

Community Learning Programme - Lifelong Learning

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Context and background

Cardiff University's Division of Lifelong Learning (LEARN) exists to provide, support and facilitate high-quality, accessible, affordable and flexible higher education (HE) for a diverse range of adult learners and communities.

A network of community partnerships underpin this provision, including the Welsh Refugee Council (WRC), South Riverside Community Development Centre (SRCDC), Caer Heritage Centre, Oasis and Grangetown Pavilion.

Community learning is integral to Cardiff University, ensuring we are open to local communities. This programme could not exist without numerous partner organisations. Community and outreach work often happens under the radar but provides amazing opportunities for the students we support.

LEARN community programme

This flexible, innovative programme is based on a set of 10-credit, Level 3 micro-credentials (or modules). Successfully co-created with our community, the programme aims to support deprived communities in quintiles 1 and 2 of the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation (WIMD), thereby supporting students into work, college or university, who would have been unable to access higher education without this free provision.

In 2024-25 LEARN had 204 enrolments for its community programme. 16 modules have been delivered in this academic year, with some being delivered multiple times as shown in Table 1.



Table 1: Community Learning Programme 2024-25

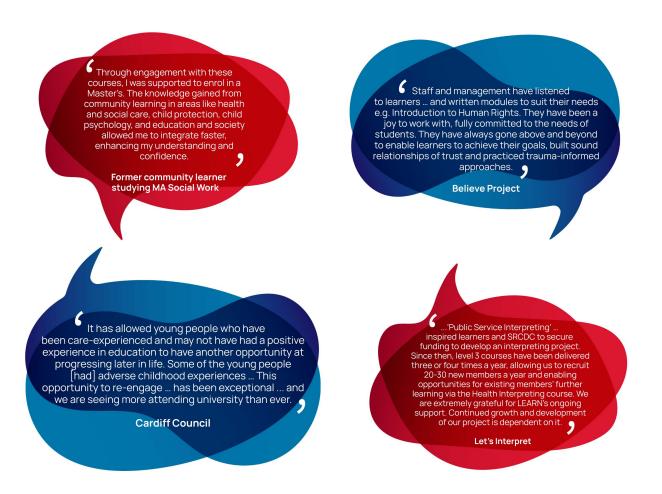
Module	Number of Occurrences
Academic English for Adults I (IELTS preparation classes)	1
Academic English for Adults II (IELTS preparation classes)	1
Academic English for Adults III (IELTS preparation classes)	1
Academic English for Adults IV (IELTS preparation classes)	1
Academic English for Adults V (IELTS preparation classes)	1
Fundamentals of Personal Finance	2
Introduction to Public Service Interpreting	4
Introduction to Health Interpreting	1
Introduction to Criminology	1
Childs Play	2
Introduction to Human Rights	1
Careers In the Legal Sector	1
Careers In Education	1
Careers in the Legal Sector	1
Careers in Health and Social Care	3
Careers In Childcare	1
Total	23

89% of 2024-25 students are from WIMD quintile 1 or 2 communities; 85% of students are Black, Asian or from a minority ethnic background and 49% are from Cardiff University's priority groups for widening participation: care experienced, carers, veterans, estranged young people and asylum seekers. Additionally, 51% of all students are sanctuary seekers - refugees and asylum seekers combined.



Impact

In 2023-24, 15 community learners progressed to Level 4, undergraduate and postgraduate studies at Cardiff University. In addition to aiding transition into HE, LEARN community courses provide employability opportunities such as training interpreters for bilingual and multilingual communities. Co-produced provision empowers participants, improving their confidence. LEARN tutors' expertise, professionalism and knowledge of trauma-informed practice inspires and motivates under-represented students.



This case study has been provided to support sharing of micro-credential practice, as part of the work of the Medr-funded Micro-credentials Special Interest Group (MIC.SIG).

Find out more about the MIC.SIG on the QAA Cymru website.



