

Annual Equality Data Report

**Oldham Lifelong Learning Service**

7 December 2021



**1 Introduction**

  

Oldham Lifelong Learning Service is committed to delivering excellent service to learners, whilst continuously improving the way we promote equality and celebrate diversity.

As part of our on-going commitment, we collect relevant equality information about our learners. This information helps us to understand if we are meeting learner needs and how we can improve the services we offer.

The Equality Act 2010 replaced previous anti-discriminatory laws with a single Act. It simplified the law, removing inconsistencies and making it easier for people to understand and comply with. It also strengthened the law in important ways, in order to help tackle discrimination and inequality. *(Source: “Equality Act 2010: Specific duties to support the equality duty….” Government Equalities Office)*

The specific duties of the Equality Act 2010 require the Service, as an Educational Provider, to publish information showing compliance with the Equality Duty, at least annually; and to set and publish equality objectives, at least every four years.

This document publishes information which demonstrates that the Service has due regard to the need to:-

* **eliminate unlawful discrimination**, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
* **advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it;

 and

* **foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

The information the Service currently collects will help inform the Service’s equality objectives as part of the Equality Act 2010. The Service currently collects information on some of the protected characteristics, namely Race, Gender, Age and Disability.

This summary provides information on participation of learners from some of the protected characteristics as well as their attainment.

If you have any questions or comments about Oldham Lifelong Learning Service and equality and diversity please contact:

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**2 The Service**

Oldham Lifelong Learning Service is a direct deliverer of post-19 learning opportunities. The Local Authority is committed to providing learning in the most appropriate and convenient locations for learners.

**Mission**

To deliver high quality, accessible local learning opportunities which enable adults to realise their potential and gain employment by developing their confidence, creativity, knowledge and skills.

**Objectives**

 **Objective 1**

To provide a relevant and flexibly delivered curriculum as a foundation for lifelong learning to meet the needs of the target groups and to encourage non-participating adults to return to learning and gain employment.

**Objective 2**

To maintain the Service’s commitment to quality assurance and continuous improvement in order to deliver a high-quality service to learners.

**Objective 3**

To develop further collaborative partnerships with the statutory sector, voluntary agencies and local communities to ensure coherent provision and progression for users of the service.

**Objective 4**

To consult learners, partners and local communities to ensure provision is responsive and meets identified needs.

**Objective 5**

To ensure that staff deliver high quality teaching and learning and provide stimulating and challenging opportunities for all learners.

**Objective 6**

To promote the Lifelong Learning Service ensuring that information, advice and guidance, marketing and publicity are relevant and accessible to all learners.

**Objective 7**

To ensure the delivery of a high quality, responsive and accessible service by the provision of appropriate resources.

**Policies and Procedures**

The Service operates a comprehensive range of policies and procedures including Equal Opportunity & Diversity, Harassment & Bullying, Safeguarding and Complaints. In addition, the Service assesses the equality impact of all decisions and policies regarding the services they offer.

**3 Equality Data**

Equality Data

**3.1 Who uses our Service? Learners and groups who are protected by the Equality Act 2010**

Learners attend one or more of the following types of courses: Adult Skills (AS) and Community Learning (CL).

**3.1.1 Ethnicity**

In 2020/21 academic year: -

* 68% of learners across all provision were from a black and minority ethnic (BME) background
* 68.7% of learners in Adult Skills provision were from a BME background
* 72.1% of learners in CL were from a BME background.

The Service provides courses across Oldham and targets learners in the disadvantaged areas of Oldham which have high representation of BME heritage residents. The Service continues to work in areas of deprivation where the population is largely White-British heritage.

The 2020 Population figures show that **76.6%** of Oldham’s population aged 19 and over were from a White Background and **23.4%** were from a Black and Minority Ethnic Background. However, the BME population in the top 10 most deprived wards in Oldham is 36%.

The Service offers provision in venues in communities with high levels of deprivation. **51.8%** (+2.8%) of learners across the Service’s courses (from all ethnic backgrounds) came from the **top five most deprived wards** in Oldham as defined by the index of multiple deprivation; **73.4%** (+3.6%) of our learners came from the **top 10 most deprived wards in Oldham**. In addition,**77.1%** (+3.6%) of our learners had a home **postcode** that appeared in the **disadvantage uplift table**.

**3.1.2 Gender**

In 2020/21 academic year;

* 20.25% of learners across all provision were male and 79.75% were female
* 20.34% of learners in AS were male; 79.66% were female
* 18.84% of learners in CL were male; 81.16% were female

The 2020 Population Projections indicate that Oldham had a total population of **180,321 residents aged 19 or over**. Of this population, **48% of Oldham’s population were male and 52% were female.**

Nationally, men continue to be traditionally under-represented in Adult and Community Learning. Recent RCU data (done on behalf of the DfE) shows that in 2018/19 academic year; there was 28% male representation in AEB and 27% in ACL provision. In 19/20; 21.31% of Lifelong Learning learners in AEB were male in 20/21 this fell slightly to 20.25%.

The Service continually explores the potential reasons for the shortfall in male participation target and maintains focused strategies to address this.

**3.1.3 Age**

The Service statistics show that people of all ages accessed the service. The age profile of our learners continues to compare well with the age range of the total population. (2020 Population figures)

* 7.24% of learners were aged 19 – 24 (Oldham – 9.9%)
* 26.39% were aged 25 – 34 (Oldham – 18.6%)
* 34.73% were aged 35 – 44 (Oldham – 16.9%)
* 18.11% were aged 45 – 54 (Oldham – 17.4%)
* 8.99% were aged 55 – 64 (Oldham – 15.4%)
* 3.62% were aged 65+ (Oldham – 21.7%)

**3.1.4 Declared Disability / LDD**

* 21.99% of learners across all provision declared a disability / LDD
* 21.48 of learners in AS declared a disability / LDD
* 22.62% of learners in CL declared a disability / LDD

Adult (19+) demographic summary of FE and skills participation (2015/16) data showed that 16% of learners aged 19+ declared a learning difficulty / disability [[1]](#footnote-1)

**3.1.5 Supported Learners**

These are learners who are assisted by either the Learning Support Team or external support. Supported learners receive a wide range of support. A supported learner may have a Learning Support Worker in the classroom or they may have one session with their tutor and the Worker to plan how course materials can be adapted to suit their requirements. Support is also provided through specialist resources and assistive technology.

* 8.6% of learners across all provision were supported. (11.77% previous year)
* 13.78% of learners in AS courses were supported (14.07 previous year)
* 8.86% of learners in CL were supported (5.54% previous year)

The balance of supported learners changed due to the pandemic as some vocational courses were changed to Community learning courses. This enabled learners to continue with their learning but removed the ‘pressure/implications’ of vocational exams or course work submission. The consistent volume of learners supported on vocational courses shows that supported learners continue to be fully integrated into qualification courses, which is a key aim of the Learning Support function.

**3.1.6 Deprivation**

The Service offers provision in venues in communities with high levels of deprivation. 51.8% of learners across the Service’s courses (from all ethnic backgrounds) came from the top five most deprived wards in Oldham as defined by the index of multiple deprivation; 73.4% of our learners came from the top 10 most deprived wards in Oldham. In addition, 77.1% of our learners had a home postcode that appeared in the disadvantage uplift table.

**3.1.7 Concession**

Across **all provision** the following concessions applied: -

10.48% (162) Free course

5.69% (88) No concession

8.67% (134) Government entitlement (Maths, English)

61.58% (952) Benefits

13.58% (210) Low wage

Across **Adult skills** the following concessions applied: -

0.1% (1) Free course

2% (21) No concession

14.16% (149) Government entitlement (Maths, English)

63.88% (672) Benefits

19.87% (209) Low wage

Across **Community Learning** the following concessions applied: -

26.49% (329) Free course

9.82% (122) No concession

0.48% (6) Government entitlement (Maths, English)

63.2% (785) Benefits

0% Low wage

**3.2 How well do learners from different backgrounds achieve?**

Oldham Lifelong Learning Service monitors whether learners complete their course, if they pass their exam or achieve their learning outcome at the end of the course. This statistic is called the Achievement rate.

The Service continues to monitor achievement rates by equality groups. It looks at how successful different equality groups are, for example how successful are men compared to women. It also looks at learners grouped together by ethnicity, gender, disability, age, concessionary status, and supported learners. The overall Service data for 2020/21 shows that the majority of learners are achieving as well as their peers. There were no trends by equality groups that caused concern.

If significant variances are identified as part of the Service’s Monitoring process, an action plan is put in place to ensure that the reason for the variance is identified and that relevant actions are taken to ensure that the gap is narrowed.

**3.3 Learner satisfaction**

The Service’s Learner Satisfaction Survey gives more detail about how satisfied learners are with the Service. In last year’s survey, the proportion of learners by equality group who completed the Survey compares well to the proportion of learners by equality group who learn with us.

In 2018/19, 97% learners stated that they were extremely likely / likely to recommend the Service (872 responses, ESFA satisfaction survey)

In 2019/20 and 2020/21 due to Covid-19, the ESFA survey was not carried out. Our own internal surveys and learner voice comments are extremely positive and demonstrate that learners are happy with their course. Learners were positive about the service response to Covid-19 and how Lifelong Learning kept them continually updated and supported learners to continue learning throughout the year.

The Service has in place a range of mechanisms where learners can make suggestions for improvements to the Service. All matters of concern and complaints were dealt with to the satisfaction of the service user and improvements were put in place as appropriate.

The Service operates a harassment and bullying policy and procedure and a hate incident reporting system.

These systems are accessible to all groups of learners. Complaints are analysed against the protected characteristics and there were no trends by equality groups that caused concern

**3.4 Equality planning, consultation and involvement**

Learners and staff are involved in the annual self-assessment on equality and diversity every year. Equality Impact Assessments have been completed where appropriate.

In 2020/21 consultation with learners and partners has continued to help the service decide what courses we put on and in which venues. Feedback has been in the form of course feedback sheets, learner voice processes and surveys. The Service continues to monitor outcomes against the Service’s equality objectives 2019-2023. In May 2021, the service submitted their Matrix Annual continuous improvement check for Year 2 and maintained accreditation and was judged to have no improvements or actions. The assessor commented on the effectiveness of the service in helping people to excel and the service’s flexibility in responding to changing needs triggered by the pandemic and effective networking with partners to share resources and coordinate provision for the benefit of the community.

**3.5 Staffing / Employment**

As the Service sits within Oldham Council, information on employment is collated and monitored corporately.

1. Department for Education: Further Education and Skills in England July 2017 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)