

# **Letter from Zack Polanski AM about Local Essential Skills provision letter**

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Dear Sadiq,

### **Local Essential Skills provision**

I am writing to you as constituents have contacted me about a threat to the delivery of essential education services.

They tell me that staff at Morley College received a formal notice from their HR department advising them that the college has begun a consultation process for a proposed restructure within the Essential Skills area. They say this is in response to a significant reduction in the GLA Adult Skills Fund allocation and the confirmation that the GLA will no longer fund over-delivery for the academic year 2025-26.

Constituents tell me that this restructure will drastically reduce the delivery of English, Maths, and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) at the North Kensington campus, with the college also intending to centralise Essential Skills delivery at the Waterloo campus which is miles away from North Kensington and not easily accessible for local residents.

This proposal risks removing accessible and life-changing education for some of the most disadvantaged residents in North Kensington. Local people rely on these English, Maths, and ESOL classes to gain employment, attend further education, and participate fully in the community.

They are extremely concerned that this decision will worsen inequality in their area and undermine the GLA's commitment to widening participation and supporting lifelong learning.

Would you be able to review the Adult Skills Fund allocation and its impact on deprived communities and work with the college to ensure that provision is still provided to those who need it most?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Zack Polanski  
Green Party Member of the London Assembly

Dear Zack,

Thank you for your enquiry regarding Local Essential Skills provision. I am sorry for the delay in responding.

I am committed to ensuring that Londoners can gain the skills they need to progress into better jobs, boost earnings and improve confidence and mental wellbeing. Since I was given control over adult skills in London in 2019, more than a million Londoners have received free skills education or training thanks to City Hall funding.

In February 2025, the Department for Education communicated that there would be reductions to the Greater London Authority (GLA) Adult Skills Fund (ASF) and Free Courses for Jobs budget from the academic year 2025/26 onwards of 3.3 per cent. Recognising the difficult situation as a result of the lower allocation next year, I have stepped in and provided an additional amount of £7.9m to ensure colleges and training providers can keep delivering courses to Londoners. This will help absorb some of the reduction for the academic year 2025/26.

You are right to point out the importance of English, Maths and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses for Londoners. That is why I continue to fund delivery of English, Maths and ESOL to the extent of £118.2m, and since August 2021, I have funded more than 295,000 Londoners to take these courses through the ASF.

I am committed to widening participation and access to skills for more Londoners, and that is why through my Community Outreach programme, I am funding community organisations to raise awareness of adult education and employment support opportunities.

My Deputy Mayor for Business and Growth and I will continue to work with Morley College and all our further education providers to protect learning opportunities for Londoners and ensure adult education and training continue to support inclusive economic growth.

Yours sincerely,  
Sir Sadiq Khan

Mayor of London

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