



Adult Learning Within Reach

Learner Attraction and Application Policy

1. Purpose

The aim of this policy is to set out guiding values and standards governing entry to WEA courses.

2. Values

The WEA is committed to widening participation in learning, especially for those who have had limited access to learning or who have had little previous educational success and believes that there should be no restrictions on choice of learning other than the ability of the learner to undertake and benefit from the course.

As part of this commitment, the WEA provides targeted courses for particular groups of learners who have traditionally or habitually experienced disadvantage in relation to learning or employment opportunities. In terms of equality legislation, this is defined as "positive action." It is designed to remove entrenched barriers to learning.

The WEA is also committed to the matrix standard. It aims to provide impartial information and advice about WEA learning opportunities, financial and learning support including signposting and referral to other providers where this is in the learners' interests.

3. Scope

"Attraction and application " is the earliest stage in the learner journey. It is underpinned by clear, accurate and objective information and advice to support all learners and potential learners to make informed and objective choices about learning. It may or may not lead to enrolment.

Learner attraction can take place:

- Through WEA learning centres;
- Through WEA marketing and publicity literature;
- Through contact with WEA tutors or education teams;
- Through contact with WEA volunteers and existing or former learners;
- Via the WEA website;
- Through WEA partner organisations;
- Through outreach venues;
- Through information, advice and guidance networking.

Application criteria may include:

- Targeted courses with partner organisations e.g. women's centres, mental health, or homelessness organisations;
- Particular skills or experience- for ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages), Maths and English courses and accredited courses initial assessment takes place to determine placement on the correct course and level for the learner.

Eligibility requirements are set out clearly prior to enrolment. This may include criteria set out by funders e.g.:

- Eligibility to live and work in the UK
- Provide ID related evidence e.g. passport, driving licence, national insurance number to evidence confirming employment etc
- Some courses are only available to people who live in a particular area due to their funding, for example if courses are funded by a devolved authority, then they are only open to residents of that devolved.
- For more information on eligibility please visit <https://www.wea.org.uk/help-and-support>

4. Policy

Attraction

- Engage in community activity and partnerships to identify local needs and develop suitable provision where this can be resourced.
- Work in conjunction with branches of WEA volunteers to identify and organise provision. Develop a course rationale for any targeted provision, e.g. women only courses.

Application

- Help individual learners identify and clarify their initial learning needs.
- Be clear in course information where prior qualifications, experience and/or other evidence of knowledge or skills (e.g. through initial assessment) determine entry to a course.
- Be clear about any entry restrictions where provision is targeted at particular groups or particular levels.
- Be clear about funders' eligibility criteria prior to enrolment.
- Offer places to all learners for whom we have suitable courses.

Information and guidance

- Inform and advise learners about opportunities that will meet their needs.
- Ensure learners apply for relevant courses and offer Information and Advice for learners applying for multiple courses. Learners will be signposted for careers advice where relevant.

- Provide accurate, objective and up to date information about WEA learning opportunities, financial support and learning support.
- Ensure that information is available in a range of accessible formats that encourages widening participation.
- Ensure that all national and local publicity materials are compliant with the matrix standard and with the WEA's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy.
- Ensure that all course information clearly set out any previous skills or experience needed.
- Signpost or refer learners to colleagues or other providers and agencies where this is indicated by their needs.
- Ensure there are opportunities for learners to feedback about the service received.

Implementation

Learners:

- Are advised to complete enrolment (via online or telephone) to confirm place on the course (a confirmation email will be sent learners with all relevant details relating to the course);
- Complete initial assessments where required;
- Have the required evidence to confirm their eligibility to study on a WEA course;
- Need to be fully enrolled to access to online courses via Canvas (the WEA's virtual classroom space);
- Must make any required payments before the course starts;
- Should apply for financial support (DLS) and or in class support with a learning need or disability ideally before the course starts. We advise learners to visit <https://www.wea.org.uk/help-and-support/financial-support> or contact the Learner Services team on 0300 303 3464 or learnersupport@wea.ac.uk

Nationally staff will consult with appropriate specialist teams to:

- Develop appropriate national publicity and information material and/or templates that meet the matrix Standard;
- Provide relevant updating, training and support for key staff involved in all aspects of admissions and enrolment
- Provide relevant and appropriate training materials for all aspects of admissions and enrolment in line with the matrix standards;
- Review Learner Attraction and Application Policy and processes on an annual basis in consultation with the Head of Learner Attraction and Experience and Director of Learning.

5. Management and Monitoring

- Nationally by the Head of Learner Attraction and Experience
- Nationally by the Director of Learning in conjunction with other appropriate national staff

- Through learner and tutor evaluation
- Through national learner satisfaction surveys
- Through learner progression surveys
- Through complaints and compliments
- Through the self-assessment process and SAR
- Through annual policy review

6. Links to other policies and documents

This policy is part of a suite of learner support policies defining learner support entitlements. Most relevant policies are publicly available through the WEA's website at <http://www.wea.org.uk/about/policies>

Date of this Review	Date of next Review	Policy reviewed and updated by:	Policy approved by:
January 2025	July 2025	Head of Learner Attraction and Experience	Director for Learning