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# ENGLISH MATHS ESOL

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## ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Thursday 9 November 2023  
10am–3.30pm | The Foundry, Vauxhall

Led by



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# English, Maths and ESOL Conference 2023

## Contents

Thursday 9 November 2023 | 10am–3.30pm

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02	<b>Contents and practical information</b>
03	<b>The conference at a glance</b>
04	<b>Introduction</b>
05	<b>A message from our sponsor</b>
05-07	<b>Partners and exhibitors</b>
08-13	<b>Agenda</b>
14	<b>About the Multiply Effective Practice Network</b>

## Practical information

**Disabled access:** The Foundry building offers wheelchair and step-free access. The venue comprises five floors and all floors are accessible by lift. Emergency exit by lift is not possible during an evacuation, but safe refuge areas are available on all floors save for the ground floor.

**Emergency procedures:** Upon hearing the fire alarm, you must leave the building immediately by the nearest fire exist to the Fire Assembly Point. If you are unable to evacuate the building unaided, please proceed to the nearest safe refuge. We advise delegates to familiarise themselves with The Foundry's floor plan and emergency exits.

**Speaker presentations:** All presentations (where provided to us) will be uploaded onto the event webpage and attendees notified by email.

**Wifi:** The Foundry Conference | pw: ethicalguest

# The conference at a glance

Thursday 9 November 2023 | 10am–3.30pm

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10am	Registration, refreshments and exhibitions open
10.30am	Chair's welcome, learner perspectives and an update from Department for Education
11.20am	Refreshments, exhibition and move to breakouts
11.40am	Workshop 1: How to strengthen provision in education for refugee learners
11.40am	Workshop 2: Literacy and homelessness: A roadmap for support
11.40am	Workshop 3: Functional Skills Maths: The ESOL Success Story
11.40am	Panel discussion: Multiply: Is it all adding up?   Multiply Effective Practice Network (MEPN)
12.45pm	Lunch, exhibition and move to breakouts
1.45pm	Chair's welcome followed by research keynote: Using Digital Technologies to Teach and Support Adult Skills Learners: Findings from Research and Future
2.15pm	Workshop 4: Embedding Education for Sustainable Development in Maths, English and ESOL
2.15pm	Workshop 5: Reading the Way
2.15pm	Workshop 6: Reimagining the role of volunteers in adult literacy
2.15pm	Showcase: Making it all add up   Multiply Effective Practice Network
3.30pm	Close

# Introduction

Join us for the return of our in-person English, Maths and ESOL Conference – the must-attend event for essential skills practitioners, providers and commissioners across England. The conference is led by Learning and Work Institute in partnership with Research and Practice in Adult Literacy (RaPAL), the National Association for Teachers of English and other Community Languages to Adults (NATECLA) and UCL's Institute of Education .

An estimated nine million working-age adults in England have low basic skills in literacy or numeracy, among whom five million have low skills in both. However, the number of adults improving these skills has halved over the past decade in England and the adult education budget is £1 billion lower in real terms.

Schemes such as the government's Multiply programme to boost adult numeracy skills are a start. Yet more needs to be done to ensure all adults can gain the essential skills they need for life and work. We'll be talking about how we can ensure that Multiply makes a difference, and what else is needed to help every adult get the essential skills needed for life and work.

As well as Multiply, this year also has a focus on inclusion in essential skills. Amongst other topics, we explore effective practice in literacy for adults supported by homelessness services, how to make numeracy accessible to learners with ESOL needs, and how reading groups support emergent readers in prisons.

## About Learning and Work Institute

Learning and Work Institute (L&W) is an independent policy, research and development organisation dedicated to lifelong learning, full employment and inclusion. Its work on Essential and Life Skills focuses on identifying the benefits of building essential skills, understanding how to engage adults in learning and exploring the most effective ways of delivering essential skills learning.

L&W is the convener of the Multiply Effective Practice Network ([MEPN](#)), a forum for all Multiply commissioners, providers and wider stakeholders with a strategic interest and expertise in adult numeracy to share experiences and learn from other areas as the Multiply programme evolves.

## A message from our sponsor and exhibitor

At City & Guilds, we have supported both learners and those involved in teaching and assessing skills in maths, English & ESOL for over 40 years. Our wide range of programmes with end-to-end support is designed to help colleges, providers and employers increase the effectiveness of their delivery and to make real differences to the lives of learners. In addition to our digital resources, our specialist team provide an extensive portfolio of webinars and networking events, as well as tailored guidance and support. We are delighted to be sponsoring this year's English, Maths and ESOL Conference as part of our commitment to helping people, organisations and economies develop their skills for growth.

w: [www.cityandguilds.com](http://www.cityandguilds.com) | x: @cityandguilds

## Our partners and exhibitors



MEI are a charity committed to improving lives through advances in maths education. This can improve everyone's life – through the maths we use ourselves, and through the many ways maths is used that benefit our society. MEI collaborate with education providers from early years through to adult maths and multiply.

w: [mei.org.uk](http://mei.org.uk) | x: @MEIMaths

# Our partners and exhibitors



Ascentis is a leading Awarding Organisation and Access Validating Agency providing cutting-edge qualifications for training, education and business in the UK and overseas. With 50 years' experience, Ascentis has developed an extensive portfolio including Access to Higher Education Diplomas, Community Interpreting, Construction, Digital Skills, Employability, English & Maths Skills, ESOL, Education & Training and Short Online Qualifications (SOQs). Ascentis is a recognised educational charity with a commitment to providing over 200,000 learners each year with clear progression routes to further learning and work. We are proud to be the number 1 provider of ESOL in England and the largest provider of Access to HE Diplomas nationwide. Ascentis is regulated by Ofqual, Qualifications Wales, CCEA and licensed by the QAA. Many of our qualifications are eligible for funding under the ESFA

[www.ascentis.co.uk](http://www.ascentis.co.uk) | x: @AscentisAO



NATECLA (National Association for Teaching English and other Community Languages to Adults) is the national forum and professional organisation for ESOL practitioners. As an independent charity, NATECLA offers high quality, relevant training opportunities for the ESOL community, provides expert advice to government bodies and other agencies and lobbies on issues that affect our teachers and learners. We have recently led on the production of an ESOL strategy document for England which we hope will be adopted by government and other stakeholders to allow more migrants to have access to high quality provision. We have regional branches across the UK to lead on organising events and other activities more locally, run a training arm to provide high quality, in-house, CPD opportunities for ESOL departments and publish three publications for members and the wider community.

w: [www.natecla.org.uk](http://www.natecla.org.uk) | x: @NATECLA

# Our partners and exhibitors



Research and Practice in Adult Literacies (RaPAL) is the only UK-wide organisation that focuses on the role of literacies in adult life. We promote effective and innovative practices in adult literacies teaching, learning and research; and support adult literacies practitioners and researchers. We enjoy engaging in debates that touch on English language and literacy, numeracy and digital skills across homes, communities and workplaces. Through our members, digital journals, conferences and policy and advocacy work, we are active in Europe and have international links.

w: [www.rapal.org.uk](http://www.rapal.org.uk) | x: @rapal\_uk



Founded in 1902, UCL Institute of Education is today unique amongst faculties of education in its scale and in the depth and breadth of its expertise, unparalleled both in its impact nationally and in its work with education systems overseas. In the 2016 QS rankings, the Institute was placed first in the world for education for the third year running, ahead of Harvard, Stanford and Melbourne. Our research addresses society's most important challenges and our teaching inspires our students by providing them with first-hand experience of leading-edge research and knowledge creation. We play an important global role, contributing to international academic and policy-related arenas and networks developing the fields of education and social science worldwide.

w: [www.ucl.ac.uk](http://www.ucl.ac.uk) | x: @ucl

# English, Maths and ESOL Conference 2023 | Agenda

Thursday 9 November 2023 | 10am–3.30pm

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**10am**  
Atrium

## Registration, refreshments and exhibitions open

**10.30am**  
Conference  
Room

### Chair's welcome

An estimated nine million working-age adults in England have low basic skills in literacy or numeracy, among whom five million have low skills in both. However, the number of adults improving these skills has halved over the past decade in England and the adult education budget is £1 billion lower in real terms. Schemes such as the government's Multiply programme to boost adult numeracy skills are a start. Yet more needs to be done to ensure all adults can gain the essential skills they need for life and work.

The programme will begin with a learner film, after which L&W chief executive Stephen Evans will introduce some of the key themes of the day.

### Learner Perspectives

Stephen will then invite our winner of the English Language Learning Award at this year's Festival of Learning, Fakhra Irfan to the stage

### Update from Department for Education

We will then hand over to Claire Steeksma and Stephen Mayne from the Department for Education for an update.

Speakers:

- Stephen Evans, Chief Executive, Learning and Work Institute
- Fakhra Irfan, English Language Learning Award Winner, Festival of Learning 2023
- Claire Steeksma, Multiply Programme, Basic Skills and Multiply Division, Skills Group
- Stephen Mayne, Adult Essential Skills Strategy Adviser, Department for Education

**11.20am**  
Atrium

## Refreshments, exhibition and move to breakouts



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**11.40am**  
Meeting  
Rooms 1&2

**Workshop 1: How to strengthen provision in education for refugee learners**

In this workshop The Bell Foundation and Refugee Education UK (REUK), will share initial findings from a mixed methods research study examining what is happening across the UK with regards to education provision for young people who arrive late in the education system, at the upper-secondary or college level (from year 9 onwards). The session will explore practical ideas for supporting refugee learners and consider how Further Education settings can create spaces in which refugee learners feel safe, feel they belong, and can succeed academically and beyond. Participants will have the opportunity to work in small groups in which they can reflect on their existing provision for refugee learners and share ideas for strengthening this provision.

Speakers:

- Katherine Solomon, Head of Training and Resources, Bell Foundation
- Huw Hides, Further Education Lead Practitioner, Refugee Education UK

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**11.40am**  
Meeting Room  
4

**Workshop 2: Literacy and homelessness: A roadmap for support**

An estimated 50% of adults with experience of homelessness have inadequate literacy for their daily needs. They have constant struggles with public transport, medical appointments and inclusion in the digital world. Crucially, it affects their ability to read official documents, fill in forms and find suitable employment. For individuals with multiple and complex needs, opportunities to improve their skills can seem out of reach. Low self-esteem and overwhelmingly negative memories of childhood schooling are barriers to re-engagement with education.

Literacy100's report, 'Empowerment Through Literacy: A Charter for Adults with Experience of Homelessness', explores ways in which educational provision can be made more accessible to vulnerable adults. Its Charter calls for professionals, organisations and policy-makers to endorse and adopt its recommendations. This seminar will provide an overview of the report, and will be an opportunity to hear directly from adults who have been affected by both low literacy and homelessness.

Speakers:

- Julia Olisa, Chair and Co-Founder, Literacy100
- Alessy Beaver, Trustee, Literacy100
- Gary Chambers, Ambassador, Literacy100
- Foysol Miah, Ambassador, Literacy100

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11.40am

Meeting Room  
5

### **Workshop 3: Functional Skills Maths: The ESOL Success Story**

Low numeracy skills foster an environment in which people feel 'left behind' leading to a loss of equality and social exclusion as it hinders the ability to integrate, find work and participate in community life. Maths has its own language, even more challenging for ESOL learners. It creates an inequality of opportunity when compared to native speakers of English learning maths.

At South Bank Colleges, a pilot project to teach FS Maths was devised with a detailed curriculum plan supporting delivery with a critical element; Support ESOL tutors to teach FS maths. We communicated the 'why' to the team and demonstrated the impact on the lives of ESOL learners. A process to change mind-sets began. By year end, 504 learners had enrolled, above 85% achieved at least 1 FS maths qualification ranging from E1 to L1 FS maths. Join this session to hear more and to discuss your opportunities to develop maths for ESOL learners.

Speakers:

- Asma Ahmad, Director Young People's Essential Skills South Bank Colleges
- Rachel Öner, ESOL Specialist, Öner Training and Consultancy

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11.40am

Conference  
Room

### **Panel discussion: Multiply: Is it all adding up? | Multiply Effective Practice Network (MEPN)**

This panel discussion focuses on the Multiply adult numeracy programme. Our expert speakers will reflect on what's working well in Multiply and what's needed to ensure that the programme makes a difference to adults' numeracy skills. We'll also consider what lessons we can learn from Multiply to inform development of future essential skills policy and programmes.

Speakers:

- Naomi Phillips, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Policy and Research, Learning and Work Institute
- Paul Milner, Programmes Director, National Numeracy
- Dr Fiona Aldridge, Head of Insight and Intelligence, WMCA
- Martin Newton, Adult Maths and Multiply Development Lead, Mathematics in Education and Industry

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**12.45pm**

Atrium

**Lunch, exhibition and move to breakouts**

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**1.45pm**

Conference  
Room

**Chair's welcome followed by research keynote: Using Digital Technologies to Teach and Support Adult Skills Learners: Findings from Research and Future**

This session explores findings from research on using digital technologies to teach and support adult skills learners and new directions for research to understand how these technologies can be used effectively with adult skills learners. The session will provide a framework for examining the phases of knowledge development about the use of digital technologies and will discuss findings from studies of practices to prepare users of technologies, to implement technologies, and to assess outcomes from the use of technologies.

Gaps in existing research on the use of digital technologies will be identified with a focus on the types of research that could benefit adult skills practitioners and administrators. Highlighted will be findings from recent research on the use of individualized text messaging to support adult skills learners' persistence and learning.

Speaker: Judith Alamprese, Principal Scientist, ABT Associates

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**2.15pm**

Meeting  
Rooms 1&2

**Workshop 4: Embedding Education for Sustainable Development in Maths, English and ESOL**

This workshop will give participants the opportunity to review the key elements of Educational for Sustainable Development (ESD) in the further education and skills sector, explore how ESD can be included into teaching and learning and investigate strategies to promote and embed education for sustainable development (ESD) into your professional practice.

Speakers:

- Jo Swindells, National Head of English and ESOL, Education and Training Foundation
- Mafalda Giudice, Group Coordinator Teaching and Learning, New City College

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**2.15pm**

Meeting Room  
4

**Workshop 5: Reading the Way**

Reading the Way: A new way for emergent readers to build reading confidence and enjoyment. In the spring of 2023, Prison Reading Groups spearheaded a partnership project with adult literacy specialists and prison education provider Novus to create reading groups aimed at emergent readers. This breakout will explore the thinking behind this project (and how it developed), share insights from the pilot evaluation and examine how others can get involved in the next steps.

Speakers:

- Dr Sam Duncan, Associate Professor in Adult Education and Literacies
- Sarah Turvey, Director, Prison Reading Groups
- Shamima Edye-Lindner, Project Manager, Give a Book/Prison Reading Groups
- Esther Kelly, Reading Strategy Lead, Novus

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**2.15pm**

Meeting Room  
5

**Workshop 6: Reimagining the role of volunteers in adult literacy**

Drawing on the work of the Adult Literacy Trust, a charity which works closely with adult education providers to offer literacy learners personalised one-to-one support by a trained volunteer, this session explores the role of volunteers in supporting adults to develop their confidence in reading and literacy more widely. We'll hear from New City College, one of ALT's partners, about the benefits of the programme, and from an ALT volunteer. There will also be opportunities to discuss and reflect on the role of volunteers in adult essential skills provision.

Speakers:

- Alex Stevenson, Trustee, Adult Literacy Trust
- Fiona Matthews, Group Curriculum Director for English, New City College
- Judah Urch-Grear, Volunteer Manager, Adult Literacy Trust
- Ronnie Macfarlane, Volunteer, Adult Literacy Trust

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**2.15pm**

Conference  
Room

**Showcase: Making it all add up | Multiply Effective Practice Network**

How can Multiply providers most effectively engage learners? And what about employers? How can Multiply programmes support learners to progress on to further learning and qualifications in maths? In this session, we'll hear from Multiply providers who are responding to these and other key challenges in Multiply delivery. There'll also be the chance to share your own effective practice and exchange with others working on Multiply.

Speakers:

- Lois Calvert, Multiply Development Manager, North Yorkshire Council
- Martin Newton, Adult Maths and Multiply Development Lead, Mathematics in Education and Industry

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**3.30pm**

Atrium

**Close**

# About the Multiply Effective Practice Network

**L&W is the convener of the Multiply Effective Practice Network (MEPN), a forum for all Multiply commissioners, providers and wider stakeholders with a strategic interest and expertise in adult numeracy to share experiences and learn from other areas as the Multiply programme evolves.**

The MEPN aims to support Multiply commissioners and providers by:

- Providing forums to share what's working well, and local innovation
- Sharing solutions to common challenges – in commissioning and delivering
- Supporting access to evidence-based insight into what works in adult numeracy provision

Activities throughout the year include:

- Provider networking events linked to key themes in Multiply delivery, including expert inputs and showcasing local delivery
- A regular MEPN newsletter
- Bespoke support that can be agreed with areas who wish to invest. Support could include: local stakeholder engagement sessions, thematic evidence workshops for local providers and providing evaluation support.

For more information about the network, get in touch at [multiplyeffectivepractice@learningandwork.org.uk](mailto:multiplyeffectivepractice@learningandwork.org.uk)

The network is part of the RegALE (Regional capacity for Adult Learning and Education) project. RegALE aims to increase impact and sustainability of regional/local adult education organisations by setting up or reinforcing networks among them and with regional/local authorities.

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