

A not-for-profit awarding organisation  
supporting educational achievement  
for all learners.



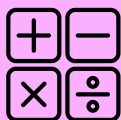
**Vocational  
Qualifications**



**Access to HE  
Diplomas**



**Apprenticeship  
Assessments**



**Functional  
Skills**



**Micro-  
credentials**



**Qualification  
Development**



**Skills Passport**



**Badge of  
Excellence**



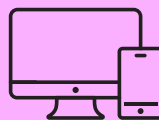
**Remote  
Invigilation**



**Technical  
Qualifications**



**Experienced  
Worker  
Assessments**



**Essential  
Digital Skills**

If you would like to know more about our offer, contact  
the team on [enquiries@openawards.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@openawards.org.uk)

## Support your learners with

- ✓ Assessment and delivery training.
- ✓ Approachable customer service.
- ✓ Curriculum development services.
- ✓ Specialist quality assurance.
- ✓ Online portal with best practice and additional resources.

**Over 370  
qualifications from  
Entry Level 1 to Level 7  
to help your learners  
achieve their goals.**

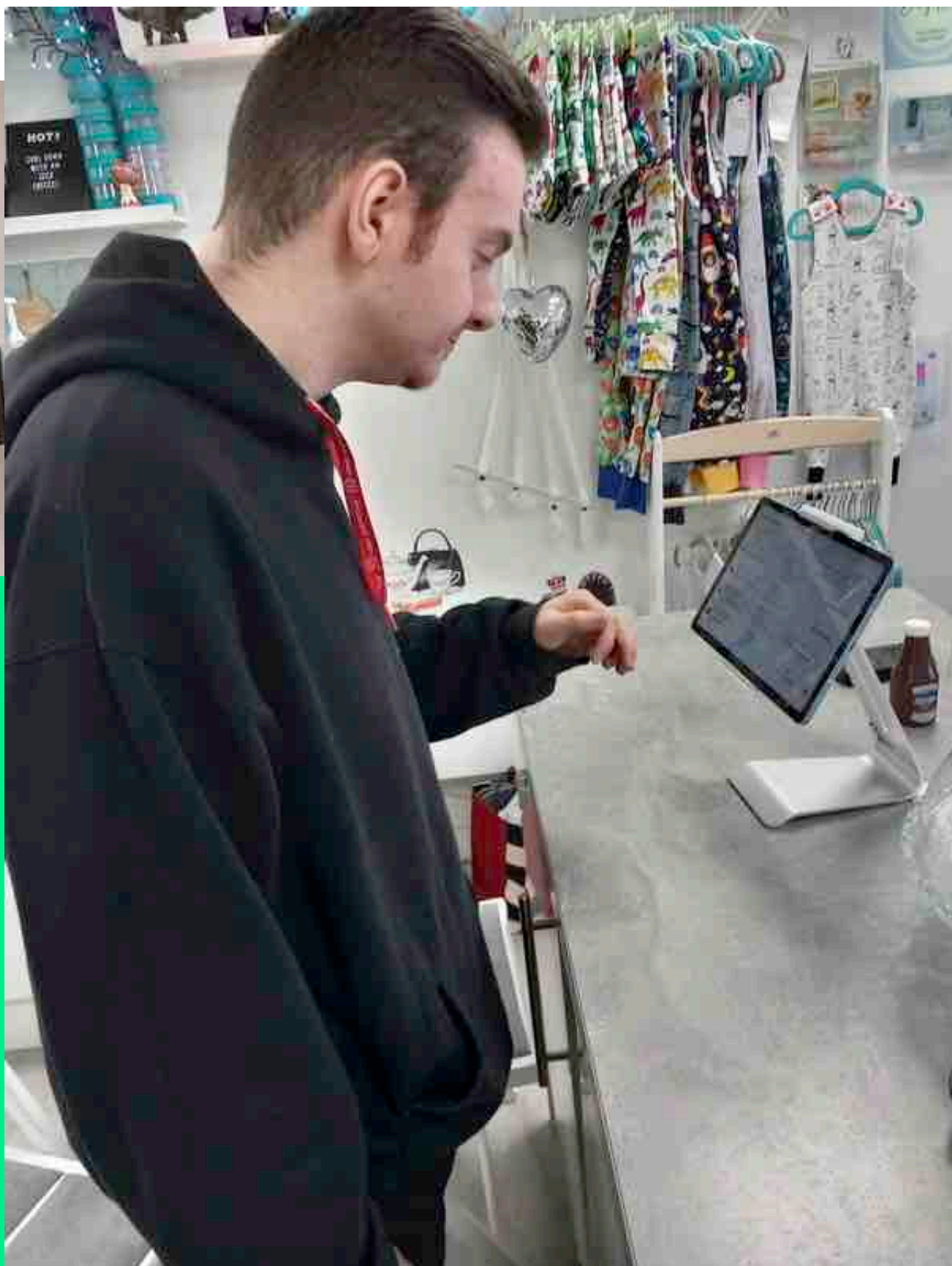
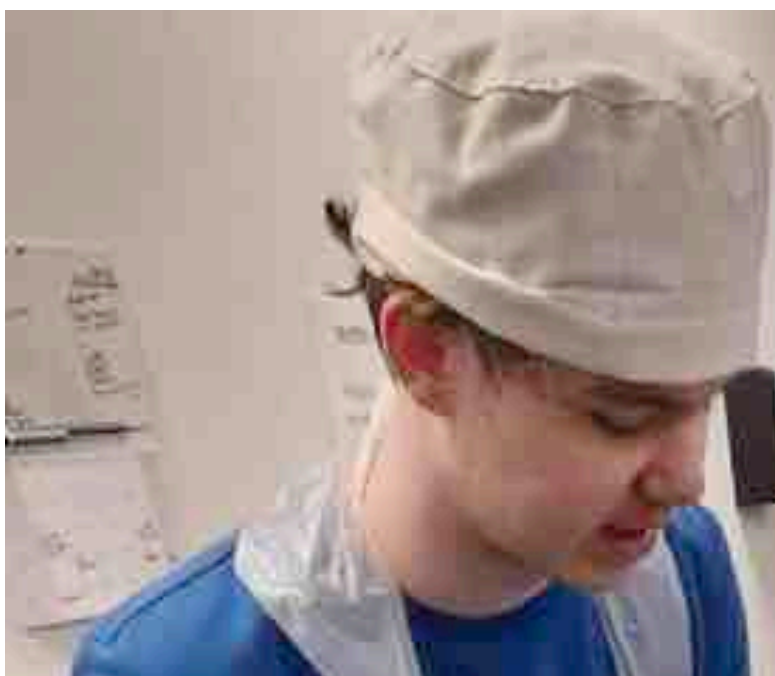
**Changing  
lives  
through  
learning.**

**Learn more.**



National Supported Internship Day

# how **Pure College** empower young people with SEND



# Pure College's supported internships

Pure College offers a three-year supported employment programme to support young people with SEND.

Throughout their programme, their learners develop skills for life and skills for work through a mixture of training, internal placements and work experience.

By taking a bespoke approach, they enable their learners to discover their passions, build confidence and develop the key skills they need for their dream careers.





# how it works

**Year 1: Ambition for Life**

**Year 2: Ambition for Work**

**Year 3: Supported Internship**



# preparing learners

‘By the time they have come up to the supported internship, they've got experience of the world of work. They've got some idea of being professional and what behaviors are expected of you.’

***Caroline Morgan***  
*Senior Employment Officer*

“The college is about building the students up to the supported internship. There's lots of Pure support there for the students.”

***Kellie Thompson***  
*Employment Officer*



# trying new things

Pure College creates a vocational profile for each learner to match their opportunities to their skills and passions. Their learners then complete at least three placements with local employers.

Through trial and error, their learners can explore new avenues and decide on their own career path.



# employer challenges

“A lot of employers, still, sadly, have a perception of young people with SEND.

They have a perception of autism, they have a perception of learning disabilities, and it can take reframing from one of our students for them to go ‘this is amazing. This young person is doing really well.’

Out of all of our students in our pilot year, they all got offered work.”

***Caroline Morgan***  
*Senior Employment  
Officer*





# Tom's dream job

During his internship at Transport for Greater Manchester, Tom's passion for, and knowledge of, transport proved invaluable. This encouraged them to develop a customised role for him as Bus Station Assistant.



# how we work with Pure College

We work with Pure College as their awarding body. Our qualifications help their students build and demonstrate their skillsets.

They offer a range of our 'Preparing for Life and Work' qualifications, including:

- Year 1 - Award in Skills for Further Learning and Employment, Entry Level 3
- Year 2 - Award in Employability and Professional Development Level 1



**Find out more about our  
'Preparation for Life and  
Work' qualifications at:**

**[openawards.org.uk](https://openawards.org.uk)**

2023-  
2024

# Impact Report

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# CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES

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The objectives of the charity are exclusively charitable and are to advance the education of those who have previously benefited least from educational opportunities by:


- **Promoting** and **widening participation** in education, learning and training.
- **Improving** the **quality** and **flexibility** of education, employment, learning and training provision.
- **Improving access** to learning opportunities and facilitating progression to further learning and in particular through the award of credit and credit-based qualifications.



Heather Akehurst, CEO

**“2023-24 has been another successful year for Open Awards and we are delighted to see that we are supporting more learners and apprentices to achieve their qualifications and progress to their next level of learning or employment. This report is a chance to celebrate everyone who has achieved Open Awards qualifications and courses, and all the providers that support them through their education programmes. We look forward to the next 12 months at Open Awards as we continue to focus on the role we play as a charity, awarding organisation, End-point Assessment organisation and Access Validating Agency, in supporting our providers and learners/apprentices and ultimately, changing lives through learning.”**





Open Awards seeks to achieve these objectives by working with local and national government, colleges, schools, academies, employers, private training providers, and voluntary sector organisations to provide qualifications, accredited training courses and End-point Assessment, all of which have the potential to lead to enhanced employment opportunities.

Success for Open Awards is determined by the number of organisations we work with, the number of apprentices for whom we achieve meaningful outcomes, the number of learners and the qualifications they achieve. In addition, we capture learner information on the difference our qualifications and, where applicable, bursaries, make to their learner journey.

**33,292**

**Learners registered**

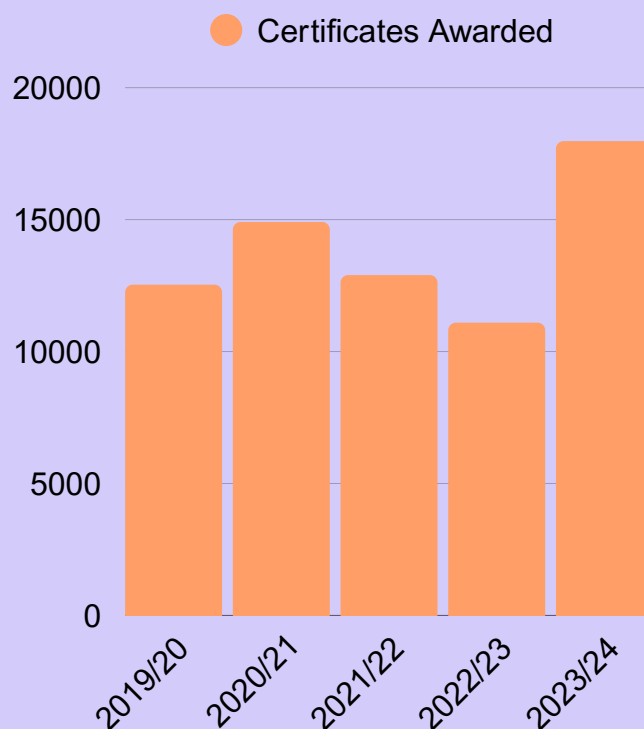
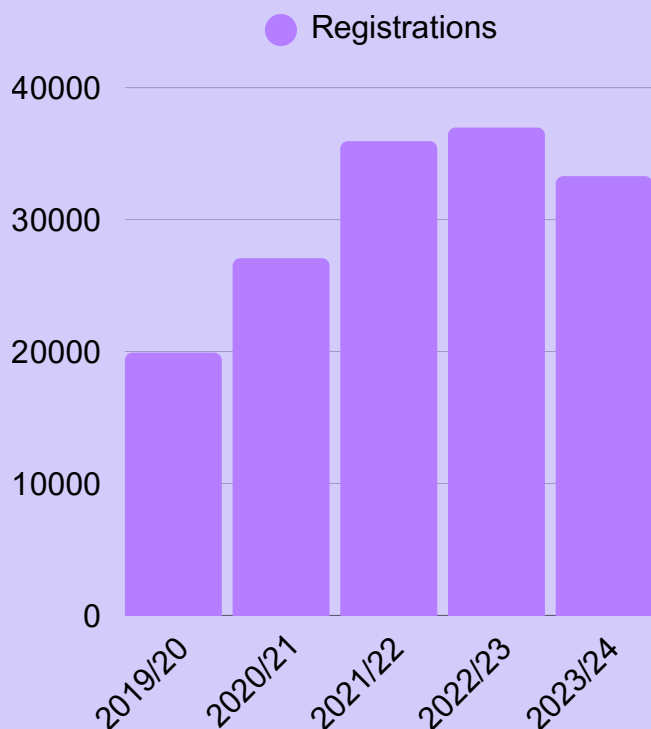
**17,973**

**Certificates issued**

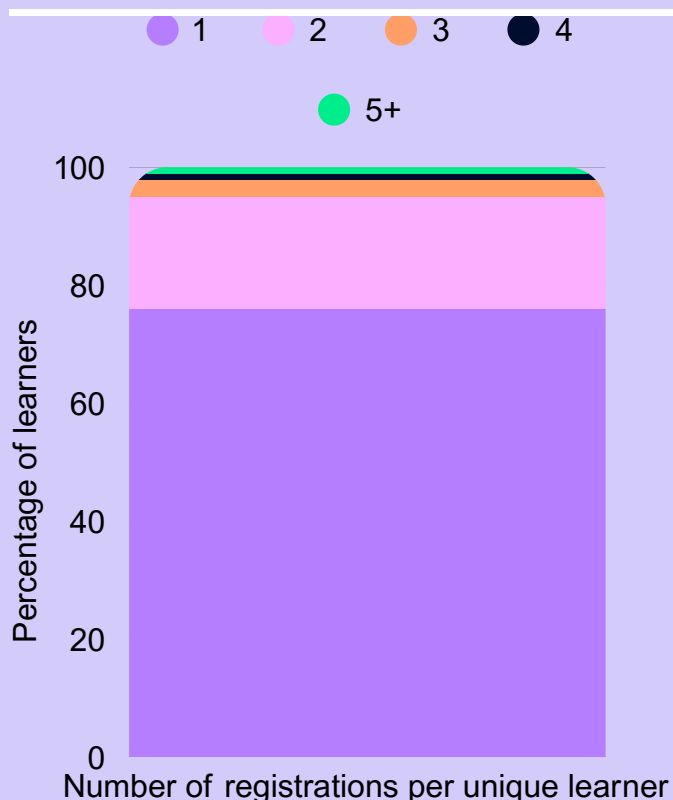
**614**

**Approved providers**

# OUR REACH



The number of learner registrations has remained stable over the last three years, showing a sustained increase from 2019/20 figures. The number of certificates awarded has increased. More learners are achieving the qualifications and courses they are registered to.

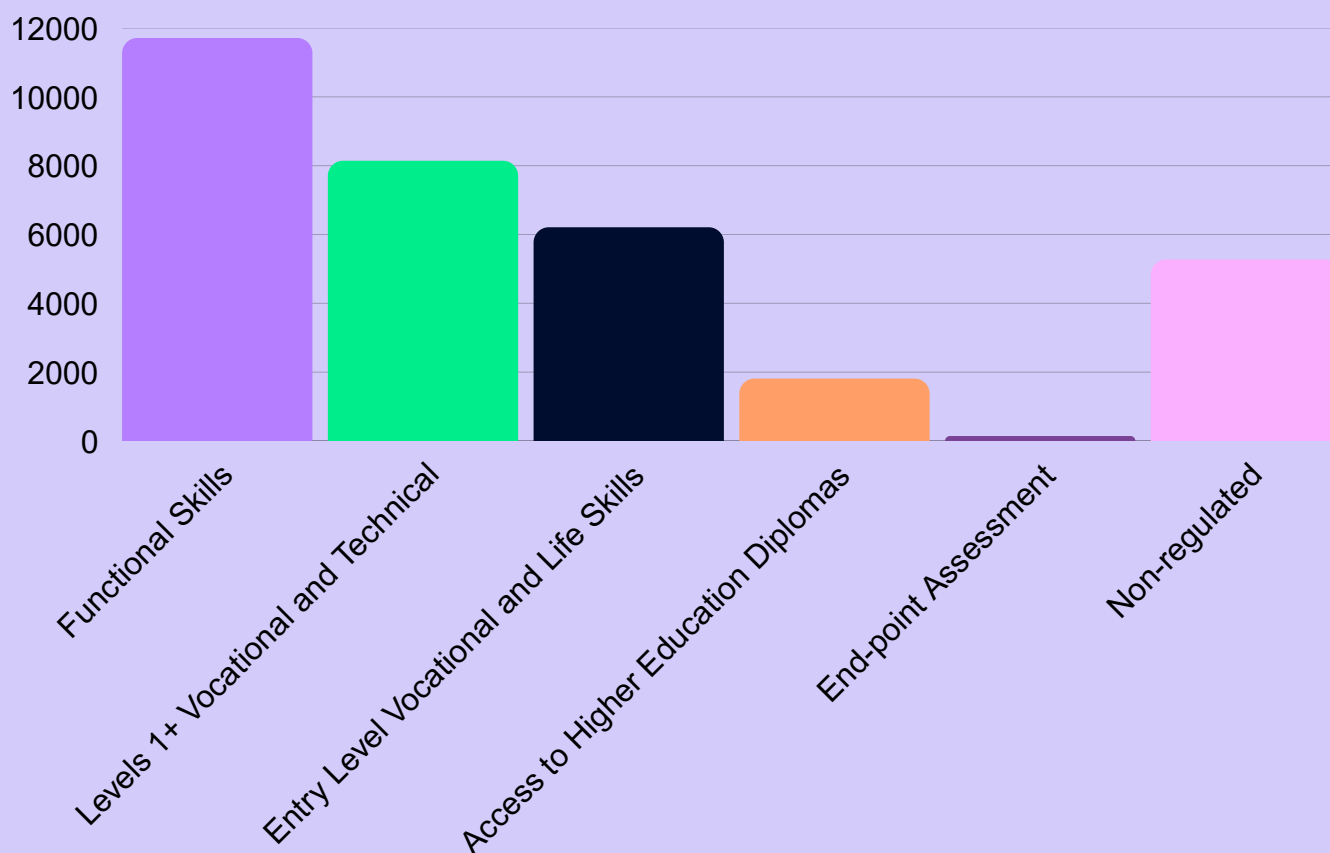


The majority of learners (77%) were registered to one qualification or course in the 2023/24 academic year.

19% of learners were registered to two qualifications or courses in-year. The majority of these were to both Functional Skills English and mathematics qualifications.

Only 5% of learners were registered to three or more qualifications in-year.

# OUR REACH



## Types of Qualifications

Whilst Functional Skills qualifications do not generate a significant proportion of overall income for Open Awards, they do account for nearly one third of our learner registrations. We are committed to continuing to invest in Functional Skills qualifications and associated assessments and support materials in line with our charitable objectives.

We have continued to see a significant number of learners across vocational and technical qualifications at Levels 2 - 5, including those taking higher level qualifications. This is as a result of our investment in developing occupational qualifications that support learners enter skilled employment through alternative education routes.

We have continued to support SEND providers through our Entry Levels, Level 1 and Level 2 provision, Our SEND forums remain popular. We saw Access to HE registrations increase slightly during 2023/24, with a focus on reaching more learners from September 2024. End-point Assessment was fully launched in 2023/24, and we are starting to see growth in this area.

# OUR REACH



## Subject Sector Areas

Preparation for Life and Work remains our largest sector with the most qualifications available and the most learners registered. However, this includes Functional Skills qualifications. Employability and Professional Development, Individual Capital Development and Skills for Further Learning and Employment also remain popular across our providers and learners.

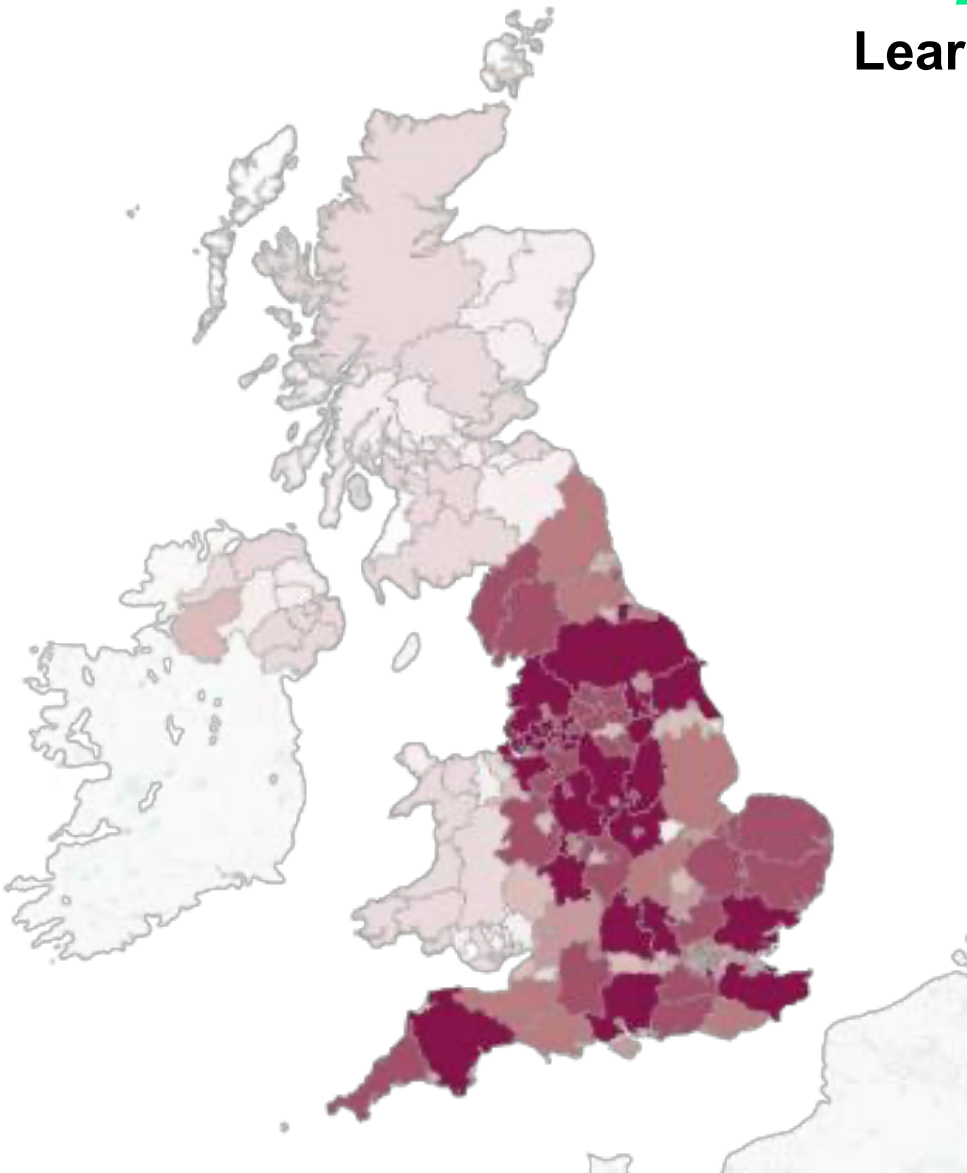
We have seen a significant increase in Health and Social Care qualifications, including the development of a new Level 2 Adult Social Care Certificate, and continue to see year-on-year growth in both Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care, and Digital Technology Sectors.

# OUR LEARNERS

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# 33,292

Learners registered



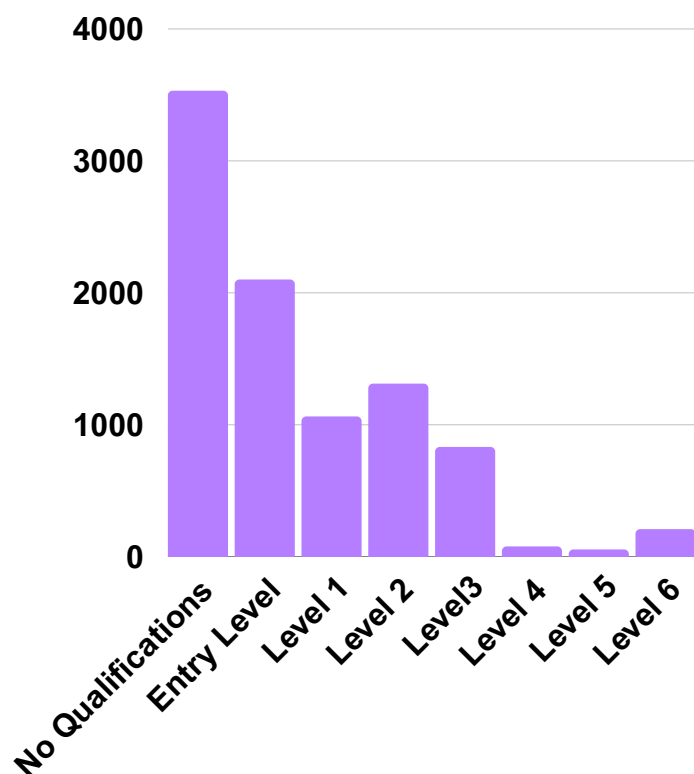
## Geographical Location of Learners

Open Awards has focused growth on North-west and Yorkshire regions and the 'M6 corridor'. In addition, we are seeing some growth in pockets across South England. It is positive to see our reach expand right across England. Our approval with QiW in 2023 has resulted in a slow and steady increase in qualifications offered in Wales, and we expect this to increase more significantly in 2024/25 and 2025/26 academic years.



# OUR LEARNERS

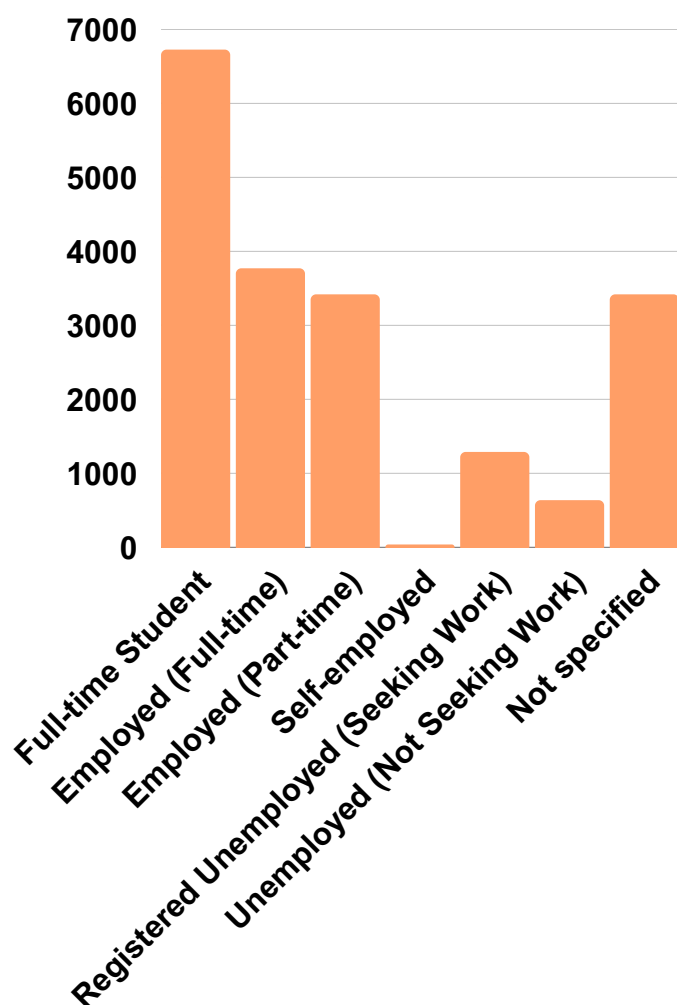
● Prior Attainment Levels



## Prior Attainment Levels

A significant number of learners are starting an Open Awards course with no prior qualifications, or Entry Level and Level 1. This is evidence of our continuing to work towards our mission of supporting educational achievement for all and creating opportunities for those with the lowest previous levels of attainment. This is perhaps most stark when looking at Functional Skills registrations and the progression through to Level 2.

● Employment Status



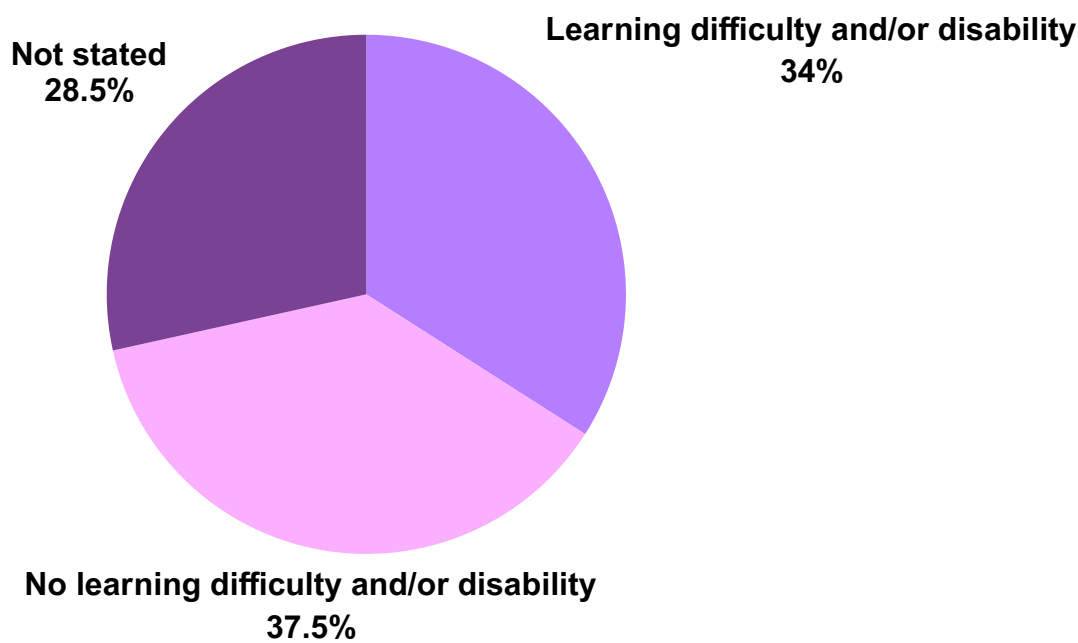
## Employment Status

The majority of Open Awards learners are full-time students and are completing a full-time study programme, or equivalent, to support their progression through education and into the workplace. Of those in employment, a large proportion are on an Access to HE Diploma or completing Functional Skills qualifications alongside an apprenticeship. We have seen a small increase in learners who are registered unemployed as a result of our growth in the third sector and with local authorities.

# OUR LEARNERS

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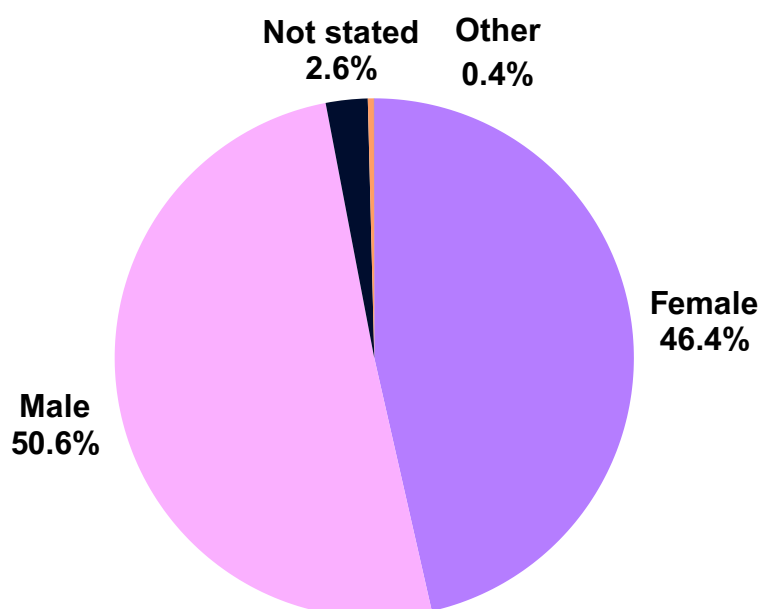
## Learners with a disability or learning difficulty



Open Awards has maintained our commitment to developing qualifications and courses specifically aimed at learners with SEND. This includes supporting the roll-out of Access to HE within SEND sixth forms and independent specialist providers. 34% of all learners have identified a learning difficulty and/or disability, demonstrating our commitment to our mission and values. However, there is a significant gap in data which will be addressed through 2024/25 academic year.

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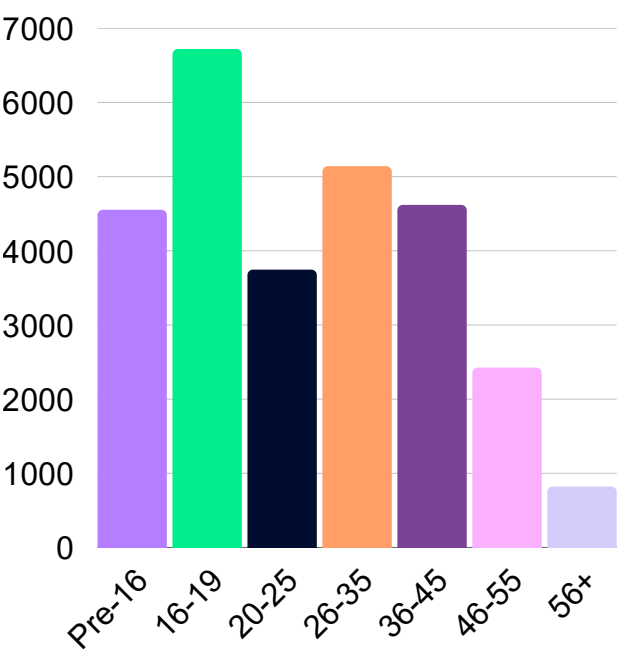
## Gender



There is a relatively even split between male and female learners across Open Awards provision. We have seen a small increase in the number of learners who have either not stated, or selected 'other'. This may be, in part, due to the improvement in the data collection and the reduction of blank fields. We will continue to monitor this over the next 12 months.

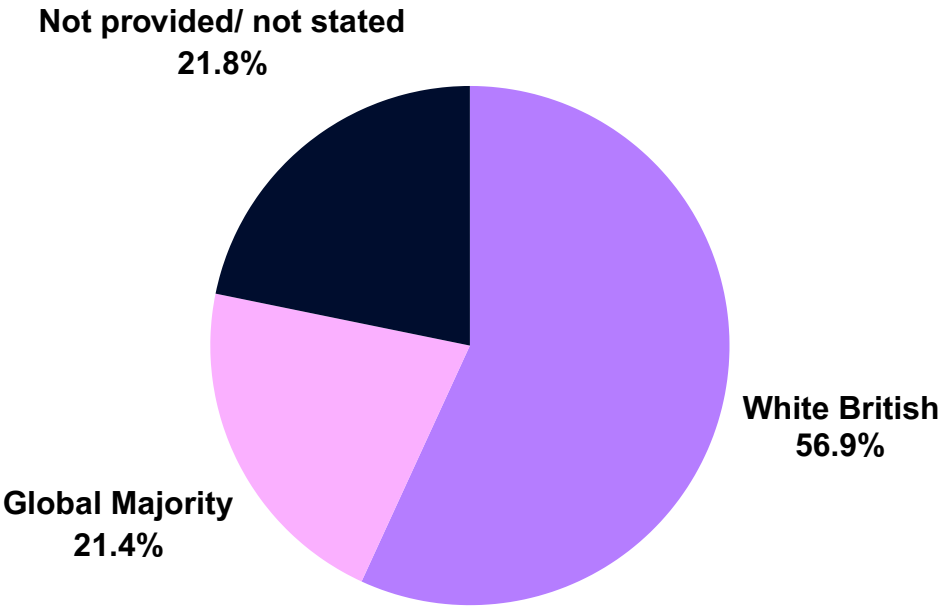
# OUR LEARNERS

## Age



The majority of Open Awards learners are now within 16-19 age category, in line with the increase in our engagement with schools and the overall shift towards younger learners on Access to HE programmes. However, we are still supporting learners across all age groups, including older learners returning to learning or re-training. We anticipate this trend continuing with a focus on future skills, including digital and technology.

## Ethnicity



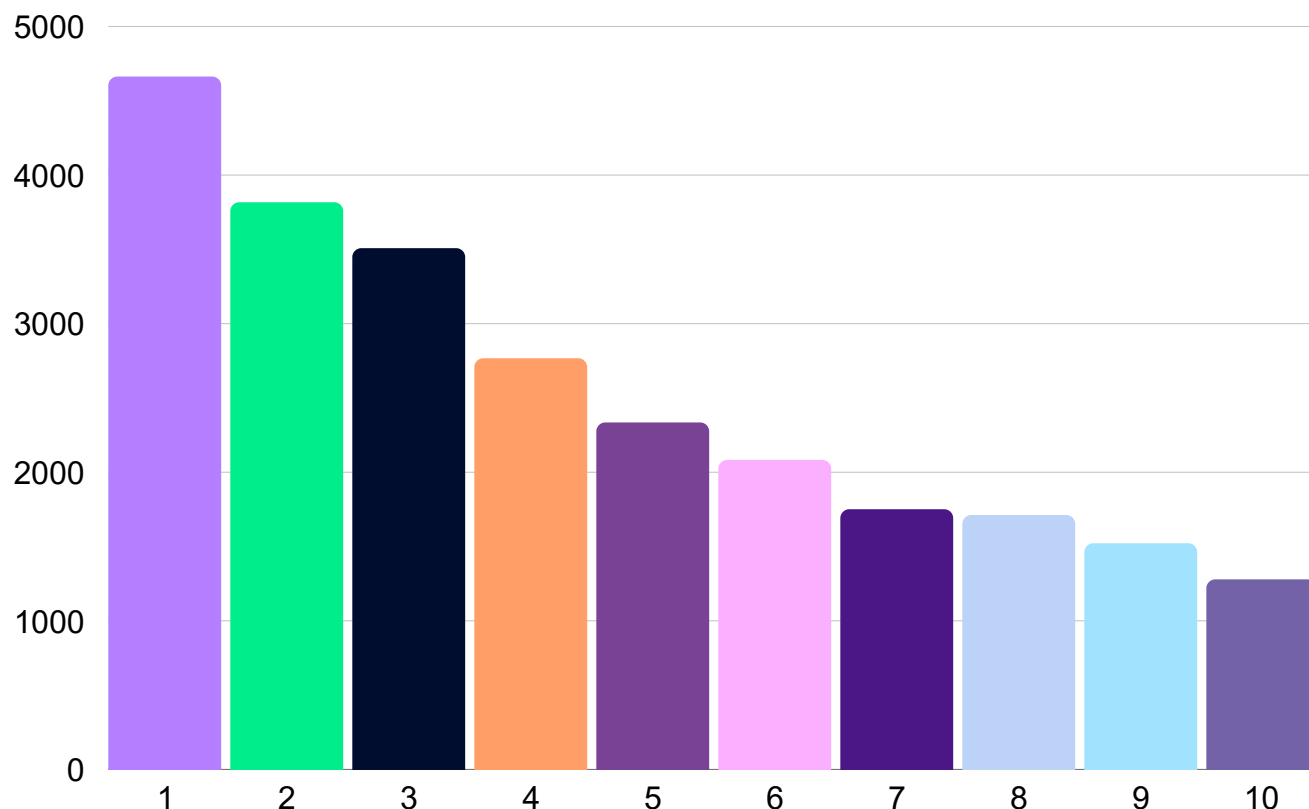
### Breakdown of Global Majority (%)

White (Other)	21%
Asian Other	19%
Black British	18%
Mixed Ethnic Background	13%
Asian British	12%
Black Other	11%
Any Other Ethnic Group	7%

The majority of learners who provided their ethnicity are White British. However, this does not, in all cases, reflect the demographics of the geographical areas we work in. There are significant gaps in data which is likely resulting in anomalies. This will be reviewed in 2024/25 and 2025/26 to identify any trends.

# OUR LEARNERS

## Indices of Deprivation

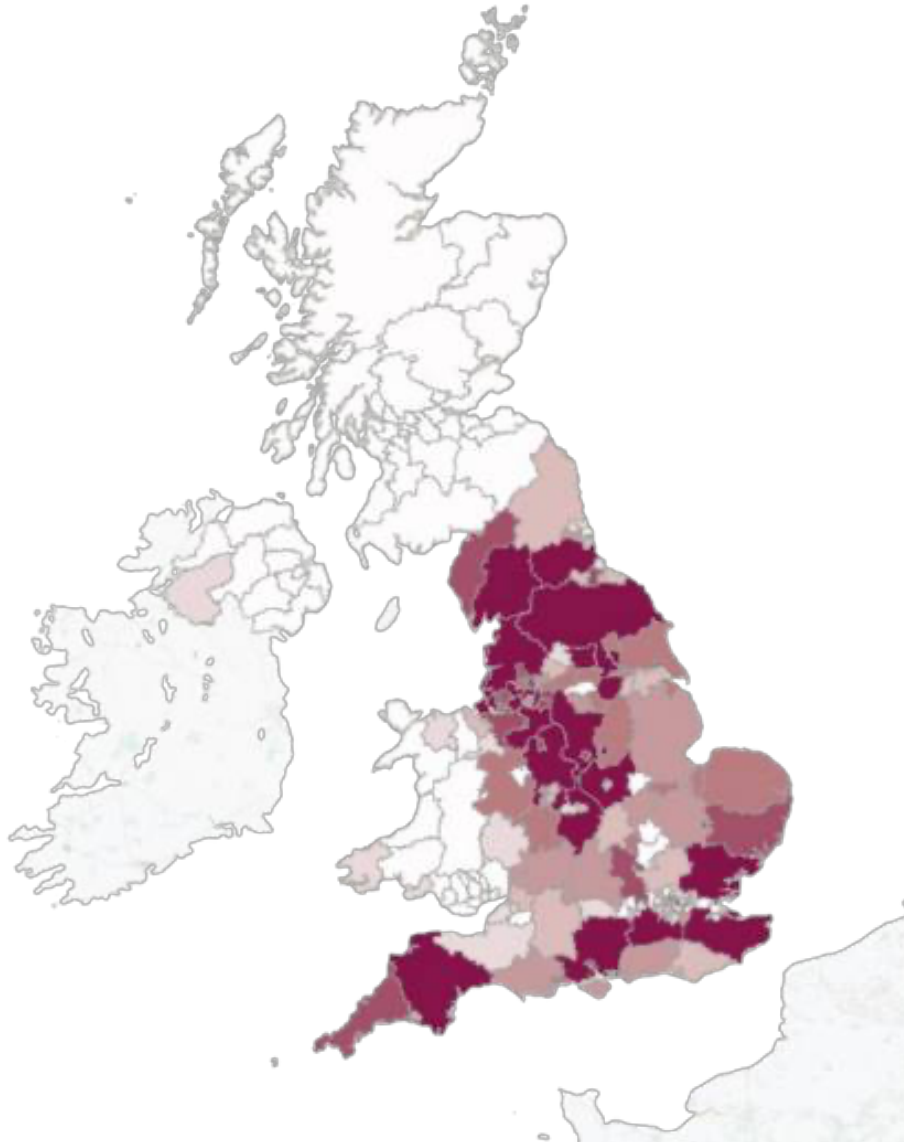


The above chart illustrates our learner registrations against the indices of deprivation specifically for Education, with 1 equalling the lowest decile; and 10 the highest decile. Therefore, the majority of learners we are reaching have the lowest access to education. There are some anomalies in the data where provider postcodes have been supplied, but the overall trend remains the same. This illustrates Open Awards' focus on alternative education and supporting educational achievement for all. Further analysis is required to look at which qualifications are being delivered within the 1-5 range to assess the outcomes within these areas. This will be reviewed in 2024/25 and 2025/26.

# OUR PROVIDERS

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## Geographical Location of Providers



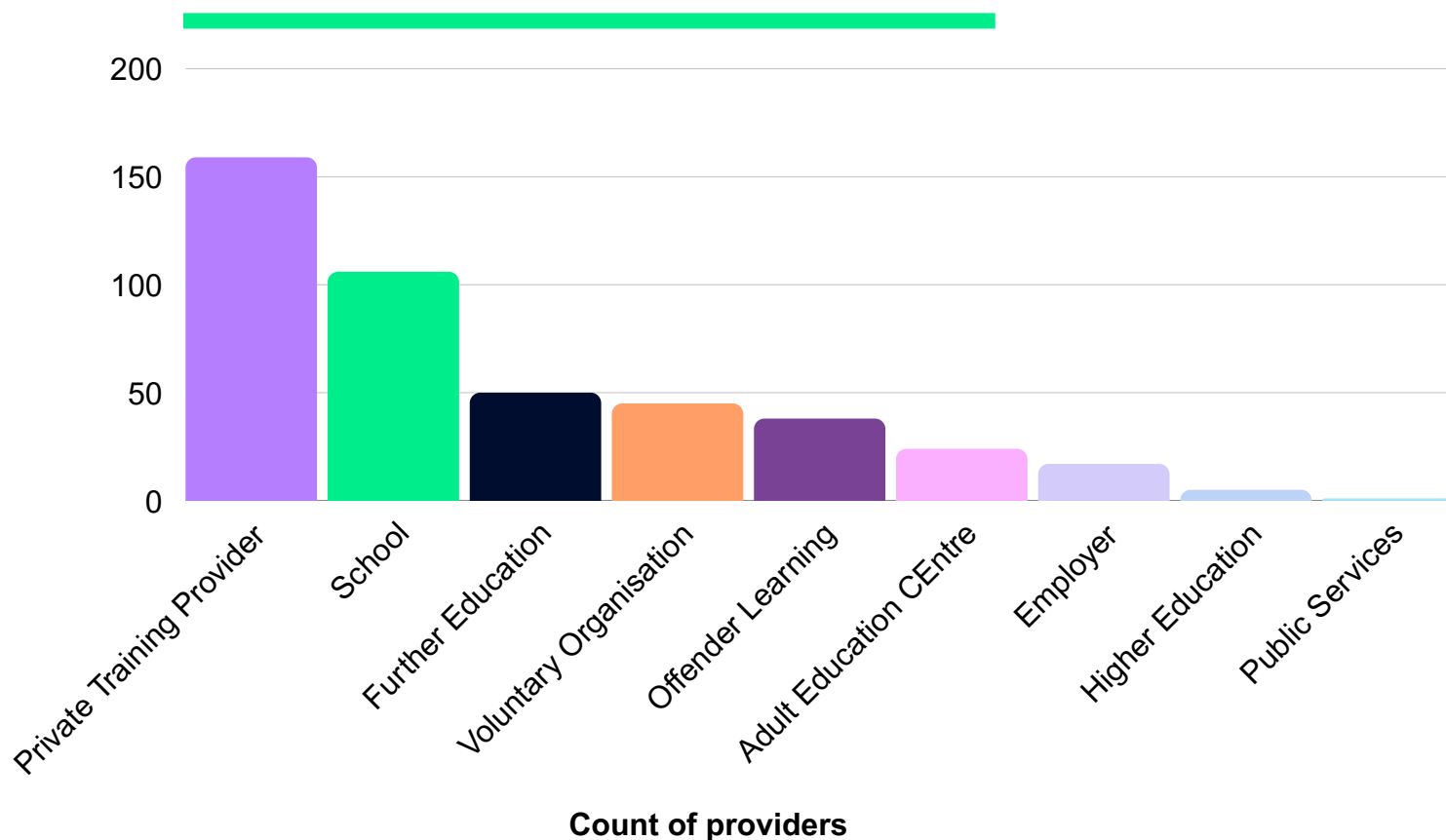
The above map reflects the location of our providers across the United Kingdom. In 2023/24 we approved our first Welsh providers, reflecting our diversification into QiW regulated qualifications. We continue to see growth in providers across North-west, North-east, Yorkshire and South England.

# 614

**Approved providers**



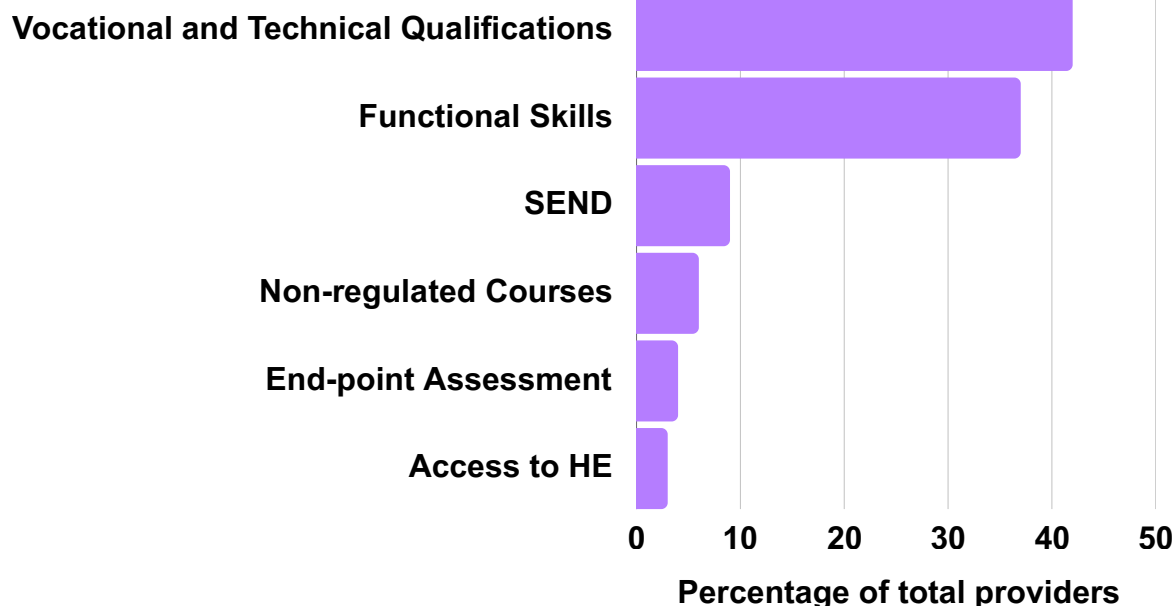
# OUR PROVIDERS



## Types of Provider

There has been continued growth in the number of schools and private training providers that work with Open Awards. This has been as a result of focusing our qualification developments on SEND schools, occupational technical qualifications, and End-point Assessments (apprenticeships). We are also seeing an increase in full-cost recovery provision at private training providers, particularly within education, training and mentoring.

## Providers by Types of Qualification



# POSITIVE IMPACT

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**“To anyone looking to do their functional skills in maths and English, I would recommend Open Awards.”**

**Functional Skills, Anonymous learner**



**“It was great to have a clear insight on the qualification and what is required going forward, and it was very positive and productive for me.”**

**Access to HE Curriculum Planning, The City of Liverpool College**

**“As always you’ve been amazing to me over the years and we’d not be where we are without you.”**

**Customer Support, Forest School Education Ltd**

**“Some of our learners have commented on how calming, helpful and easy to understand their invigilator was. They explained everything very well to the learners and this really puts them at ease, which is ideal before sitting an exam.”**

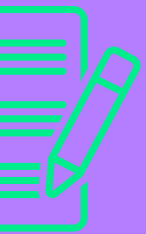
**Functional Skills Assessments, NHS England Provider**

# POSITIVE IMPACT

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**“Really happy with Open Awards so far and found the approval process really good. Support has been much better than other AOs and hoping to move more provision.”**

**Provider Approval Support, Scope Training**



**“Thank you so much for all your support during the last academic year it was invaluable to us and was / is truly appreciated.”**

**Functional Skills Support, Fix IT (UK) Ltd**

**“Myself and the team here have been incredibly grateful to you for all the support and guidance you have given us in establishing our Hospitality Academy and even more as our provision has grown. It's a really great team.”**

**Curriculum Support, People First Independence  
Advocacy**

**“By speaking face to face it cleared up any questions we had and added some options that we were not expecting, therefore much better than anticipated. This has helped to build trust and improves communication.”**

**Curriculum Development Support, Walsall College**

# POSITIVE IMPACT

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**1120**

Delegates completed  
training

**225**

Organisations  
participated in training

**37**

Events and forums  
were held

**142**

Assessor/ marker  
training sessions held

**98%**

Rated service as  
good or excellent



**98%**

Rated training as  
good or excellent

# WIDER IMPACT

Many of the team undertake voluntary roles outside of Open Awards. This includes roles related directly to education and the charity sector. The flexibility of Open Awards policies and working arrangements, including hybrid and remote working, doesn't just enable roles outside of the workplace, but actively encourages it.

# 1065

Hours of volunteering  
over 12 months

- Governor
- Trustee/ Director
- Coaching
- Church volunteer
- Local government
- Sector/ employer groups
- Magistrate

“I undertake this work to give me a wider understanding of the challenges and needs within the education section, as well as to help in a small way to ensure our young people receive a good education- which is something I am always grateful for.”

Paul Henderson-Griffiths  
Director of Service Delivery



“I am committed to supporting my local community and this role enables me to utilise my skills, passion and knowledge of education to make a small but meaningful contribution to the children and families I live alongside.”

Carla Hodgkinson, Product Development Officer

“I enjoy seeing the development of all the children over the years and enjoy the community and team that the club brings. Without volunteers a small unincorporated grassroots club like ours wouldn't be able to operate, and a lot of these children wouldn't get the opportunities that we offer.”

Vanessa Coombes, Finance Manager



# CHANGING LIVES THROUGH LEARNING

## Impact Report

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ripaper

WOMAN

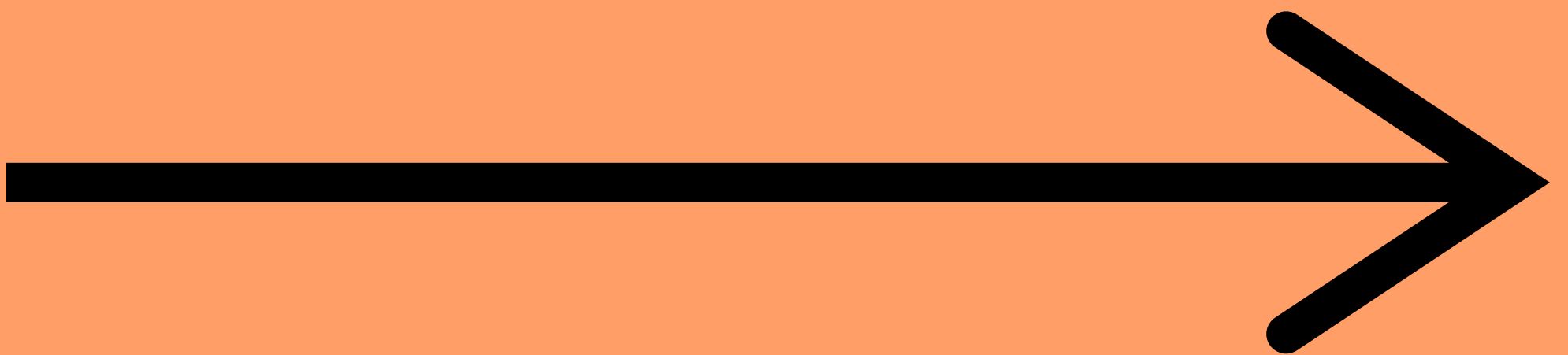
*"Emma knows she has  
wanted  
support has been*



# SEN-friendly courses

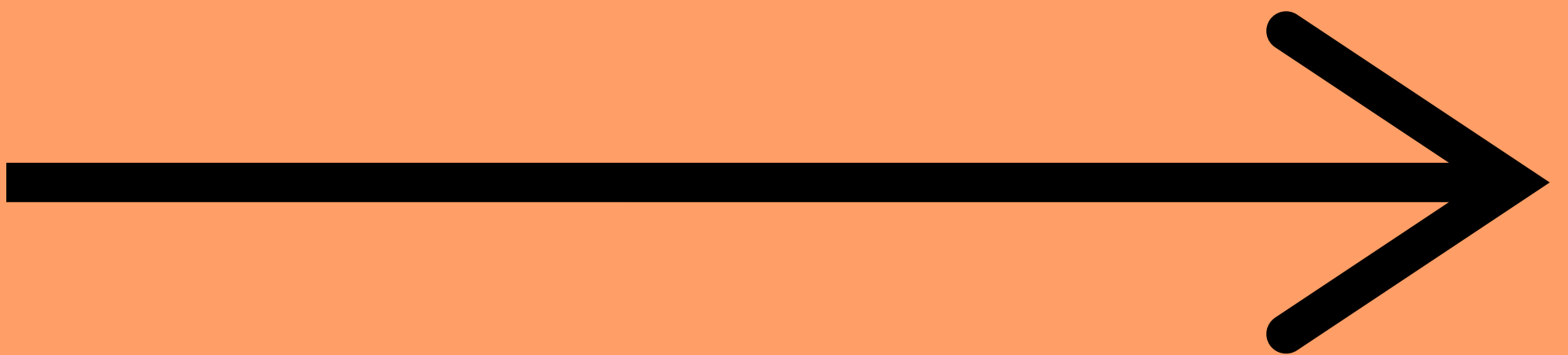
“Before working with Open Awards, we found that other providers were not as SEN-friendly. Our learners have a variety of needs, and it's essential for us to be able to adapt the learning so that all learners can access the courses effectively.

**Open Awards’ courses have been designed with the flexibility we need to meet those diverse needs, making a significant difference in how we support our students.”**



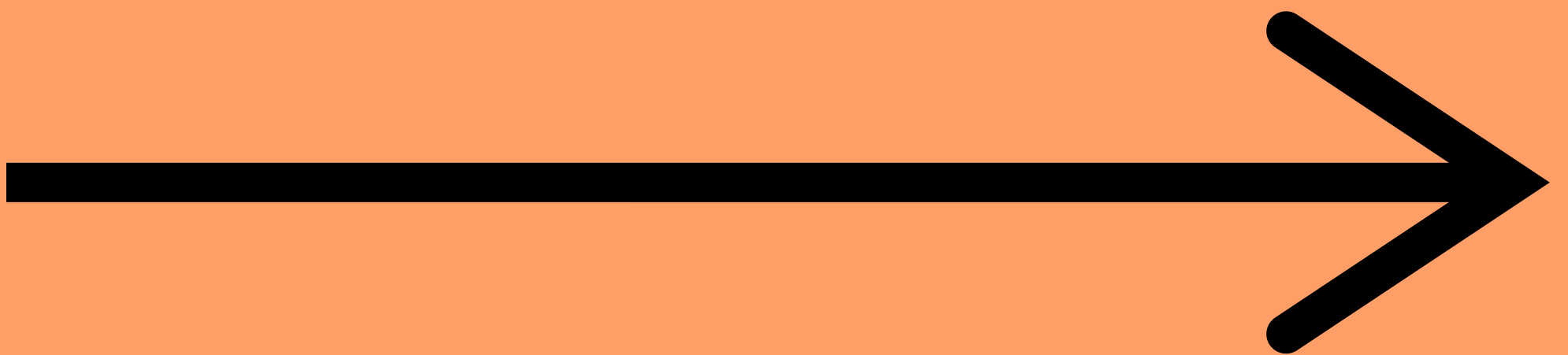
# Fantastic support

“Working with Open Awards has been a smooth and supportive experience, from onboarding through to ongoing support. **Emma Kettle has been fantastic.** Whenever we have struggled to find something, she has guided us through the process, whether over the phone or via Microsoft Teams. If she hasn’t known the answer immediately, she has always taken the time to find the information and get back to us promptly. **Her support has been invaluable and greatly appreciated.**”



# Flexible qualifications

“The qualifications offered have provided our tutors with **the flexibility to adapt the courses in a way that is user-friendly and accessible** for our learners with Special Educational Needs (SEN). This adaptability ensures that course content can be tailored to meet diverse learning requirements, promoting inclusivity and better engagement. **As a result, our SEN learners are better supported throughout their educational journey, leading to improved outcomes and a more positive learning experience.**”



Find out more about our Functional Skills qualifications and our tailored support services:







**how Ascent  
College equip  
autistic young  
people to**





# introducing Ascent College

Ascent Autism Specialist College, part of the Remarkable Group, is a specialist FE College. They enable autistic young people to reach their full potential.

Within the college environment, they provide specialist education, personalised curricula and bespoke accredited and Preparation for Adulthood programmes.

Their functional skills-based curriculum equips their students with skills for life and work alongside social and employability skills.





# supporting Benji

After expressing a keen interest in the outdoors, Benji has started his 'Outside Maintenance' internship at Lyme and Wood Hub Learning Centre.

Adapted to his personal needs, his supported internship is enabling him to develop a range of different skills in bite-sized chunks using repetition to support his knowledge retention.



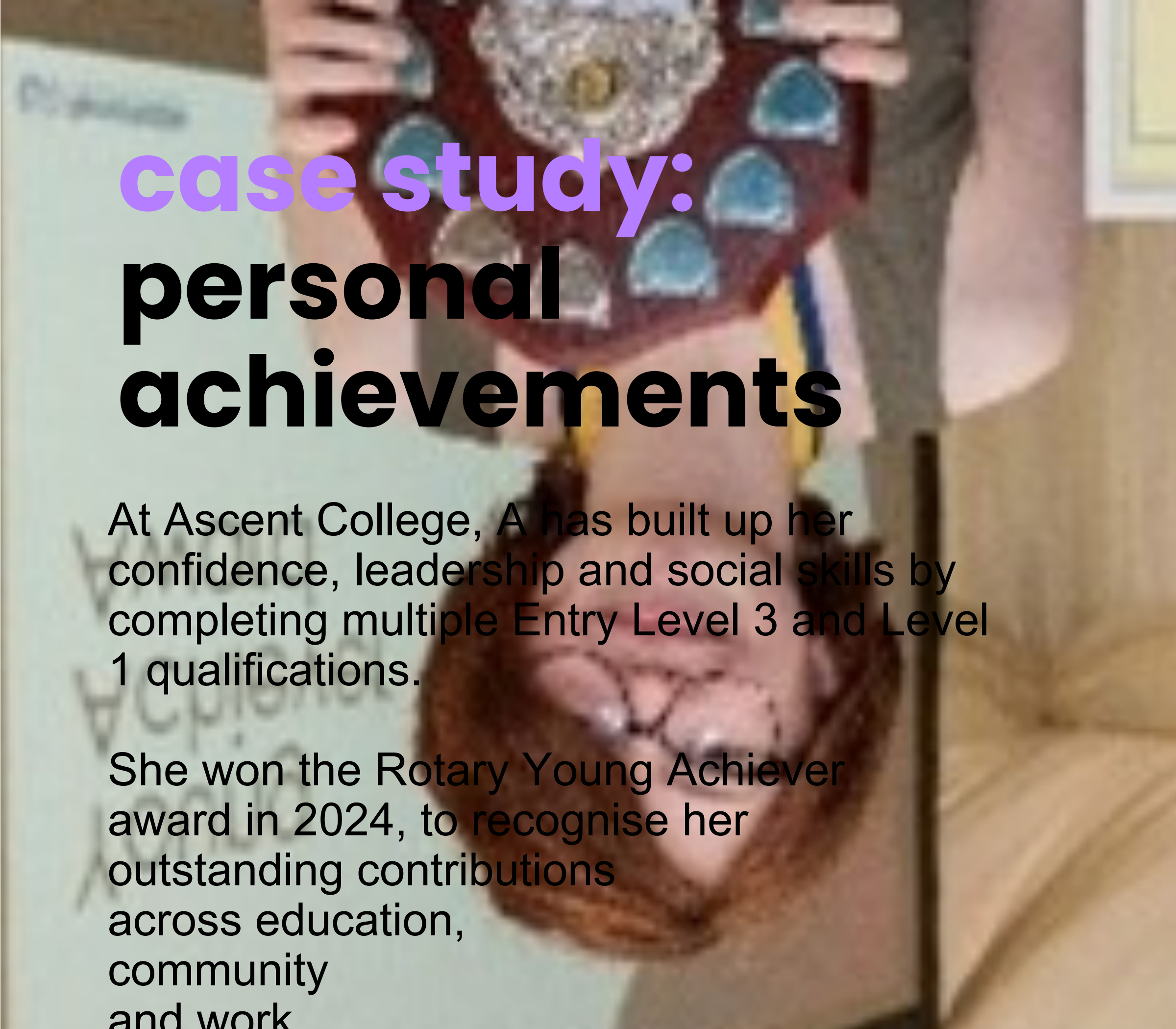
# **case study:** **vocational** **success**

To support A with her desire to work in administration, hospitality and/or events, Ascent College arranged for her to complete on-site work experience at the Cosy Corner Cafe.

From here, she secured long-term placements at Vinci Construction and The Haydock Jockey Club.







# **case study:** **personal** **achievements**

At Ascent College, A has built up her confidence, leadership and social skills by completing multiple Entry Level 3 and Level 1 qualifications.

She won the Rotary Young Achiever award in 2024, to recognise her outstanding contributions across education, community and work.



# how we work with Ascent Autism Specialist College

To equip their students with skills for life and work, they offer a range of our qualifications, including:

- Functional Skills Maths and English
- Essential Digital Skills
- Skills for Further Learning and Employment
- Skills for Travelling in the Community



Find out more about our 'Preparation for Life and Work' qualifications at:

**[openawards.org.uk](https://openawards.org.uk)**



World Environment Day

# Case Study: The Therapy Adventure





World Environment Day

# The Therapy Adventure

The Therapy Adventure believes in 'Doing Therapy Differently'. On any given day, you'll find their registered therapists delivering 1:1 therapy, whilst whittling around the fire in outdoor clinics, leading outdoor communication groups for children with complex needs in the woods or supporting autistic children at rock climbing walls.

The Therapy Adventure have been working with Open Awards since 2023 and offer our Level 1 Award in Conservation, as well as the



World Environment Day

# Level 1 Award in Conservation

“We deliver Open Awards Level 1 Award in Conservation. More than 90% of our learners are neurodiverse, have SEND or mental health needs. Many of our learners are academically able but have executive function needs that put in place barriers to accessing school and gaining qualifications.

Working with Open Awards has meant we can deliver a flexible, portfolio based qualification- helping to break down barriers for our learners. When combined with our therapist-led, high support approach, students who would otherwise struggle to access formal learning can gain a Level 1 qualification.”

**Georgina Merckel Evans**  
Manager at The Therapy Adventure





World Environment Day

# Level 1 Award in Conservation – in action



**Caspian Jamie**  
Course Director at The Therapy Adventure



World Environment Day

# Level 1 Award in Conservation – learner impact

“In our latest parent feedback survey, **100% of parents would recommend** our Conservation qualification to other families, 86% are reporting an **improvement in study skills** since starting the course and 67% say their **child's mental health and wellbeing has improved** since starting the course.”

**Georgina Merckel Evans**  
Manager at The Therapy Adventure



World Environment Day

# Level 1 Award in Conservation – feedback

“I wanted to let you know how **worthwhile your work is** particularly for people who have been unable to access more traditional ways of learning and accreditation. Your work really does make a difference and it is great to see the **development of alternative and truly inclusive pathways of learning.**”

Parent feedback

Level 1 Award in Conservation

“It has supported a **sense of belonging** and **self worth** for what the children contribute for being them and being curious and kind.”

Parent feedback

Level 1 Award in Conservation





Find out more about our Conservation  
and Forestry qualifications at:

**[openawards.org.uk](https://openawards.org.uk)**

case study

#LDWEEK

# how we support Fable House in ensuring their learners **are seen, heard and**



E  
E  
E

story matters



# Making contributions

“We encourage our students to make themselves heard in appropriate ways, particularly through **creative expression**, with exhibitions to show off their work. We make sure our students are seen in the local mill community and the wider area, supporting them to **develop professional and appropriate social relationships** with a range of society.

All students are supported to attend their annual reviews if they wish to do so and we ensure their **voice is heard** in any decision making about their health, care and education. We follow the maxim of ‘**not about us without us**’ and support students to develop the skills required to be their own advocate. “

**Sonia King**  
CEO  
Fable House



# Student-centred learning

“Our learning is **student centred** and our students are involved in choosing their pathways and subjects that they want to study, particularly at post 16. We **encourage** and **facilitate debate** and promote the **intrinsic joy of learning** as well as celebrating external successes such as finishing qualifications.

Everything is done in a trauma informed, student informed collaborative process and no one is made to do something they feel uncomfortable with. Students are **given ownership over their journeys** and tutors guide them along that route, with gentle broadening of their skillsets and experiences at a rate that suits them and meets their needs.”

**Jo-Anne Coxall**  
Education Lead  
Fable House

# A love for learning

“There have been so many success stories since working with Open Awards. Our two longest attending students being **offered university places** is a huge achievement for them and we are so proud of them. One went on to other things, but the other is starting at York St Johns in September which is amazing.”

**Sonia King**  
CEO  
Fable House



# Learner recognition

“We have had students who have never received any recognition, get certificates for their hard work and get to **feel proud of themselves**. We have had the opportunity to see students work really hard for things they want and **develop a love of learning** in a safe space.

We have built a beautiful curriculum that not only allows our students to learn what they need for the future but also gain RQF qualifications that are of real use to them as they move on. ”

**Jo-Anne Coxall**  
Education Lead  
Fable House





# Support from Open Awards

“When Fable House first started, we were working with only two students and the other AOs we had approached felt we were too small and unique to be accommodated. Open Awards **got us straight away** and were clearly specialist at working with both tiny centres like ours and larger providers.

There was **no judgement** or dismissing, just a **collaborative and supportive approach** to find out what would work best for our students and our provision, which was a breath of fresh air in comparison to how we had been treated by other services.

We particularly liked that the portfolio approach in the majority of the qualifications, which are so flexible and adaptable, it was less prescriptive than others we had looked at and really **gave our students opportunity to shine**”.

**Sonia King**  
CEO  
Fable House

Find out more about how we can  
support your centre to create a  
love of learning for your students:

obbeuad