

## **Write up from adult learners workshops 16 January 2012**

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Attendees were asked three questions:

1. What did you want to get from your course?
  2. What is helping to meet your needs and what impact is it having?
  3. Is there anything else that would help meet your needs?
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## Session 1 – skills for life

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Around 50 - 55 people attended, split into 3 groups

What did you want to get from your course?

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I want to work in a bank</li> <li>▪ To help with everyday maths tasks</li> <li>▪ To help my kids with their maths work</li> <li>▪ English language</li> <li>▪ To get a formal certificate in maths</li> <li>▪ To feel young again, to achieve a goal and to look forward to a brighter future</li> <li>▪ English and maths, and to help young people after school</li> <li>▪ A second chance – I didn't do well at GCSE</li> <li>▪ I have gaps in learning from school in college that I want to fill, I want to go to university</li> <li>▪ I want to be a teacher. It was tough learning among teenagers</li> <li>▪ To help with shopping tasks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Learning English, numeracy</li> <li>▪ Achievement of goals</li> <li>▪ New friends</li> <li>▪ To communicate better in English with my family, and the community</li> <li>▪ Helps me with my career choice</li> <li>▪ Confidence</li> <li>▪ Finding out about university courses, access</li> <li>▪ Employment</li> <li>▪ Paving the way for further education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Better qualification</li> <li>▪ Confidence</li> <li>▪ Better understanding</li> <li>▪ Reading/writing/spelling</li> <li>▪ Close to home and school</li> <li>▪ Disabilities independence</li> <li>▪ Better job prospects/support in looking for jobs</li> <li>▪ Helping with children with homework – school forums</li> <li>▪ Help other activities in life – Church, G.P., and School Forms. Letters.</li> <li>▪ Understanding new systems</li> <li>▪ Makes your achieve. Confidence (with doctor)</li> <li>▪ Local accessibility</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I want to get a job, I want to build my confidence</li> <li>▪ I want to improve myself – as a write. I want to be able to challenge things</li> <li>▪ Skills in English and maths – for job, home and university</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Adult only crèche access. Safety with ICT</li> </ul>
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**What is helping to meet your needs and what impact is it having?**

<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>	<b>Group 3</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ They make it enjoyable</li> <li>▪ Can go at own pace</li> <li>▪ Teacher student ratio is better than at other places, can focus better</li> <li>▪ Good being with similar ages (not youngsters)</li> <li>▪ Close to the school so easy to pick up kids, fit in around work etc. Important if encouraging women to get back into work</li> <li>▪ I can track my progress</li> <li>▪ Can get more done in a shorter space of time, good for busy mums</li> <li>▪ Everyone is friendly and relaxed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 3 mums couldn't come without the crèche</li> <li>▪ The family / playscheme classes have had a very positive impact</li> <li>▪ Teachers are excellent</li> <li>▪ Learning (teaching) is at a pace suitable for adults</li> <li>▪ Maths and English are better for adults</li> <li>▪ Computer access for internet</li> <li>▪ Fast track courses are very good</li> <li>▪ Local to children's school, so I can attend</li> <li>▪ Career advisor is used a lot</li> <li>▪ Skills increased</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Local: Location accessible, good transport links – easily to get here</li> <li>▪ Use crèche</li> <li>▪ Encouragement from teacher</li> <li>▪ Meeting friends – socialise/have fun</li> <li>▪ Sometimes don't want to go home!</li> <li>▪ Teacher helps if don't understand encourage to ask questions and gain more knowledge</li> <li>▪ More contact with the tutor compared to other colleges</li> <li>▪ Personal contact (closer relationship)</li> <li>▪ Good access for people with disability –</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The teachers are different – happy to help, encouraging</li> <li>▪ Good teachers, good relationships, trust them, can say that you don't understand</li> <li>▪ Family learning is good, and can meet other mums</li> <li>▪ Pick up lots of other skills like how to approach people</li> <li>▪ Impact on my writing for work</li> <li>▪ Learn lots of other things e.g. science, life</li> <li>▪ Sense of goal and structure in life</li> <li>▪ Learn how to communicate with people</li> <li>▪ I have something to say now. It has helped so much with my confidence</li> <li>▪ Feeling happy</li> <li>▪ I can now put myself forward</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Helping for my job with SEN children</li> <li>▪ More focused</li> <li>▪ Easy transport and walking makes it possible to come</li> <li>▪ Confidence increased a lot</li> </ul>	<p>feel safe her, plus easy access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Good inclusion for everyone</li> <li>▪ Frequent classes but smaller class size e.g. 15-16 at TTC compared to 25-30 in several colleges</li> <li>▪ Not hectic like a college with teenagers or younger people</li> <li>▪ Choosing to come to learn – free classes</li> <li>▪ Gives self worth/ self value</li> <li>▪ Confidence goes up</li> <li>▪ Achieving on accreditation/qualification/a goal</li> <li>▪ Family learning - learning together – creating a learning environment/ethos in the family</li> <li>▪ No stigma as an adult going back to learning</li> </ul>
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**Is there anything else that would help meet your needs?**

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Other classes – catering, flowers, science, computer, language, music, sign language, ICT, parenting</li> <li>▪ More ESOL</li> <li>▪ I could teach you Spanish [one someone said they wanted Spanish classes]</li> <li>▪ Longer classes e.g. the whole day – so I can make maximum use of my day release</li> <li>▪ Maintain what we have</li> <li>▪ Library on site – which has the right books and so we can stay focussed [when asked why not use Peckham library]</li> <li>▪ Someone to talk to and help with things like applications or how to volunteer</li> <li>▪ Extra homework and other support outside of classes</li> <li>▪ Go beyond level 2 i.e. level 3 is key for jobs</li> <li>▪ Advertise better e.g. library, local press, shops, GPs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Short clips of ESOL on the website</li> <li>▪ Basic clips of Literacy 1 by the trainer</li> <li>▪ Keep the college running please, as we have difficulty with learning at teenager colleges</li> <li>▪ Interactive tool on Southwark website</li> <li>▪ More and better advertising of Thomas Chalton centre</li> <li>▪ Work placement to practice what we learn</li> <li>▪ More sessions in the evening</li> <li>▪ More languages – we would join language exchange groups</li> <li>▪ More days/ hours are need for ESOL fluency</li> <li>▪ More time is needed for Literacy and Numeracy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ More funding for other courses e.g. GCSE English</li> <li>▪ Homework club – access to computers</li> <li>▪ More hours for some of the classes</li> <li>▪ More equipment e.g. computers</li> <li>▪ More heaters! Monday morning is very cold</li> <li>▪ Have a cafe</li> </ul>

## Session 2 – arts and culture based

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Around 25 - 30 people attended, split into 2 groups

What did you want to get from your course?

Group 1	Group 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Full time work was coming to an end and wanted to retrain for leisure</li><li>▪ To learn new and interesting things</li><li>▪ Social network</li><li>▪ For health – fitness and emotional</li><li>▪ To keep active after retirement and be active in the community</li><li>▪ To link into what else is available</li><li>▪ Wanted to improve my writing</li><li>▪ To mix with a wider group of people that you would do otherwise</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Increase concentration and focus</li><li>▪ Art &amp; craft (disability group)</li><li>▪ Having more structure to life (man with severe depression doing ceramics)</li><li>▪ Learning basic skills</li><li>▪ Making money – over £700 by man with severe depression, over £100 by disability group</li><li>▪ Meeting other people – so less depression</li><li>▪ Confidence building</li><li>▪ Making repairs to garments, soft furnishing</li><li>▪ Sewing – bags for use by disability group</li><li>▪ Developing skills – useful for my business</li><li>▪ Making items for sale</li></ul>

**What is helping to meet your needs and what impact is it having?**

Group 1	Group 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Being part of a team</li> <li>▪ Routine in your life – a commitment, a reason to get out of the house</li> <li>▪ Wood work is on of the few facilities in London, a very rare assets</li> <li>▪ Finishing a garment and being pleased</li> <li>▪ Fulfilment</li> <li>▪ Improving my memory – learning small routines, co-ordination etc</li> <li>▪ A long-time relationship with the courses</li> <li>▪ Our diverse community can come together on a common objective</li> <li>▪ Motivation</li> <li>▪ Creativity</li> <li>▪ Job opportunities are important</li> <li>▪ To better myself</li> <li>▪ Its social – come to meet people</li> <li>▪ It local/long distance to other people</li> <li>▪ Life long skills, not just a passing activity</li> <li>▪ Chance to make a difference/help society</li> <li>▪ Skills and inspiration, and save money making my own things</li> <li>▪ Cross referencing of ideas – you learn form other students</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Supportive staff good with our needs and skills</li> <li>▪ We can learn at our own pace</li> <li>▪ Competent trainer who is also very pleasant</li> <li>▪ Facilities can be used by participants</li> <li>▪ Social time is very important</li> <li>▪ Therapeutic for people with severe depression</li> <li>▪ Easy access to the Thomas Chalton centre</li> <li>▪ Availability of kilns and other specialised equipment</li> <li>▪ Loyalty to the Thomas Chalton Centre it is unique</li> <li>▪ Exhibitions are recommended – with social opportunities as a result</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Help each other</li> <li>▪ Its local</li> <li>▪ Prices are affordable</li> <li>▪ We have an off shoot group that does performances</li> <li>▪ Some have started their own business [woodwork]. It gives basic skills and can take the next step</li> </ul>	
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**Is there anything else that would help meet your needs?**

<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Group 2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What do the population want – survey?</li> <li>▪ Should speak to other types of learners e.g. those after work</li> <li>▪ Wider range of courses</li> <li>▪ Meeting all needs- disabilities including learning disabilities</li> <li>▪ If repeat you have to pay more, its too expensive for some</li> <li>▪ Advertise more – in the station, signs in the road so people know its here, local shops, hospitals, GPs, Southwark Life, add onto other comms</li> <li>▪ Price</li> <li>▪ Use lottery funding?</li> <li>▪ A class cancelled due to too few people – get more people</li> <li>▪ Better information on change of building or classroom, if cancelled</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ For the Woodwork course 30 hours is too restricted and not enough</li> <li>▪ For the Ceramics course 30 hours is too restricted and not enough</li> <li>▪ Courses cannot be continued by students for another term without excessive fees – Be open about the cost of the course – students can work out a way of funding the course for themselves, it's so good</li> <li>▪ Good teachers should be retained by secure classes, eg the Japanese teacher</li> <li>▪ More dialogue with class and student rep's</li> <li>▪ Enrolment process is very dogmatic &amp; needs to be simplified</li> <li>▪ Continuers should be able to re- enrol at end of term</li> </ul>



etc

- An open day to the public to show what we can do
  - Child care isn't known about
  - Simplify and reduce the form filling- too many forms, multiple requests for information and takes up valuable class time
  - Courses are designed to continue but its costs to continue
  - Make use of empty buildings
  - Get patrons
  - Management isn't visible – its gets pushed down to the tutors
  - Internal comms isn't right – customer questions should be a priority
  - Open up to other organisations e.g. CAB – to use the centre, promote it
  - Should be able to transfer, rather than cancel then have to enrol again
  - Speed and communication
  - Can book rooms for free through Princess Di Trust – if a charity
- Access to feedback form management, and to Southwark needs to be improved
  - Administration needs to be improved – there is a 1 year calendar for Lewisham. Also the term dates are wrong in the Southwark booklet
  - On site visits by senior management to classes will give an accurate picture
  - The booklet is not on display at libraries and museums, and other public locations
  - Courses look unpopular if not promoted
  - National Target of 30 hours for adult learning is restricting skills, and is discriminatory
  - The disabled returners to classes are discriminated against – they pay 2 ½ times as much as able returners
  - The elderly have been falling away, also disabled due to cuts in concessions
  - The Head of the service should be in residence
  - Repeat learners are discriminated against, in favour of new learners
  - There should be an email mailing list for students
  - Numbers attending courses are a false indicator of desire for courses – many are from North London