

# There's a WEA course for you

Learner Handbook 2024-2025



**WEA**

Adult Learning Within Reach



# Welcome to your learner handbook

Learning plays an important part in our everyday lives and also our wellbeing.

If this is your first step back into learning, we hope that it is just the beginning of a long and successful journey. A journey that will bring you new skills, interests, and qualifications. If you have already attended some of our courses in the past, we hope you enjoy your new course and continue to learn new skills.

We will help and support all of our learners as much as possible. Please talk to your tutor if there is anything we can do to help.

The WEA wants you to have an enjoyable time with us and in this handbook, you will find details about what to expect from your course. You will also be asked to give feedback at the end of your course. Your views are very important to us and will help us to plan and improve future courses.

We hope your learning experience with us will be exciting and stimulating.

## **Preeya Buckley**

Director of Quality & Learner Services

## About Us

We are a charity and the UK's largest voluntary sector provider of adult education. We believe learning is for everyone and learning is for life. We also have a special mission to reach those who want to improve their lives and communities. We actively campaign for adult education and you can get involved in the WEA as a volunteer or member.

## Our Vision

A better world - equal, democratic, and just; through adult education the WEA challenges and inspires individuals, communities, and society.

Read more about us here

[wea.org.uk/about-us/who-we-are](https://wea.org.uk/about-us/who-we-are)

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# 1. Enrolling onto a WEA course

To enrol on a WEA course, you must be aged 19 or over by the 31st August 2024.

## UK residency

Learners who have not been resident in the UK/EU for the last three years are required to complete a learner eligibility form and provide appropriate evidence, or a higher course fee will be payable.

If you would like more information, please call the Learner Enrolment and Onboarding Team **300 303 3464**.



## To find out about courses we offer in your area you can:

Use our online course search

[wea.org.uk](http://wea.org.uk)

Contact your local WEA office or branch.

[wea.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/departments](http://wea.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/departments)

Looking for a new job, or want to learn new skills? Visit:

[wea.org.uk/courses/skills-for-work](http://wea.org.uk/courses/skills-for-work)

## Once you have found the course you are interested in, you can:

Apply online: [wea.org.uk](http://wea.org.uk)

Apply and enrol by telephone **0300 303 3464**  
(9.00am to 5.00pm, Monday to Friday, local rate).

Please bear in mind that a course may be full or if numbers are insufficient, cancelled. We strongly advise that you enrol online/by telephone wherever possible to avoid disappointment.

## What to expect from the WEA

When you enrol with us you will enter into a WEA Learning Agreement. The application and enrollment process sets out the agreement between learners and the WEA to ensure that learning opportunities are of a high standard.

We want you to get the most from your course with us. The WEA Learning Agreement ensures that our classes are of a high standard.

### **WEA Learner Learning Agreement we will:**

- Offer you clear information and advice before and after your course
- Check what you want to get from the course and whether it is suitable for you
- Provide you with an introduction to the WEA and the course
- Create a safe and positive learning environment where you are respected and valued and know what to do if you are worried
- Provide information on steps to keep yourself, your information, and your devices safe when learning online
- Inform you of financial and learning support you may be eligible for to support your learning
- Arrange additional support as far as is reasonably possible
- Provide suitably qualified, experienced, and supportive tutors
- Expect tutors to use a range of teaching and learning activities to keep you actively involved in your learning
- Expect tutors to use tasks to see how you are learning, which may include quizzes, question and answer, small projects, discussion, written or practical work

## WEA Learner Learning Agreement (cont)

- Keep you informed about your progress and achievement
- Let you know about WEA activities outside of your course
- Ask for your feedback about this course and the WEA
- Take positive action to promote equality and diversity
- Let you know if WEA staff are joining the session for quality checking purposes
- Deal quickly and politely with any complaints about the WEA.

### As a learner, you should:

- Arrive on time, attend every session, and let your tutor know if you cannot attend a session
- Be able to complete the whole course
- Complete work given to you by your tutor on time and only submit work that is your own
- Let your tutor know if you are thinking about leaving the course and tell them why
- Tell the WEA if you move, change your contact details or if your income changes
- Return any borrowed equipment or teaching resources at the end of the course
- Let your tutor know about any support you might need to complete your course (e.g. financial, learning, disability, or technical support.)
- Reflect on and record your learning and progress using the WEA Learning Record
- Provide feedback after your course
- Be actively involved in your learning and ensure everyone has a chance to take part



- Wear clothing suitable for learning or the work place
- Contribute to a positive and safe learning environment, both face to face and online and behave with respect for others and follow all the class rules that have been agreed
- Demonstrate the Common (British) Values of tolerance, mutual respect, individual liberty, and the rule of law
- Report any safeguarding concerns, including online safety, and follow the relevant procedures.

## While you are learning with us

The information below may refer to our policies. Our policies set the standards for the way we work and can be found on our website at: [wea.org.uk/resources/policy-docs](https://wea.org.uk/resources/policy-docs)

If you prefer to be sent any policy by post, please contact your nearest regional office. [wea.org.uk/find-your-local-wea](https://wea.org.uk/find-your-local-wea)

## WEA Learner Hub

In the WEA Learner Hub you can:

- View your course applications and enrolments
- Upload evidence to support your application(s)
- Change personal details and consents
- Easily link to Canvas and Microsoft Office 365
- Complete your Learning Record
- Complete end of course feedback.

Your welcome email will contain your WEA Microsoft 365 account details, including your username and password. When you first log in, you will be prompted to change your password.

For more information please visit:

[wea.org.uk/help-and-support/how-do-i-access-learner-hub](https://wea.org.uk/help-and-support/how-do-i-access-learner-hub)

## Canvas and Online Learning

Canvas (our virtual learning platform) will help you:

- Communicate and work with your tutor and other learners
- Complete activities, assignments, or homework
- See feedback from your tutor
- Find extra reading, links to videos, blogs, events etc.

For more information [wea.org.uk/help-and-support](https://wea.org.uk/help-and-support)

### What is Canvas?

Canvas is a learning area that allows teachers to run courses online, so you can take part in your lessons from a distance, as well as after the classroom session has ended.

You can access Canvas via your preferred IT devices, such as a laptop or desktop computer

### Online learning

We have grown the number of courses we can offer learners online, offering you more choice than ever before. Half of WEA courses are taught online, using Zoom or Microsoft Teams (website applications), where you can join a classroom from the comfort of your own home.

By following a link or by entering the class information, you can join a classroom from the comfort of your own home. Learners will also need to have access to speakers, a microphone, and a video camera on (where required).

#### To use Zoom or Teams you will need:

An IT device (e.g., laptop, PC, tablet, or smart phone) which has speakers, a microphone, and a video camera. If you do not have a video camera, you can buy these inexpensively.

If your computer does not have speakers or a microphone, you might try hands-free headphones which have an integrated microphone.

For more information, please visit [wea.org.uk/help](https://wea.org.uk/help)

## Access and support for learning

Your tutor can provide information when you are on the course, or you can contact your local regional office for further information regarding available support: [wea.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/departments](https://www.wea.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/departments)

● **Additional Learning Support** - if you have a disability, learning difficulty, health issue or other support needs please tell us as soon as you can, so that we can put support in place. Contact your nearest regional office or speak to your tutor if you have started your course already.

Sometimes we may talk to other organisations to ensure we know how to support you best. If we need to talk to someone else, we will ask for your permission first. We will also keep you informed about what is happening and discuss any follow up action with you.

For more information please visit: <https://www.wea.org.uk/help-and-support/additional-learning-support>

● **Getting to our classes** - most of our classes take place in local community venues and we use venues that are accessible wherever possible, but we cannot guarantee this. For details of access at our venues, refer to the online course information (where available) or contact your nearest regional office. [wea.org.uk](https://www.wea.org.uk) or contact your nearest regional office.

● **Access to assessment** – access to assessment is extra help for learners taking accredited courses or qualifications. Evidence of an identified Learning need or disability will be needed for assessment purposes.

Examples of access arrangements include extra time, a sign language interpreter or coloured overlays. Some access arrangements require us to notify the awarding organisation and take a little time to put in place. Speak to your tutor as soon as possible so that we can make the right arrangements for your needs or contact your regional office.

For more information see our Disclosure of Needs policy. [wea.org.uk/resources/policy-docs](https://www.wea.org.uk/resources/policy-docs)

## 2. Course fees and financial help

Information about course fees is shown online.  
The WEA receives public funding from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCA) for the majority of our courses and this funding supplements the fees paid by learners.



# Discretionary Learner Support Fund

## What is the DLS?

The Discretionary Learner Support (DLS) is a limited fund that allows the WEA to provide financial support to learners on a course funded through the ESFA (Education and Skills Funding Agency) or Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) with a specific financial hardship preventing learners from taking part in learning.

## Learners can be supported with the following:

- Tuition fees
- Examination or Accreditation fees
- Other course costs e.g., books and equipment
- Childcare
- Travel

## Eligibility for the DLS fund:

- Learners to be on an income assessed benefit
- Household income less than £21,000 (£21,547.50 for GLA only)

## How to apply:

- \* Download a DLS form please [wea.org.uk/help-and-support/financial-support](http://wea.org.uk/help-and-support/financial-support) (Each form has a set of guidance notes which explains the application and approval process)
- \* DLS forms must be completed before or two weeks after the course has started. (Late submission of the DLS may not be processed due to insufficient DLS funds)
- \* If you are applying for childcare learners must have their DLS applications approved before confirming childcare placements. Any unapproved childcare claims will remain the responsibility of the learner
- \* Learners who have been approved DLS support will receive a confirmation email from the ALS/DLS Advisor.

If you have any questions, please contact the Enrolment and Onboarding Team Email: [learnersupport@wea.ac.uk](mailto:learnersupport@wea.ac.uk) or Tel: 0300 303 3464

## Free Tuition fees (for learners on low wages)

If you are currently working and earning a certain amount you may be able to apply for 100% fee remission towards the cost of your tuition fees for a WEA course up to level 2.

For learners to receive full funding they must:

- Enroll on to a WEA course up to level 2
- Be in employment up to 37.5 hours (full/part time) and;

Be earning **up to** the set amount, based on where you live. Due to the creation of Mayoral Combined Authorities the salary threshold differs.

Learners will need to complete Low wage form. If unsure, learners are advised to check their eligibility for the Low wage offer via your WEA course organiser or Tutor.

For more information, please visit

[wea.org.uk/help-and-support/low-income](https://wea.org.uk/help-and-support/low-income)

## Course cancellation and refunds

If you have booked or enrolled on a WEA course, you may cancel a course booking at any time by informing us in writing.

If you cancel a course booking within seven working days of receiving the course confirmation, provided that the course has not commenced, you are eligible to receive a full refund.

If the course is scheduled to be delivered over more than three sessions, you may cancel your course booking and request a full refund from the Support Centre team. This applies if you cancel prior to the scheduled start time of the second course session.

If the WEA cancels a course before the course begins, or up to and including the second session, you will be eligible for a full refund of the course fee that you have paid.

See our full Course Cancellation and Refunds policies.

[wea.org.uk/about-us/policies](https://wea.org.uk/about-us/policies)



# 3. Careers information and advice

## We can provide information and sometimes advice about a number of things:

- WEA courses in your area
- Choosing the right course
- Fees and financial support
- Learning support
- Progression – information on what you can do next
- Signposting or referral – directing you to other courses, agencies or resources

## You can get information and advice

- By talking to staff in your nearest regional office
- By talking to your tutor, if you are already on a course

You can also ask for the information in larger print, or for the information to be read to you. For information about progression and next steps in your learning please see our website and discuss with your tutor [wea.org.uk/future-careers](http://wea.org.uk/future-careers)

The WEA is matrix accredited. This means that we are assessed for the quality of our information and advice services. We will help you to make sure your learning with the WEA is right for you; you know what support is available and how you can progress. You can expect to receive a good service from us. We are always looking at ways in which we can improve how we work and welcome feedback on all aspects of the WEA.





I really enjoyed it. I've  
made friends and I've  
got a job

## 4. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI)

The WEA believes that education plays a major role in challenging discrimination and disadvantage. We are committed to inclusive learning and ensuring that all our learners achieve the best possible outcomes. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) in the WEA is a collective responsibility.

We expect everyone involved in the WEA to challenge conditions that place anyone at a disadvantage and create an inclusive community in which diversity is valued and celebrated.

See our Equality, Diversity & Inclusion policy  
[wea.org.uk/about-us/equality-diversity-and-inclusion](https://wea.org.uk/about-us/equality-diversity-and-inclusion)



## Our Values

Our values as an organisation actively commit us to promote democracy, individual liberty, the benefits, and challenges of the rule of law and mutual respect and tolerance for those with different faiths and beliefs. These are also the values defined by the government as “British” values and are part of the Prevent Duty to challenge radicalisation and extremism.

We promote these values in our classes by encouraging you to:

- Actively, research, debate and question aspects of the subject you are studying, lead discussions and presentations
- Draw on your study and broader experience to explore the wider contexts of your subject and apply it the external world
- Apply your learning individually and where possible as a class through activities in your communities
- Put into practice what you have learned outside the classroom, either as a group or as individuals
- Become WEA members or active citizens in your own right
- Explore different views to your own

For more information on the WEA [wea.org.uk/resources/wea-strategy](https://wea.org.uk/resources/wea-strategy)

# 5. Staying Safe

## Safeguarding

We aim to provide a welcoming environment where you feel safe and secure. If you have any concerns about your own safety or the safety and wellbeing of others, including discrimination, abuse, exploitation, harassment or bullying you can tell your tutor.

If you do not feel you can talk to your tutor, you can ring your Regional Office. Within each region, there is a trained member of staff called a Safeguarding Officer who will respond to your concerns.

## The Prevent Duty

All educational organisations have a role to play in safeguarding learners from becoming radicalised and being drawn into terrorism. If you have any concerns of this nature about yourself or someone else, you can talk to your tutor or to the Regional Safeguarding Officer.

**You can find the name and contact details of your Safeguarding Officer from your tutor or from our website [wea.org.uk/help-and-support/what-is-safeguarding](https://wea.org.uk/help-and-support/what-is-safeguarding)**

For our Safeguarding Policy and Prevent Policy visit [wea.org.uk/resources/policy-docs](https://wea.org.uk/resources/policy-docs)

## E- Safety

We will support learners with information and advice to keep yourself, your information, and your devices safe when learning online.

If you ever feel worried, contact your tutor or the Safeguarding Officer for your region. For further advice and guidance visit <https://www.getsafeonline.org> See the E-Safety section in Help in your Canvas course for more online safety links.

The WEA Online Safety Policy in Teaching and Learning and Student Computer and Digital Use Policy sets out responsibilities of learners and WEA staff members. Policies can be downloaded from [wea.org.uk/resources/policy-docs](http://wea.org.uk/resources/policy-docs)

## Health and Safety

The WEA is committed to ensuring the health and safety of our learners during their learning journey with the WEA.

If you have any health and safety concerns, please raise them with your tutor initially.

For more information, please see our health and safety policy statement at [wea.org.uk/resources/policy-docs](http://wea.org.uk/resources/policy-docs)

## 6. Become a member of the WEA

Whether or not you have finished your course, we invite you to consider becoming a WEA member and joining a movement that transforms lives. Membership is open to anyone who supports our aims and values.



## Become a WEA member today

Be part of our award-winning learning community and movement that helps to bring adult learning within reach of more people than ever before.

WEA membership costs just £15 a year, and is free if you are under 25, a current WEA volunteer, or receive a means-tested benefit.

### By becoming a member, you will be able to:

- Access to our award-winning weekly members' lecture series. Learn from our network of expert tutors, and interact with other members from your own home
- Get priority online or telephone booking for autumn term courses.
- Secure your spaces before anyone else during our special members' early enrolment window each summer! (members in England only)
- Receive our Highway magazine, and access digital back issues to stay updated on the work we are doing
- Attend our members' annual conference
- Make great savings with discounts at local and national retailers
- Be part of a movement that helps others and transforms lives To join, visit [wea.org.uk/become-member](http://wea.org.uk/become-member)

You can also support us as a volunteer. Volunteers give their time freely and make a difference in their communities. You can see the range of volunteer roles we offer at [wea.org.uk/volunteer](http://wea.org.uk/volunteer)

Active volunteers are also eligible for free membership. By volunteering with us you can gain valuable skills for employment and further training or utilise your skills to make things happen. If you are interested in volunteering, ask your tutor or email: [volunteering@wea.ac.uk](mailto:volunteering@wea.ac.uk)





**It's made me  
inquisitive about  
the world again.  
And it's made me  
want to take part.**

## 7. Unacceptable behaviour

At the WEA, we try to keep rules for learner conduct to a minimum. However, it is important that you know what we consider to be unacceptable behaviour and what happens when someone behaves unacceptably.



## What we expect of learners:

If your tutor feels that you are not keeping to the agreement, the following will happen:

- 1 He or she will first discuss the matter with you and agree with you how to tackle the problem.
- 2 If he/she is not satisfied with the result, they will pass the matter on to their Course Manager who will discuss it with you and see if a resolution is possible.
- 3 If there is no resolution or improvement, or you do not carry out suggested actions to help you improve, the Course Manager may then take disciplinary action. You may be given:
  - A verbal warning
  - A written warning.
- 4 If there is still no improvement in your conduct, or you do not carry out suggested actions to help you improve, the Course Manager will refer the matter to a member of the Regional Management Team. If there is no resolution, you may be asked to leave the course.

## What the WEA expects of learners is also set out in the following Agreement and policies:

- WEA Learning Agreement
- WEA Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy
- WEA Online Safety Policy in Teaching and Learning
- Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- WEA Unacceptable Student Behaviour Procedure

[wea.org.uk/resources/policy-docs](http://wea.org.uk/resources/policy-docs)



**My course built my confidence and prepared me for my role as a support worker for adults with mental and physical disabilities**



## 8. Data protection and GDPR

Under the new General Data Protection Regulation, all organisations need to be clear about what they are using your personal details for. This section is intended to show you how the WEA uses your personal data.

At Worker's' Educational Association ("WEA"), we are committed to protecting and respecting your privacy, our Privacy policy explains when and why we collect personal information, how we use it, the conditions under which we may disclose it to others and how we will keep it secure. Our policy applies to all learners and other service users.

For more information on the Privacy policy please visit <https://www.wea.org.uk/privacy>



## 9. Feedback, suggestions, and complaints

We would like to hear about any part of your WEA experience, as your feedback helps us to improve our service. You can do this by contacting the WEA Learner Enrolment and Onboarding Team emailing [learnersupport@wea.ac.uk](mailto:learnersupport@wea.ac.uk) or calling **0300 303 3464**.

To make a complaint please read through the WEA Complaint Procedures, this can be found within the WEA policy section [wea.org.uk/resources/policy-docs](https://wea.org.uk/resources/policy-docs)



## 10. WEA Contact Details

**General information for learners**  
**National line number 0300 303 3464\***

### **Learner Enrolment and Onboarding Team:**

For general enquiries

E. [learnersupport@wea.ac.uk](mailto:learnersupport@wea.ac.uk)

\*For information on phone rates please read our terms of use



For all written enquires please use the following address:

WEA,  
First Floor, Coach  
Works, 21 The  
Calls, Leeds,  
LS2 7EH

To contact a regional office please visit:

[wea.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/departments](http://wea.org.uk/about-us/contact-us/departments)

T. 0300 303 3464  
E. learnersupport@wea.ac.uk  
W. wea.org.uk

 @WEAadulted  
 weaadulteducation



Education & Skills  
Funding Agency



INVESTORS  
IN PEOPLE



European Union  
European  
Social Fund



The WEA is a charity registered in England and Wales (no. 1112775) and in Scotland (no. SC039239).