



Skills and Employment Committee

21 October 2024

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| Title: | Public Questions |
| Public Report: | Yes |

Question 1 – Antony Carpen, Resident

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| To | Skills and Employment Committee |
| | <p>Question:</p> <p>Re Agenda Item 6 - Director's Highlight Report, and the priorities set out by the new government, <i>“Please could the Committee write to the Department for Education to find out what its policy is on citizenship education for existing UK adult citizens - and in particular whether it will be commissioning work to make the existing GCSE in Citizenship studies available to adults at lifelong learning centres, and whether Combined Authorities will have the freedom to fund free places on such courses for those on basic skills programmes/without the old 5C GCSEs. According to Qasir Shah of University College London, in his paper of 2020, no such opportunities exist for citizenship education for adults, equivalent to that which is available in some schools via the GCSE in Citizenship Studies.”</i></p> |
| | <p>Response:</p> <p>The Department for Education’s Policy on Adult Education (age 19+) includes support for 4 legal entitlements to full funding for eligible adult learners.</p> <p>The entitlements are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• English and maths up to and including level 2 for individuals aged 19 and over who have not previously achieved a GCSE grade A* to C or grade 4 or higher, and/or have been assessed as having an existing skill level lower than grade 4 (even if they have previously achieved a GCSE or equivalent qualification in English or maths)• first full qualification at level 2 for individuals aged 19 to 23, and/or• first full qualification at level 3 for individuals aged 19 to 23• Essential Digital Skills qualifications (EDSQs) or Digital Functional Skills qualifications (DFSQs), up to and including level 1, for individuals aged 19 and over, who have digital skills assessed at below level 1 <p>It is the responsibility of all publicly funded education and training providers to ensure adult learners are ready for their next stage of education, employment or training. The curriculum should extend beyond the academic, technical or vocational. It should provide for learners’ broader development, enabling them to develop and discover their interests and talents.</p> <p>The curriculum and the provider’s wider work should support learners to develop their character – including their resilience, confidence and independence – and help them know how to keep physically and mentally healthy.</p> <p>The provider should prepare learners for life in modern Britain by equipping them to be responsible, respectful, active citizens who contribute positively to society; developing their understanding of fundamental British values; developing their understanding and appreciation of diversity; celebrating what we have in common and promoting respect for the different protected characteristics as defined in law.</p> |

There are multiple accredited qualifications available to adults, however, this provision is usually embedded across the curriculum rather than offered as a standalone qualification.

A GCSE in Citizenship Studies (L2) is 120 guided learning hours and whilst it could be funded under adult skills funding, there is insufficient demand for delivering such a qualification to adult learners and in many cases, it would only be co-funded costing the learner £360. Most adult learners prefer to develop their knowledge and skills in Citizenship through non-accredited routes. The preference is therefore to embed citizenship throughout the curriculum or to offer shorter qualifications such as an Award in Citizenship at 20 guided learning hours.

Question 2 – Bev Nicolson, Resident

To Skills and Employment Committee

Question:

“It is very hard to study subjects other than English, Maths and languages unless you can afford to attend an independent sixth from college. Neither schools or further education colleges have the funds for adult learners. If you were unfortunate to have done badly at school, and are now over 18, your options to increase the qualifications you have are extremely limited.

In the light of that, I would like to ask what is the scope of the Skills Funded provision? Will it be narrowly focussed on English and Maths or is there room to expand it to include other academic subjects?

Response:

The purpose of Adult Skills Fund (ASF) is to support adult learners to gain skills which will lead them to meaningful, sustained and relevant employment, or enable them to progress to further learning.

The Department for Education’s Policy on Adult Education (age 19+) includes support for 4 legal entitlements to full funding for eligible adult learners.

The entitlements are:

- English and maths up to and including level 2 for individuals aged 19 and over who have not previously achieved a GCSE grade A* to C or grade 4 or higher
- first full qualification at level 2 for individuals aged 19 to 23, and/or
- first full qualification at level 3 for individuals aged 19 to 23
- Essential Digital Skills qualifications (EDSQs) or Digital Functional Skills qualifications (DFSQs), up to and including level 1

Within ASF, further provision for tailored learning is available that supports wider outcomes such as to improve health and wellbeing, equip parents/carers to support their child’s learning and develop stronger communities.

Learning providers who deliver provision through the ASF include Further Education Colleges, Independent Training Providers and the third sector. Schools do not typically receive Adult Skills Funding.

The scope for ASF across Cambridgeshire & Peterborough is aligned to the national policy and includes flexibilities to fully fund:

- English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)
- First L2 and L3 qualifications
- A second L3 qualification for unemployed or economically inactive adults for in work progression or entry into growth or foundational sectors.
- Individuals and their dependents covered by the Armed Forces Covenant

In addition there is an offer of:

- Enhanced funding for 19-23yr olds for enrichment, tutorials and work experience
- Enhanced funding for a greater range of L3 qualifications
- Bursary funding for Care Leavers aged 19-22

More information can be found in the published Adult Skills Funding and Performance Rules, available on the CPCA website: [Skills Library - Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority \(cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk\)](http://cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk)

There are also other routes to skills development for adults. These include courses offered via Skills Bootcamps, Apprenticeships and numeracy courses offered through the current Multiply programme.

Funding for 19-25yr olds with an EHCP is managed separately and not by the Combined Authority.