

Adult Education in Gloucestershire Accountability Statement 2026/27

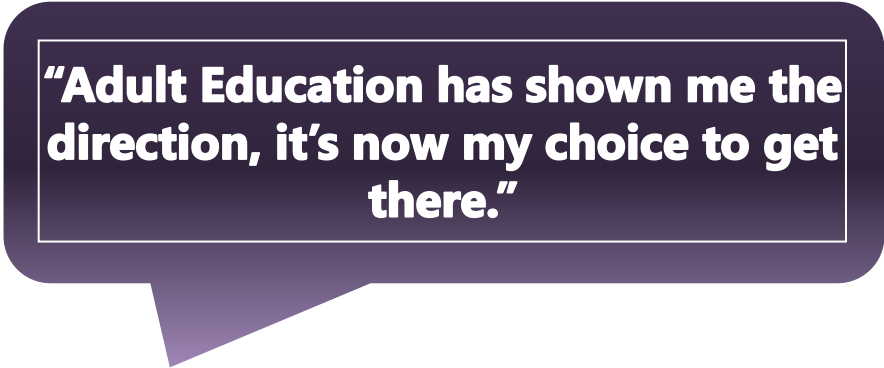
Transforming Lives through
Adult Education in
Gloucestershire



Strategic Aims and Objectives

- **Promote Social Mobility** by targeting disadvantaged and underrepresented groups
- **Promote Inclusive Learning and SEND Participation** by supporting learners with additional needs through inclusive provision aligned with the SEND reforms and Inclusive Mainstream Fund
- **Enhance Employability** through practical, accredited training and essential skills in English, maths, ESOL, and Digital Literacy
- **Support Health and Wellbeing** by offering learning that fosters mental health, reduces isolation, and builds communities
- **Align with Economic Needs** by developing vocational routes in priority sectors in collaboration with employers and local authorities
- **Foster Confidence and Engagement** through inclusive learning environments that encourage community participation.

These aims underpin planning, performance monitoring and accountability across all partnerships and provision.



“Adult Education has shown me the direction, it’s now my choice to get there.”

Statement of Purpose

To provide learning opportunities that improve people’s lives and outcomes, enabling people to participate in their communities and support growth and prosperity in Gloucestershire.

Service Vision

To become the provider of choice in Gloucestershire, delivering outstanding learning, inspiring individuals and transforming the lives of local communities to support growth and prosperity.

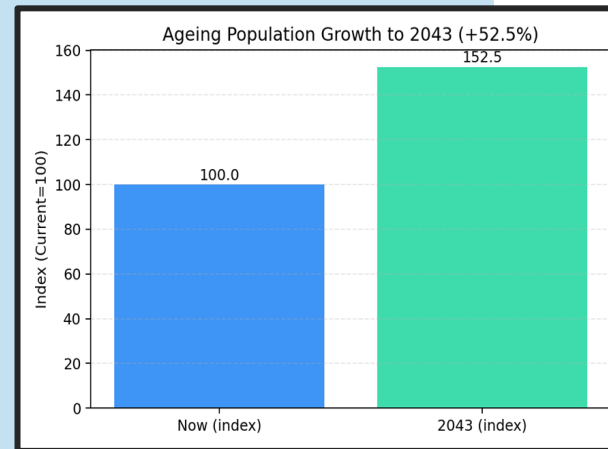
Adult Education in Gloucestershire...

Adult Education in Gloucestershire is situated within the county of Gloucestershire in the southwest of England. The county is predominantly rural, with six district councils and two urban centres: Cheltenham and Gloucester.

This year we support over 2,000 learners annually, totalling 3700 enrolments, through partnerships with employers, communities, and council services.



75%
of learners live in
England's most
deprived communities.



Local Needs Duty and Devolution Context

In line with the statutory **Local Needs Duty**, the Service reviews how effectively provision meets local skills, employment and community needs. This review is informed by the Gloucestershire LSIP, council intelligence on deprivation and economic inactivity, and partnership engagement across the county. As Gloucestershire prepares for increased devolved responsibility for adult skills, this approach ensures provision is responsive, inclusive and locally accountable.

How this evidence is used:

Local intelligence informs curriculum planning, commissioning decisions and partnership focus.

The County of Gloucestershire has a population of
around 646,600
Source: Census 2021

The Leadership Planning Process

Our planning aligns with economic opportunity and future skills through active engagement with the Gloucestershire Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), employer intelligence gathered by the designated Employer Representative Body, and council-wide strategies including the Local Growth Plan and the Council's long-term vision. This ensures continuous alignment with local priorities as LSIP evidence evolves.

This approach has led to sustained achievement rates above the national benchmarks.

Learner Demographics

In-depth analysis from a wide range of sources, including labour market intelligence, council education datasets, employer insight and Jobcentre Plus intelligence, provides a detailed understanding of demographic and economic need.

Council Objectives

An annual service plan is prepared and this feeds into the Directorate and Council wide delivery plans and commissioning intentions.

Curriculum Planning

Leaders design and adapt the curriculum. The Service's annual plan is reviewed by the management team and the Governance and Advisory Board (GAB) to ensure that courses and learning programmes meet local community and employer needs and take account of emerging/increasing demand (e.g. ESOL provision for Afghan refugees, cost-of-living support for residents).

Targets and Performance

The Adult Education management team undertakes a review of previous overall performance, historical Key Performance Indicators, and emerging or increasing skills needs aligned with Council priorities. This analysis informs the development of new targets for the forthcoming year.



Benchmarking

Adult Education in Gloucestershire undertakes periodic benchmarking against comparable local authority adult education services through the Lincolnshire County Council Benchmarking Club. Benchmarking focuses on learner outcomes, participation, achievement, and value for money.

Performance review cycles are embedded throughout the academic year to track outcomes, identify emerging risks, and drive responsive actions. Clear accountability structures define roles, responsibilities, and reporting expectations, ensuring that all individuals and teams understand their contribution to achieving high-quality performance and organisational improvement.

Supporting SEND and Inclusive Provision

Supporting learners with **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)** Adult Education in Gloucestershire is committed to supporting learners with SEND through inclusive, community-based provision that enables participation, progression and independence. In line with national accountability expectations and the introduction of the Inclusive Mainstream Fund (2026/27), the Service will work with partners across the local system to support the transition to the reformed SEND system.

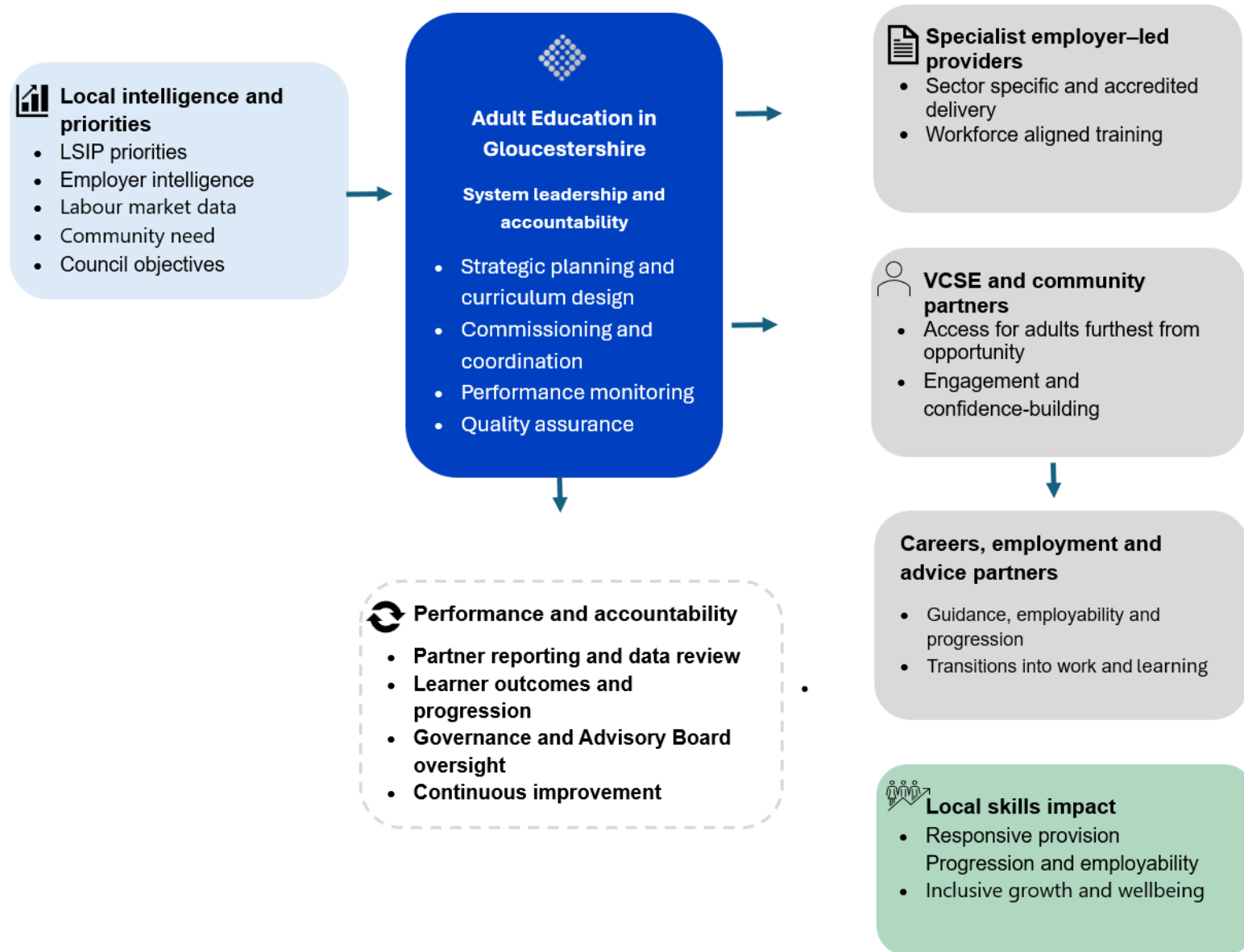
This includes:

- Strengthening inclusive teaching, learning and support across all provision
- Ensuring accessible pathways for learners with additional needs into adult learning and progression opportunities
- Working collaboratively with local authority SEND services, health partners and providers to offer joined-up support
- Aligning provision with local SEND priorities and preparation for adulthood outcomes (employment, independent living and community inclusion)
- Increase participation of SEND learners in mainstream provision

This approach ensures adult learning contributes to a coherent, inclusive education and skills system across Gloucestershire.

How our partnership model delivers local skills outcomes.

A system-led approach that turns local intelligence into accountable delivery through partners



Responding to LSIP Priorities

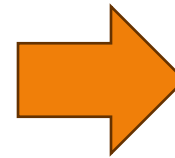
PLAN

REVIEW

Responding to Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) Priorities

In line with the DfE guidance for developing Local Skills Improvement Plans, Adult Education in Gloucestershire aligns its 2026/27 provision with the published Gloucestershire LSIP and with emerging priorities for the next LSIP cycle (2026–2029).

The service works with employers and partners through the designated Employer Representative Body (Business West) to ensure provision responds to identified workforce needs, skills gaps and progression pathways, in accordance with the Local Needs Duty under the Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022.



Operational Response to LSIP Priorities

- ❖ Monitor published and emerging LSIP priorities throughout 2026/27
- ❖ Map LSIP priorities against current curriculum and planned delivery
- ❖ Identify gaps, duplication and opportunities within the local system
- ❖ Adapt provision by expanding, redesigning or discontinuing courses where required
- ❖ Work collaboratively with other local providers to ensure coherent local coverage
- ❖ This approach aligns with DfE expectations for provider behaviour.

Delivered through employer, VCSE and specialist partners with performance monitored through AEiG governance and review cycles.

Our contribution to national, regional and local priorities

The priorities and activity outlined in the following pages reflect the agreed outcomes of the 2025/26 curriculum review and its alignment with Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) evidence, employer engagement and the Local Needs Duty. These outcomes have informed programme design, delivery focus and future development priorities for 2026/27.

Adult Education in Gloucestershire plays a unique role in supporting residents furthest from opportunity by providing trusted, community-based learning that reduces barriers to engagement and enables progression into employment, further learning, and improved wellbeing.

Adult Education in Gloucestershire Strategic Aims and Objectives	2024/25 - What we delivered – the Impact and contribution:	All priorities below represent the service’s planned response to LSIP evidence, employer engagement and Local Needs Duty review outcomes:
<p>Building strong inclusive communities - advancing digital inclusion, ESOL integration, adult numeracy and Tailored learning to improve employability, wellbeing and participation.</p>	<p>Adult Education in Gloucestershire delivered targeted learning to improve digital inclusion, ESOL integration, wellbeing, and participation among disadvantaged and under-represented adults across the county.</p> <p>Key impacts included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Increased access to digital skills learning for adults experiencing digital exclusion and low confidence ❖ ESOL provision supporting refugee, migrant, and newly settled communities to develop everyday English, employability skills, and community engagement ❖ Community-based wellbeing and tailored learning programmes improving confidence, mental wellbeing, and social connection ❖ Strengthened partnerships with VCSE organisations to extend reach into priority communities and reduce barriers to participation. 	<p>Drawing on the 2025/26 curriculum review, LSIP evidence, and Local Needs Duty analysis, the Service will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Expand inclusive digital skills pathways to support progression into work and further learning ❖ Strengthen ESOL progression routes into employability, volunteering, and accredited provision ❖ Grow community wellbeing learning that supports mental health, confidence-building and social inclusion ❖ Deepen partnership activity with VCSE organisations to reach isolated adults and communities furthest from work.

Our contribution to national, regional and local priorities

<p>Adult Education in Gloucestershire Strategic Aims and Objectives:</p>	<p>2024/25 - What we delivered – the Impact and contribution:</p>	<p>All priorities below represent the Service’s planned response to LSIP evidence, employer engagement and Local Needs Duty review outcomes:</p>
<p>Supporting the climate change strategy and ensuring growth is sustainable.</p>	<p>Adult Education in Gloucestershire contributed to local climate and sustainability objectives by delivering community-based learning that supports environmentally responsible behaviours and awareness, including zero-waste food and sustainability-focused programmes. Alongside this, the Service continued to support skills development within local communities, enabling adults to build confidence, improve employability and prepare for progression into work or further learning.</p>	<p>Informed by the 2025/26 curriculum review, LSIP evidence and employer engagement, the Service will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Expand green skills and sustainability learning that supports workforce transition, employability and climate resilience ❖ Strengthen employer engagement through structured curriculum co-design, feedback, and advisory activity ❖ Ensure provision supports local labour market demand, progression routes and inclusive access to opportunity ❖ Review and adapt curriculum offer in response to emerging skills needs and LSIP refresh activity.
<p>Increasing Individual skills within local communities to meet labour market needs.</p>	<p>Adult Education in Gloucestershire supported individuals to build essential and vocational skills aligned to local labour market demand, improving employability, confidence, and progression opportunities for adults across the county. Provision focused on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Development of essential skills (English, maths, digital and employability skills) to support entry into work and progression ❖ Vocational learning and sector-relevant training aligned to priority areas identified through employer engagement and LSIP evidence ❖ Community-based delivery enabling adults furthest from the labour market to engage in learning and prepare for progression into employment, further learning, or apprenticeships. 	<p>Informed by the 2025/26 curriculum review, LSIP evidence and Local Needs Duty analysis, the Service will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Strengthen essential skills pathways as core employability enablers across all curriculum areas ❖ Align vocational and employability learning more closely with local labour market demand and priority sectors ❖ Enhance progression routes from community learning into accredited provision, employment support, apprenticeships and further education ❖ Work collaboratively with employers and partners to ensure provision remains responsive, inclusive and progression-focused.

Our contribution to national, regional and local priorities continued

These priorities reflect agreed curriculum review outcomes and align with wider council objectives for health, wellbeing and independent living.

Adult Education in Gloucestershire Strategic Aims and Objectives:	2024 / 2025 - What we delivered – the Impact and contribution:	All priorities below represent the Service’s planned response to LSIP evidence, employer engagement and Local needs Duty review outcomes:
<p>Meeting the needs of local employers</p>	<p>Adult Education in Gloucestershire worked with local employers and communities to deliver apprenticeships, accredited training and essential skills provision aligned to LSIP priorities and local workforce demand. Delivery focused on priority sectors including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Business administration and leadership ❖ Education, Early Years and teaching support ❖ Digital and ICT skills ❖ Health and Social Care. <p>Alongside this, the Service plays a preventative role in supporting health, wellbeing and independence through accessible, community-based learning that builds confidence, reduces isolation and improves quality of life, particularly for adults experiencing health, age-related or social barriers.</p>	<p>LSIP evidence and Local Needs Duty analysis, the service will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Align apprenticeships, vocational learning and employability provision with priority sectors and identified skills gaps ❖ Strengthen essential, digital and employability skills as core enablers of progression across all curriculum areas ❖ Enhance progression routes into employment, apprenticeships and further learning ❖ Deliver targeted community-based learning that promotes healthy ageing, independence and wellbeing ❖ Work collaboratively with employers and partners to ensure provision remains responsive, inclusive and future-focused.
<p>Engaging with local communities to promote healthy living and well-being, enabling them to live independently .</p>	<p>Community-based learning enabled adults to develop confidence, resilience and practical life skills, reducing social isolation and helping individuals facing health, age-related or wider barriers to remain active and independent.</p> <p>Provision supported wider health and social care activity by contributing to preventative approaches, strengthening community connections and enhancing quality of life.</p>	<p>The service delivery focus will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Support healthy ageing, independence and wellbeing through inclusive, community-based learning ❖ Reduce health inequalities and social isolation by engaging adults furthest from opportunity ❖ Strengthen life skills, confidence-building and resilience to support independent living ❖ Work collaboratively with partners to ensure provision contributes to preventative health and community resilience.

Priority Area: Digital and Technology

This priority reflects agreed curriculum review outcomes and aligns with the Gloucestershire LSIP (November 2025) and Local Needs Duty requirements.

The 2025 Gloucestershire Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), led by Business West as the designated Employer Representative Body, identifies **Digital and Cyber Technologies** as a critical and enabling priority for the county's economy.

The LSIP highlights that digital skills are required **across all sectors**, with demand in:

- ❖ Cyber security and digital professional services
- ❖ Data, software and IT support roles
- ❖ Digital skills applied within health, construction, manufacturing and professional services.

Employers reported shortages in **both entry-level digital capability and advanced technical skills**, as well as the need for improved digital confidence, adaptability and work-readiness across the workforce. The LSIP also identifies digital skills as fundamental to productivity, innovation and future growth across the Gloucestershire economy.

In response to LSIP evidence and employer engagement, Adult Education in Gloucestershire prioritises accessible digital learning that supports inclusion, employability and progression.

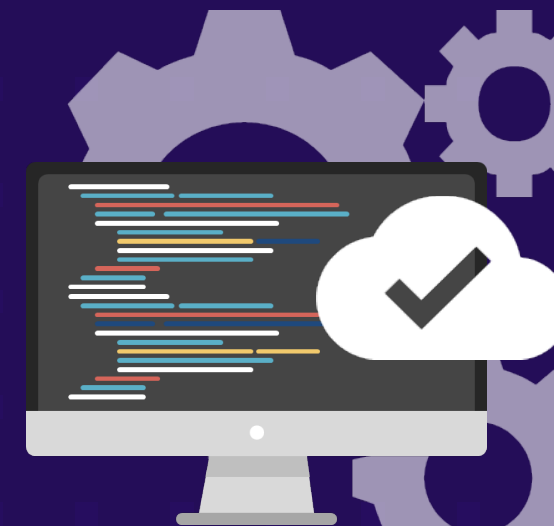
The Service will:

- ❖ Provide entry-level and core digital skills provision to support residents experiencing digital exclusion and low confidence
- ❖ Strengthen digital skills as a cross-cutting employability enabler, embed across community learning and vocational provision
- ❖ Support progression into further learning, training and employment in digital and digital-enabled roles
- ❖ Continue to invest in digital capability, equipment and staff development to ensure provision remains current and responsive.

This approach reflects the LSIP's emphasis on digital skills as both a sector priority and a critical enabling skill across the wider labour market.

¹ Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uks-digital-strategy/uk-digital-strategy> Gloucestershire

² LSIP Digital Sector Priority Findings – Business West



Priority Area: Health and Social Care

The Gloucestershire Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), led by Business West, identifies Health and Social Care as a sustained priority sector for the county, driven by an ageing population, increased demand for care services, workforce shortages and high replacement demand. The LSIP highlights:

- ❖ Ongoing demand across adult social care, care support roles and health-related occupations
- ❖ Skills shortages at both entry and progression levels
- ❖ The importance of work-readiness, essential skills, and progression routes to support recruitment and retention
- ❖ A growing need for training that supports quality, resilience and innovation within care services.

Health and Social Care is also recognised as a sector where adult education plays a preventative and enabling role, supporting wellbeing, independence and progression into employment.

In response to LSIP evidence and employer engagement, Adult Education in Gloucestershire supports the Health and Social Care system through a balanced approach to workforce development, employability and community wellbeing.

The Service will:

- ❖ Deliver accessible learning and training that supports entry into health and care roles and progression within the sector
- ❖ Strengthen essential, digital and employability skills as core enablers for care staff and those seeking employment
- ❖ Support progression pathways into accredited provision, further training and employment
- ❖ Contribute to preventative health and wellbeing objectives through community-based learning that builds confidence, resilience and independence
- ❖ Work collaboratively with employers, partners and local services to ensure provision remains responsive to changing workforce needs.

2) Source: One Gloucestershire, Integrated Social Care workforce strategy 2021

3) Source: Lightcast Economic Modelling – Occupation Overview



Priority Area: Science and Mathematics

The Gloucestershire Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), led by Business West, identifies essential skills, including English, mathematics and digital skills, as critical enablers of productivity, progression and economic participation across all sectors.

The LSIP highlights that:

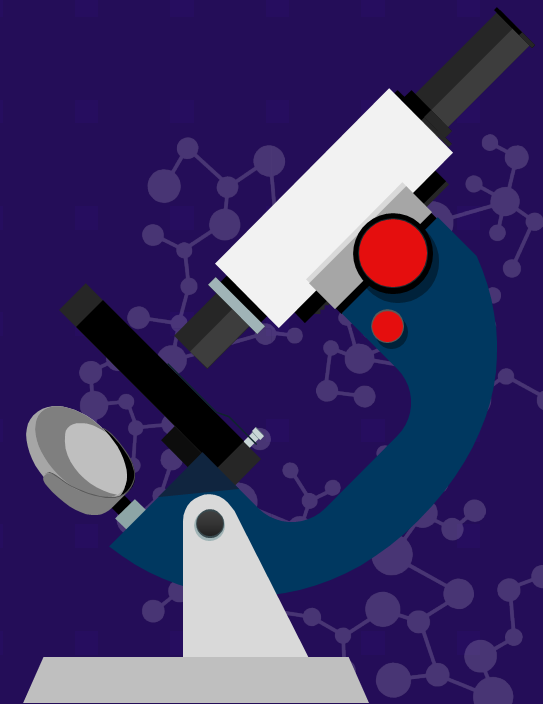
- ❖ Weak numeracy and confidence in maths remain significant barriers to employment, progression and workforce adaptability
- ❖ Employers place high value on work-readiness, problem-solving and functional skills, often alongside or ahead of qualifications
- ❖ Access to inclusive, confidence-building learning is essential to support individuals furthest from the labour market and to widen participation in technical and vocational pathways.

Improving essential skills is therefore central to addressing skills gaps, supporting progression, and enabling individuals to engage with higher-level learning and employment opportunities.

In response to LSIP evidence and curriculum review outcomes, Adult Education in Gloucestershire prioritises adult numeracy, confidence-building and essential skills development as core employability enablers.

The Service will:

- ❖ Deliver Functional Skills maths and English, alongside entry-level and non-accredited provision, to support adults with low confidence or prior negative learning experiences
- ❖ Embed maths, numeracy and problem-solving skills within vocational and employability programmes to support practical application in the workplace
- ❖ Provide targeted support and progression routes into accredited learning, employment preparation and further training
- ❖ Ensure provision remains accessible, inclusive and responsive, particularly for adults experiencing educational, social or economic disadvantage.



4) Source: <http://gw4.ac.uk/sww-sia/>

5) The consortia area is South-West of England (Cornwall & Isles of Scilly, Gloucestershire, Heart of the South-West, Swindon & Wiltshire, and West of England LEPs) and South-East Wales

6) Source: Social Market Foundation

7) DfE – *Guidance for developing a Local Skills Improvement Plan* (Nov 2025)

8) DfE – *Accountability Statements and the Local Needs Duty 2026–27*

9) Gloucestershire Local Skills Improvement Plan (Business West) Gloucestershire

10) LSIP Progress Reports