked to the above, staff enrolment and lifelong Learning awareness training especially for Idea Store staff
3. The accessibility of old buildings
4. Under representation by the Bangladeshi community
5. Under representation by Men.

Summary of recommendations for improvement

1. Regular review of accurate data focusing on under-represented target groups
2. Curriculum review
3. Course review
4. Monitor workforce
5. Improve data collection

Action Plan

| Recommendation | Key activity | Progress milestones |
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| Establishment of procedures that enable access and inclusion to be maximised within organisational limitations | Embedding of systems as regards directing learners for support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of protocols for access to available support – Spring 2007 • A&I Awareness / DDA Update training for Idea Store, Curriculum and other staff – Summer 2007 |
| Cross service Equalities “update training” as regards the disability ‘model’ being applied in LBTH | Consistent use of non-pejorative terms. E.g. ‘disabled person’ rather than ‘person with a disability’ etc | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training in place – Autumn 2008 • Consistent use of language – next EIA – March 2010 |
| Replace older Adult Education buildings with modern DDA Compliant and fully Accessible Idea Stores units | Replacement of Bethnal Green and Shadwell Centres | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure funding commitments • Create project plans • Start / complete construction by 2012 |
| Train staff on DDA issues and customer service methods for encouraging | Roll out of Idea Store Training for Idea Store staff, Supervisors and | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training programme goes live in new financial year (April 2007) – when large numbers |

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| the public to complete the voluntary sections of the enrolment form | Managers | <p>of staff move from temporary to permanent contracts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement HR tracking system with Equalities strands clearly identified on HR / IS Training reports |
| Amend the annual Self Assessment cycle to embed the 6 equalities strands into existing strategic QA processes | Inclusion of Equalities issues when the SAR process is revised and updated to bring it in line with the OFSTED Quality Improvement agenda | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicit reference to the Equalities strands within the SAR – Autumn 2007 • Production of Equalities reports from the MIS system – Spring 2007 |
| Incorporate the 6 Equalities strands into existing plans to create user, tutor and other focus / representative groups. | Select representatives from under-represented Equalities groups to be active on these groups. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production of recommendations for courses targeted at under-represented groups – Summer 2007 • Termly focus groups with key stakeholders – Autumn 2007 |
| To increase the participation of men and the Bangladeshi Community in the curriculum provision | Creation of a Idea Store 'Bangladeshi Men's forum' | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting – Autumn 2007 |
| Producing Marketing plans and materials targeted at groups NOT currently being 'addressed' | Production of marketing materials targeted at priority groups NOT currently serviced (e.g. LGB etc) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Production of materials targeted at Equalities groups NOT Currently targeted – January 2008 • Amend marketing plans to include reference to the Equalities strands – Autumn 2007 |