

## 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
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>

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.

“Through engagement with these courses, I was supported to enrol in a Master's. The knowledge gained from community learning in areas like health and social care, child protection, child psychology, and education and society allowed me to integrate faster, enhancing my understanding and confidence.”

Former community learner  
studying MA Social Work

“Staff and management have listened to learners ... and written modules to suit their needs e.g. Introduction to Human Rights. They have been a joy to work with, fully committed to the needs of students. They have always gone above and beyond to enable learners to achieve their goals, built sound relationships of trust and practiced trauma-informed approaches.”

Believe Project

“It has allowed young people who have been care-experienced and may not have had a positive experience in education to have another opportunity at progressing later in life. Some of the young people [had] adverse childhood experiences ... This opportunity to re-engage ... has been exceptional ... and we are seeing more attending university than ever.”

Cardiff Council

“... 'Public Service Interpreting' ... inspired learners and SRCDC to secure funding to develop an interpreting project. Since then, level 3 courses have been delivered three or four times a year, allowing us to recruit 20-30 new members a year and enabling opportunities for existing members' further learning via the Health Interpreting course. We are extremely grateful for LEARN's ongoing support. Continued growth and development of our project is dependent on it.”

Let's Interpret

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](#).

