

# GoLearn!

Leicestershire Adult Learning Service

# Learner Handbook 2025-26

[www.GoLearnLeicestershire.ac.uk](http://www.GoLearnLeicestershire.ac.uk)

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# Welcome to GoLearn!

Whether your goal this year is to gain an essential qualification in English and maths or you are learning a new skill for your own personal development in ICT, languages or arts and crafts, we are delighted to support you with your learning journey.

This handbook will provide you with useful information that we hope will help you to make the most of your time with us. It includes information on financial and practical support, safeguarding and data protection and explains how you can feedback to us about your experience with our service.

The most important people in our service are our learners, and we endeavour to put you at the centre of the learning process. When you enrol on a programme with us we will:

- Identify your personal learning needs and make reasonable adjustments to help you succeed
- Support you to develop your learning to the benefit of you and your community
- Process and hold your essential personal information safely and in keeping with our privacy policy
- Comply with all safeguarding procedures to ensure your safety
- Celebrate the personal achievements which matter to you
- Continually review and seek to improve our offer and your learning experience

Our staff will support you to achieve your learning goals and help you to progress to the next step, whether this is further learning, employment or volunteering.

I wish you every success with your learning.

**Paul Fleming**

**GoLearn! Head of Service**

## Disclaimer

Every effort has been made to ensure the information contained in any of our documents or online is correct at time of publishing, but we reserve the right to amend without prior notice any of the contents. This could include, for example, adjustments to fees, and cancelling or combining courses due to insufficient learner numbers. This is to maintain the highest possible value for money and quality of learning within the restrictions of available funding.

# Our Learning Charter

## What you can expect from us as a learner:

- To be treated with respect and without discrimination. We will actively challenge any discriminatory behaviour
- A welcoming and safe place to learn
- Clear and impartial advice about learning and learning support
- Experienced and suitably qualified tutors who teach you as an individual, offering a variety of teaching methods
- To develop your skills as an independent learner
- To have regular tutor feedback to help you to improve your skills and understanding
- To provide the essential resources and materials to help you learn
- To have your comments, compliments, concerns and complaints listened to and to know what action has been taken
- To ensure all your personal information is kept confidential and only shared with necessary third parties with your permission

## What we expect from you as a learner:

- To let us know if you need to miss a class so that your tutor can plan to help you – regular attendance is important; please avoid taking holidays during your course
- To arrive promptly or to let us know if there is a problem with being on time
- To make sure we always have your up-to-date contact details, as we may need to contact you urgently
- To talk to your tutor about your progress and anything that may affect your learning
- If you are enrolled on one of our courses with an exam, you will be expected to take your exam in person at one of our centres. To sit your exam, you'll be required to provide photo ID on the day itself. Please let us know about any previous qualifications, and if you are also studying elsewhere
- To respond to health and safety advice and procedures
- To use all computing and internet access safely and appropriately
- To show consideration to all learners and staff whilst using our car parks and speak to a member of staff if there are any issues
- To take good care of equipment and buildings

- To treat other learners and staff with respect at all times
- To give us feedback to help us to improve what we offer
- To complete set tasks outside of your course sessions as required to aid your learning and development
- To respond to requests for essential information, so we can plan future provision to meet the needs of the community
- To let us know why, if you wish to withdraw from your course

## General Course Information

Here is information that you need to know about how we administer your courses.

### Course cancellations, delays or mergers

We will make every effort to run all the courses advertised; however, occasionally we will have to cancel, delay or merge a course if not enough people enrol. We will endeavour to give you at least one week's notice of any changes and would recommend that you do not purchase materials or equipment relevant to your course until we confirm the course is running.

If a class is cancelled for any reason, such as tutor illness or bad weather, we will contact you to let you know and will make other arrangements wherever possible. This usually involves adding an additional session at the end of the course.

### Attendance and Withdrawals

Regular attendance is important to your learning and achievement so it is crucial that you commit fully to your course. However, we understand that in exceptional circumstances, it may not be possible for you to attend your sessions. In this case please **contact** your tutor or our Business Support Staff as soon as you know that you will not be able to attend. If you are repeatedly absent from your course, you may be withdrawn.

### Returning Learners

Please note, we are unable to fund places for learners returning to study the same accredited learning aim where this has previously been achieved. (Some exceptions apply). Following initial assessment, we will do our best to provide an appropriate course. However, where this is not possible, we will endeavour to signpost you to alternative providers.

## Residency Status

If you are not a UK national, you may be asked to provide additional proof of eligibility before you will be allowed to join a funded course.

We can fund learners who are resident in England who do not live in a devolved local authority. We will check your postcode to confirm that you are eligible to do a course with us.

## Confidentiality, Data Protection and GDPR

Every effort is taken to ensure any information you provide us with is kept secure and confidential in line with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). Some of the information you supply will be used by the Department for Education (DfE) to fulfil its statutory functions and they may share your Unique Learner Number (ULN) and Personal Learning Record with other education-related organisations.

We may contact you in the future to let you know about service news, new courses, or for surveys and research if you have given your permission for us to do so. You may change your contact preferences at any time.

Further details of how your information is processed can be found online via our [Privacy Notices and Policies](#) page.

## Refunds

If the unexpected happens and we are forced to close your course, you will be issued a refund. The process for receiving a refund is as follows:

- If we are issuing a refund within 6 months of taking a payment, we can refund directly to the card used to pay. Cash refunds are also available for payments under £20. This takes roughly 3-5 working days.
- If the payment is older than 6 months, or if it is a cash payment over £20, we will have to arrange a BACS transfer which will require us to ask for proof of your bank details (usually in the form of a statement) and create a request with the County Council's Finance Department to organise the refund. The BACS process involves several steps to safeguard against fraud, and the full process can take 4-6 weeks to complete.

Be aware that refunds are not normally given except when we are forced to close/cancel a course. Consideration is given to learners with exceptional circumstances but the final decision rests with the Programme Manager who oversees your course.

Refunds which are issued due to exceptional circumstances, or a personal decision to withdraw, are subject to an administration charge of £10 per course which will be taken out of the amount you are being refunded. The £10 administration charge does not apply to refunds which are the result of cancelled courses.

Resources or examination fees included in the course cost are not refundable under any circumstances.

For more information on refunds, visit our [Privacy Notices and Policies](#) page.

## Unique Learner Number

The Department for Education (DfE) funds many of our courses allowing us to offer significantly reduced course fees. The personal data you supply us is used by the DfE to create your Unique Learner Number (ULN), and to create and maintain a Personal Learning Record. This Personal Learning Record will allow you to track your achievements at any college or centre you may attend.

Please keep your ULN in a safe place, as you may be asked to provide this number at enrolment with us or with another provider.

## SMART Libraries

If your course takes place in one of [Leicestershire County Council's SMART Libraries](#) (Loughborough, Coalville, Hinckley and Wigston) then you will need a SMART Library Card. If you are not already a library member, then we will create a library card for you which you will receive after completing the SMART Libraries induction.

To create a new SMART Library Card, we will need to share some of your personal information with the Library service for the purposes of registration. For existing library members, please check your card is still valid to gain entry to the venue. Please contact us if you have any concerns about the SMART Library registration process.

## Supporting you as a learner

As a service there are many ways we actively support our learners, including:

- Providing information and advice before, during and after learning
- Discussing your learning needs to find out your starting points
- Offering local provision in different settings, day and evening, and distance learning courses whenever possible
- Offering reduced fees for those on low income or in receipt of certain benefits
- Offering support to overcome practical barriers to education such as providing help with computer skills, English and maths skills alongside classroom support for learners with additional needs
- Providing both accredited and non-accredited courses to suit the needs of our learners
- Challenging any form of discrimination

## Equality and Diversity

We are committed to meeting our duties under UK and other equality legislation and actively tackling discrimination in all its forms. The Equality Act 2010 gives people the right not to be treated less favourably by public authorities because of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and/or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The Human Rights Act 1998 also requires public authorities to uphold and respect the standards set out in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

## Additional Learning Support

If you have a learning difference, disability, or health condition including any mental health issues that might affect your learning, please let us know at enrolment or discuss this in confidence with your tutor. We will do everything we can to offer additional support or adjustments in your class if required.

You may be eligible for:

- Additional learning aids or equipment, such as screen readers or hearing loops
- Examination access arrangements, subject to approval by the examination body
- Individual support in your class such as a learning support assistant to help with notetaking or extra instruction, signer etc.
- Help with reading, writing or maths

We also have a wide range of learning aids (pen grips, coloured overlays, reading glasses, etc.) available in centres for you to borrow if needed. Please talk to your tutor in the first instance if you are worried about your progress or are not happy with any aspect of your course. Please note that we will need reasonable notice to put appropriate support in place.

You can find out more about how we can support learning needs by visiting our **Additional Learning Support** page.

## Online Learning

Some of our classes are delivered online. It is important to check the detailed course information prior to enrolment to ensure you have a laptop or desktop computer. We strongly recommend against participating in an online course using a smartphone or tablet. You will also need a reliable internet connection to participate in the course. In the unlikely event of a failure of our IT systems, we will take appropriate actions to minimise impact on your learning. Recorded sessions may be shared with Adult Learning staff for quality assurance purposes.



If you do not have access to a computer or a laptop at home, and need one to participate in your online course, please let us know prior to your course starting. In certain cases, we may be able to loan you a laptop for the duration of your course.

## **Virtual Learning Environment – (also known as ‘Moodle’)**

Leicestershire Adult Learning Service has an online Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), which can help you with your learning. If your course is supported by the VLE, your tutor will be able to give you information on how to access your course page. Learners can also use the VLE to find information on:

- E-Safety and Acceptable Use of Information Technology
- Information, Advice and Guidance
- Safeguarding, including Prevent

Visit our **Virtual Learning Environment** today to explore.

## **Accreditation and Exams**

If you have enrolled onto one of our accredited (qualification) courses, you are expected to take the exam. The exam may not be at the same centre that you attend your course, so you will need to make arrangements for this. You will be told well in advance when and where your exam takes place. Help with transport costs may be available.

If you are eligible for specific exam arrangements, such as additional support or extra time, please discuss this with your tutor at the start of your course, as supporting documentation may be required to apply. Application for extra allowances needs to be requested to exam boards in advance and evidence needs to be supplied at the time of requests. Applications can take six to eight weeks to be approved with some exam boards.

You will be required to present photo ID on the day of your exam, or you will not be able to sit your exam. If you do not have photo ID, then you will be required to complete a learner identification form. Please inform your tutor if this required.

It is important to inform us of any changes to your address or personal circumstances before your exam. If you do not attend your exam, or exam re-take, and you haven't informed us before-hand, you may incur a charge.

## Financial Support

Finance should never be a barrier to learning and if you think you would be unable to enrol on one of our courses due to the cost, we have several options to support you.

If you are in receipt of state benefits (such as Job Seeker's Allowance, Employment and Support Allowance and Universal Credit, amongst others) you could be entitled to enrol on your course for FREE, or at the Reduced Fee price.

If your earnings are less than £25,750 (before deductions), you can apply to do an accredited (qualification) course for FREE. Evidence of your income will be required within two weeks of starting the course, and some exclusions apply.

If you are not in receipt of state benefits, but your annual income is below £27,976.16 (before deductions), you may be entitled to pay the Reduced Cost for your course. In some cases, your course may be FREE.

If you need support with the cost of studying you can apply for the Discretionary Learner Support Fund (DLSF) which is available to all eligible learners and can reimburse the cost of childcare, travel, exam fees and resources.

If you feel that you might struggle to pay your course fee all at once, you are also able to pay in instalments if the total cost of your course is above £50.00.

For more detail on the support we can provide to help with costs visit our **Financial Support** page.

## Quality Assurance and Class Visits

As part of our quality assurance, managers conduct class visits to evaluate the quality of provision and inform further development. You may be asked questions about your progress and learning experience course if this happens.

Leicestershire Adult Learning Service is regulated and inspected by Ofsted on behalf of the government. Ofsted inspectors may visit your class and speak to you about your learning experience. We are committed to safeguarding our learners and ensuring standards are maintained in line with internal and external requirements. The service is committed to continuous quality improvement and excellence in teaching, learning and assessment to ensure all learners receive the best service possible to help them progress and achieve their individual goals.

# Safe Learning and Safeguarding

Learner safety and wellbeing is very important to us at GoLearn! There are lots of ways that we keep you safe in your lessons as well as outside the classroom.

## Health and Safety

All learners should have a healthy, safe, supportive and inclusive environment in which to learn. To help us to achieve this aim:

- All our teaching staff are checked by the Disclosure and Barring service (DBS), formerly known as the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)
- We train our staff in health and safety policies and procedures, safeguarding, first aid, risk assessment and personal safety
- We make sure that you always know how to leave the building safely if there is an emergency incident (lockdown) or a fire drill
- We ask that you respond positively to your tutor's advice about safe practice in your learning environment. For example, when using specialist materials or equipment
- Drive and park on sites with care - there may be children in the area
- Please note that parking spaces for disabled people are for use of Blue Badge holders only
- We are all responsible for our own health and safety, and the health and safety of others, so please let us know promptly if you identify anything that might be a danger or hazard, or if you have any concerns about your own safety or the safety of others

## Safeguarding

Abuse can take many forms: physical, sexual, discriminatory, psychological, emotional, or financial. We want our learners to feel able to discuss their concerns with a member of staff in confidence. If you have concerns about your own safety, or the safety of someone you know, please talk to your tutor or contact us on FREEPHONE 0800 988 0308 and ask to speak to a Safeguarding Officer.

## Prevent

We have a duty to raise awareness of the government Prevent strategy, which aims to stop people becoming drawn into committing violent or criminal acts or supporting extremism or terrorism. If you are worried about someone showing signs of being radicalised, or if you see or hear something that concerns you, please talk to your tutor or contact us on FREEPHONE 0800 988 0308 and ask to speak to a Safeguarding Officer.

‘If you see something, say something’ – your concerns will be taken seriously and treated in confidence.

## Fundamental British Values

As an organisation, we believe in and promote the four Fundamental British Values, which are defined as:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs, and for those without faith

We believe people of all races and cultures including those with or without faith should behave with mutual respect and tolerance. We are all subject to British civil and criminal law and are proud to be part of a democracy encouraging individual liberty.

## Safe Use of Information Technology

Where we provide appropriate access to ICT equipment for your course (including laptops, tablets, PCs etc.), and use of the virtual learning environment (VLE) and internet to help support your learning, we expect you to use this respectfully and responsibly.

We ask you:

- Not to store personal/confidential information (e.g. password, date of birth, telephone number, address, CVs etc.) on GoLearn equipment or the VLE
- To be responsible for updating your account on the VLE
- To save your work onto a memory stick or your own cloud storage and not onto the hard drive of the device you are working on. All work is automatically deleted from learner computers once it is shut down
- To only use the internet for matters relating to your course as directed by your tutor

- To abide by copyright regulations relating to software, video, music or other copyrighted material and not to install software onto a computer or laptop
- To only go to chatrooms when they are part of your course
- Not to send, forward or store information that contains pornographic, racist, extremist, violent, hacking, or illegal information
- To carefully consider the content that you upload or post on the VLE
- To not take photographs/videos/make any recording of any individuals or lessons without permission within our centres or when learning online, unless it is part of your learning
- To handle any ICT equipment provided to you with care and report to a tutor if equipment is damaged or requires attention
- Not to use AI (Artificial Intelligence) as part of your learning, unless directed to by a tutor

Please talk to your tutor if you feel unsure or unsafe while using the ICT equipment or the VLE. Information on how to stay safe online can be found on our e-safety page [www.leics-als.ac.uk/esafety](http://www.leics-als.ac.uk/esafety). We reserve the right to withdraw access to ICT equipment or the internet for individuals who disregard this policy.

## Physical Activity Checks

Learners taking part in a physical activity course must complete a Physical Activity Readiness Questionnaire (PARQ) so that their tutor is aware of any health issues. It is your responsibility to ensure that you let your tutor know of any health issues which may affect your learning.

## Telling us about criminal convictions

We are committed to equality of opportunity and encourage all learners to apply for our courses based on personal motivations and ambitions, not on their background or personal circumstances.

Having a criminal record will not automatically stop you from studying with us and under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 you do not have to declare spent convictions. It is, however, a requirement that all learners disclose any unspent criminal convictions, pending convictions or bail conditions as a part of the standard application/enrolment process or if their circumstances change whilst studying with us.

We will consider any information disclosed in a sensitive and confidential manner including the details of the offence, the time elapsed and the nature of the course you wish to study. If we determine that the information disclosed means that your chosen course is not suitable then we will work with you, and potentially other

organisations, to discuss alternatives. Failure to reveal information could lead to you being excluded from a course.

If you are in any doubt as to whether you need to disclose anything, please speak to your tutor in confidence or contact us on FREEPHONE 0800 988 0308 and ask to speak to a Safeguarding Officer.

## **Liability Disclaimer**

We take all reasonable steps to provide the correct guidance and instructions in relation to the tasks to be performed by participants on our courses. Should any type of loss, injury or damage to you or any third party occur as a result of undertaking any of our courses of learning, we shall not be liable or responsible.

This is true whether or not we or any other party are involved in creating, designing, producing and presenting these courses, including all related instructions, guidance and material. We shall not be liable for any such loss, injury or damage caused to you or any other party because you have not followed the guidance and instructions issued by us. This includes, without limitation, any other direct, indirect or consequential loss whether the loss is financial, economic, damage to property or otherwise.

# Tell us what you think

If you think we have done a good job, or if you think we can do something better, we would love to hear from you. Your feedback is an important part of our quality assurance and allows us to spot any problems or opportunities as they arise. There are a number of ways you can let us know how we are doing.

## Feedback

All feedback given to the service is treated in the strictest confidence and only shared with those for whom the information is intended.

Below is a list of the regular ways we invite internal feedback.

You can submit feedback to us at any time throughout the year using our online **Learner Voice Survey**.

You can join one of our Learner Voice Forums, which are hosted twice a year and are an opportunity to discuss your experiences face-to-face in small focus groups.

- During, and at the end of your course, you will be asked to complete an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) where we ask for your reflections on your time with us. These are reviewed by Programme Managers and Senior Management for our annual Self-Assessment Reports.
- Three months after the end of your course, you will receive an email inviting you to take part in our Impact Survey. This questionnaire helps us to evaluate our courses and helps us to make changes.

Sometimes we may add your feedback to our 'You said, we did' displays in centres, to help inform other learners about the changes we are making. If we do use your feedback, it will be anonymised, unless you specifically ask us to contact you.

We may also give you opportunities throughout the year to participate in surveys from external agencies such as Ofsted or the Department for Education (DfE). These surveys are usually voluntary and allow our governing bodies to evaluate us as a service.

## Complaints

Whilst we do all we can to give our learners the best experience with us, occasionally things do go wrong. In these instances, we encourage all our learners to voice their concerns to us so that we can take steps to solve these problems and try to make sure they don't happen again.

To help us to improve the quality of our service, please follow this complaints procedure:

- Speak to your tutor or any staff member in confidence

If this does not resolve the issue, email [adultlearning@leics.gov.uk](mailto:adultlearning@leics.gov.uk) or call FREEphone 0800 988 0308 and ask to make a complaint.

If you feel you have still not received a satisfactory resolution then you can contact Paul Fleming, Head of Service for GoLearn!, or Leicestershire County Council's complaints team via the [www.leics.gov.uk](http://www.leics.gov.uk) site.

We aim to formally respond to all complaints within 5 working days. Where this is not possible, we will advise you of the issues and confirm an appropriate timeframe with you. If you prefer to communicate by post, please address all complaints to:

**Helen Couzens, GoLearn! Senior Business Manager,**

GoLearn! Adult Learning Service  
Room 700, The Rutland Building,  
County Hall, Glenfield,  
Leicestershire, LE3 8RL



## Useful Links

Below are some links that we think you may find interesting and useful during your time with us.

### Meet the Team

Put a face-to-a-name and meet [our leadership team](#).

### Dates For Your Diary

Have a look at [the key dates](#) you may need to be aware of for the coming year.

### Venues

Find details of all [our venues](#), including opening times, maps, travel advice, and accessibility needs.

### Ofsted

See the results of our last [Ofsted Inspection](#).

### Policies

Browse a catalogue of the service's [Privacy Notices and Policies](#).

### Document Library

View, download and print a wide array of service literature and [helpful documents](#).

### News

See the latest [news](#) and announcements from across GoLearn!

### Events

Have a peek at the special [events](#) we are planning throughout the year.

**County Hall  
Glenfield  
Leicester  
LE3 8RL**

**FREEPHONE 0800 988 0308**

**[adultlearning@leics.gov.uk](mailto:adultlearning@leics.gov.uk)**

**[www.GoLearnLeicestershire.ac.uk](http://www.GoLearnLeicestershire.ac.uk)**

**If you require information contained in this leaflet  
in another format please contact us.**

**Information correct at time of printing – July 2025**

