

Case Study:

Adult Learners

Higher Education can provide an incredible opportunity for adult learners to access a new career, upskill in their current career, increase their earning potential or pursue an existing interest they may not have previously had the chance to. However, the decision to pursue Further or Higher Education can be a challenging one for adult learners, with a variety of barriers influencing their decision, including finances, caring responsibilities, work commitments and anxieties around confidence in their ability to study.

Shaping Futures recognises the additional barriers that adult learners may face, and are committed to supporting these learners by offering individualised support, working with the appropriate institutions and ensuring they can make informed choices and access the right courses to help them achieve their aspirations.

Following conversations with Liverpool Adult Learning Services about how we could work with their existing learners, we offered a programme of Introduction to Higher Education session to learners currently enrolled on courses such as GCSE Maths and English, and Functional Skills Level 1 and 2 in Maths and English. These sessions covered the different routes into Higher Education, application timelines, the UCAS process and an overview of Student Finance.

Over March and April 2022, we delivered 8 sessions across the 3 Adult Learning Services campuses in Liverpool: Newsham Adult Learning Centre, Granby Adult Learning Centre and Park Road Adult Learning Centre.

As well as our initial session, we offered learners the chance to request a 1-2-1 follow up with an IAG trained member of the Shaping Futures team, to discuss their options, next steps, preparing an application or any other support they need to progress. In April 2022, we have provided this support to 10 adult learners.

We realise that not all the adult learners who attended our sessions may be at the stage where 1-2-1 guidance is appropriate for them, so we also provided all learners with contact information so they can access support at whatever point in their education journey they need it.

Learners were also provided with access to The Pay Index, a Labour Market Information resource Shaping Futures funds access to, along with the Liverpool City Region Careers Hub.