

MULTIPLY CAPABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAMME

Employer Engagement

ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

This resource is aimed to provide some top tips and guidance to address the common challenges of, Employer Engagement within Multiply. The content included in this resource has been drawn from discussions with providers, surveys, and learnings from the Employer Engagement webinar. We hope you will use the resources to promote discussion, support your planning and encourage creative approaches.



Find more resources and links to join webinars and forums



WHAT IS MULTIPLY?

Multiply is a government initiative aimed to support adults to develop their maths skills. The DfE has funded the Multiply Capability Support Programme to encourage providers to share best practice, network, overcome challenges and develop strategies to increase the reach and engagement throughout programme.



Find out more about the programme



Why is working with employers important?

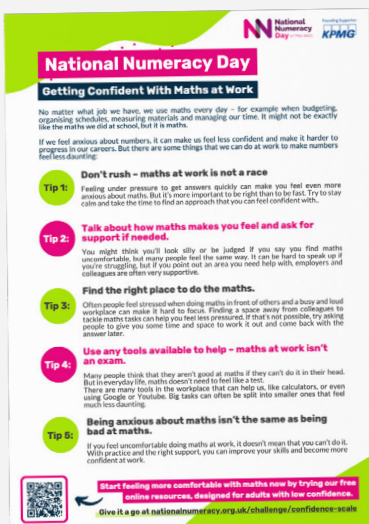
Most people with poor maths skills are in employment. Therefore, to encourage the prospective learner into learning, the learning organisations need the support of the employer to provide premises and time off.

Maths in the workplace may be different from the maths studied at school. Maths in the workplace is rarely used in isolation, although this might be how it is taught in school. Maths in the workplace may be hidden within tasks and may seem trivial. The Sutton Trust (in *The Employment Equation*) have highlighted how employees may be able to enter information, but unable to check results, spot rogue figures or deal with unexpected situations. It is estimated that the cost to employers in lost productivity is £3.2 billion per year.

Employers may need to be supported to understand why and how their employees could be supported to develop these skills.

Employers could help by saying what skills they are looking for, so these areas can be included in courses for the unemployed/inactive which will get individuals a job with that employer.

Messages to share with employers



Getting into confident with maths at work



Impact of poor basic literacy and numeracy on English employers (pg 39)



Research Briefing

Top Tips from other learning organisations



Find a topic employers are interested in for their staff to learn, such as spreadsheets. You can use this as the “hook” to run in work classes.



If you are in a Local Authority, use your council links such as housing to identify venues where prospective learners could be. For example, those who are struggling with cost of living and feeding their families.



Use employers’ premises as prospective learners will be more comfortable in an environment they know.



To achieve early recruitment wins by building on existing relationships. For example, apprenticeships or courses already being provided to employers such as health and safety and food hygiene.



Consider the time of your offer. You need to be flexible, for example cleaners may be more likely to attend a class after their morning shifts at 8am.



When developing the learner journey think ahead and progress learners quickly onto qualification adult skills budget courses.



Keep the relationships going - they will be helpful in the future.



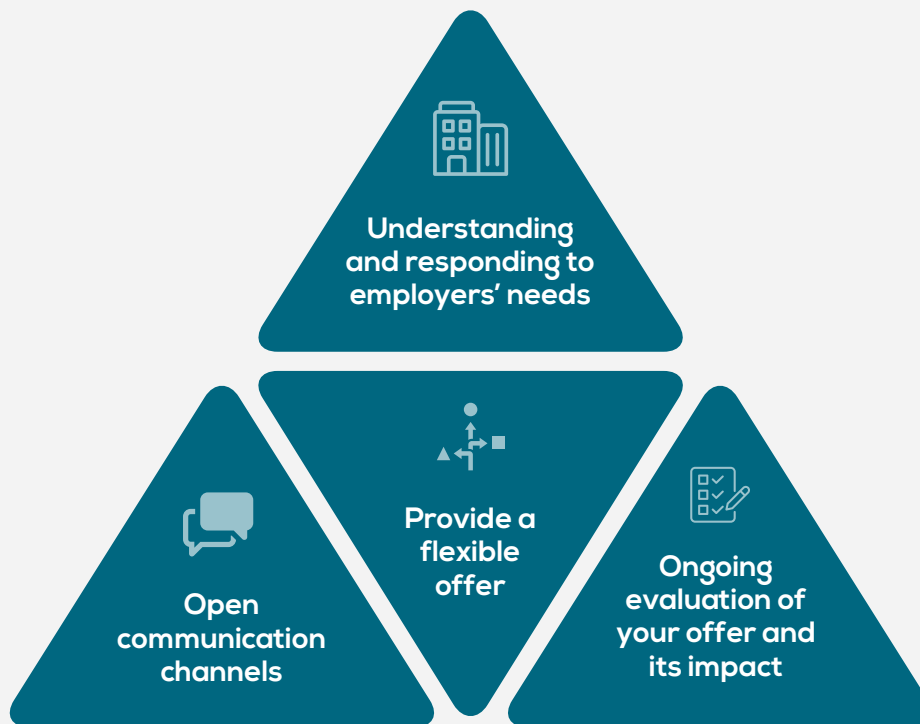
Explain to learners that the level 2 Functional Skills or GCSE is really beneficial to them and helps to achieve higher salaries.

“ **Good numeracy is the best protection against unemployment, low wages and poor health**

ANDREAS SCHLEICHER, OECD



Making connections and building relationships



Responding to employers' needs

Speaking the employers' language:

Research the organisation.

Explore the words and phrases you and your employers use and consider how you can make sure your language is as appropriate as possible. Use 'plain English' – education is full of abbreviations and acronyms with which employers may not be familiar.

Consider the range of staff an employer recruits e.g. the wider healthcare team in the [NHS](#) and how they might benefit from improved maths skills. Another example is schools who employ [support staff](#) such as: ground staff; lunchtime supervisors; and teaching assistants etc.

Hold meetings at times that suit the employers e.g. business breakfasts.

Assessment and gap analysis:

Develop an understanding of the specific maths skills that are essential for the workforce of the industry/business.

Conduct assessments to determine the current maths proficiency levels of the employees. Identify any gaps between the required maths skills and the skills employees possess.



Not all learners want to learn online

Responding to employers' needs

Demonstrate value

Employers may not see the links between maths skills and their business, and how maths skills can lead to economies e.g. through fewer errors, improved problem solving or improved digital skills or reduced turnover of staff. Retention is cheaper than recruitment – research by the CIPD suggest that few businesses calculate the cost of labour turnover. Perhaps you can help?

Employers may be concerned about the time and resources required – they may not be familiar with the funding for Multiply.

Provide employers with a cost-benefit analysis that outlines the potential return on investment (ROI) of improving maths skills among their employees. Highlight how the upfront investment in training can lead to long-term benefits for the business.

Promote upskilling opportunities:

Encourage ongoing upskilling and professional development opportunities for employees to continuously improve their maths skills. This could involve offering advanced courses or certification in specific mathematical areas relevant to their job roles. Investigate synergy with other learning opportunities e.g. via unions.



Lever in all different funding streams.

“ We were seen as a trusted brand because they [the employer] sent out our marketing on their comms, on their own website



Opening communication channels

Respond quickly and positively to queries from employers – be ready for their enquiries. Who might be the first person an employer speaks to in your organisation – do they know about your offer and/or who to refer the employer to?

Reach out to employers or their HR departments to initiate discussions about their maths provision needs. Explain your intentions to support their workforce development through improved maths skills.

Use already existing links and strengthen relationships with existing contacts e.g. levy payer employers' networks.

Look for head offices of national organisations which are in your region.

Local Authorities have extensive lists of employer links in their geographical areas e.g. in their enterprise and business growth teams. They will be in regular contact with employers through newsletters etc. Also consider a Local Authority's many partners.

Consolidate your database of employers across your organisation so that you are giving coherent messages to potential employers, covering all of your organisation's offer e.g. apprenticeships, functional skills, T levels and Multiply.

Explore partnerships with other educational institutions, or government agencies such as DWP that offer resources and support for adult maths education. Leverage these partnerships to enhance the quality and accessibility of maths provision programmes.

Attend local business exhibitions. You may find the following useful:

- Your local [Chamber of Commerce](#) – A source of intelligence about what their members/employers need as well as links to actual employers.
- [The Federation of Small Businesses](#)
- Professional bodies
- LinkedIn can be used to source contacts.
- Eventbrite (search 'business' or 'networking' in your local area)
- [Findnetworkingevents](#)
- Facebook
- DWP [jobs fairs](#)
- Head Teacher Conferences (Targeting Teaching Assistants and other Support Staff in schools).

“ **The more you talk the more you find those little cracks that you can come in and be the filler for** ”

Providing a flexible offer

Customised training programs – listen to the employer:

Employers are often best placed to identify activities that provide opportunities for developing maths skills and that benefit the company.

Develop customised/tailored maths training programmes specific to the needs of the employer.

If possible, embed the maths practice into other training.

Flexible delivery methods:

Accommodate the schedules and preferences of employers and employees (consider their shift patterns – they may be attending in their own time): twilight; day; evening; in-person; online; or blended learning approaches; same learning at different times so sessions can be accessed flexibly.

“ If anyone takes anything away [from the webinar], flexibility is the message

Continuous evaluation and improvement

Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of your maths provision programmes and collect feedback from both employers and learners/employees. Use this feedback to make necessary adjustments and improvements to the training initiatives.

Use RARPA for non- qualification courses.

Be ready to move learners onto level 2 programmes.

Look beyond Multiply for funding.

“ The informal meetings were invaluable



Other Resources and Sources of Inspiration

Department for Education

[DfE and Skills for Life Business Home website](#) addresses the employer and covers:

- Benefits for your business
- Cost
- Your responsibilities
- Find out more

Learning and Work

[Learning and Work: Multiply and UK Shared Prosperity Fund: Prospectus for Local Government](#)

[Learning at Work Week](#)

National Older Workers Week: [25 to 29 November 2024](#)

Social Mobility Commission Employers Toolkit

You might also find the [Social Mobility Commission's Employer's toolkit](#) useful when planning your approaches and the messages you want to share. The toolkit's key message is that 'people are your most valuable asset'.

“ There are employers out there that really want this to happen and therefore you should be contacting people with confidence

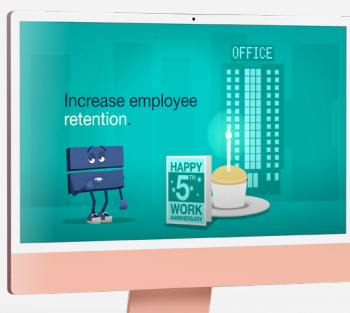
“ None of our successes happened overnight

West Yorkshire Combined Authority

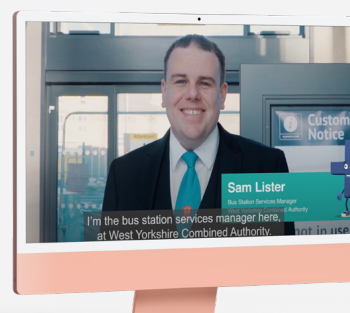


- 746,000 adults (52%) in West Yorkshire are estimated to be at entry level and below in terms of maths skills.

- While a quarter (1/4) of organisations in West Yorkshire suggest that they need to improve their employees' basic maths skills.



Multiply animation video for businesses and employees



Multiply business maths support case study (METRO)

“ *Keep going and knocking on those doors and keep having those conversations and finding those solutions.* ”

Key messages

What issues are businesses facing and how can you help – this is your hook.

Different businesses will need different approaches, so flexibility is key.

Meeting the potential learners will help you find out what they want (and if they want to be involved at all) and other information e.g. where they live, their aspirations - can improved maths skills support them to achieve their goals?

“ *What is the maths behind Excel, do they understand the formulas?’* ”

Randomised Control Trials (RCT)

[Tribal](#) are conducting a series of Randomised Control Trials for the Multiply programme.

If you'd like to get involved:

 [Click here for more information](#)

 [Contact Tribal directly](#)

Useful contacts

 [Department for Education](#)

 [National Numeracy](#)

 [National Numeracy Day 2024](#)

