



Department  
for Education

**Multiply**

# Multiply

**Investment Prospectus (England)**

**April 2022**

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## Forward

We want everyone to have the opportunity to learn and develop the essential skills they need to succeed at any age. We know that numeracy is universally important for individuals' life chances, and for the United Kingdom's economy as a whole. 17m adults in England - half of the working-age population - have everyday maths skills roughly equivalent to those expected of a primary school child (Entry Levels)<sup>1</sup>. This compares poorly internationally – below the OECD average, and behind countries such as Japan, Germany and Canada<sup>2</sup>.

That is why the UK Government has committed that the first priority of the [UK Shared Prosperity Fund](#), will be Multiply. With up to £559 million in funding available, Multiply has the potential to reach adults across the whole United Kingdom over the next three years; improving their functional numeracy skills. This will support our Levelling Up mission to ensure that by 2030, the number of people successfully completing high-quality skills training will have significantly increased in every area of the United Kingdom.

We want to help people improve their ability to understand and use maths in daily life, home, and work. Whether that be improving household finances, helping children with homework, making more sense of the facts in the media, or improving numeracy skills specific to a line of work. To achieve that, Multiply will offer a range of options such as free personal tutoring, digital training and flexible courses that fit around people's lives and are tailored to specific needs, circumstances, sectors and industries.

We know this really matters. People who improve their numeracy skills are more likely to be in employment, have higher wages, and better wellbeing. Gaining a maths qualification at Level 2 or equivalent also unlocks the door to progress to higher levels of free training to secure a skilled job in our economy. Improved numeracy also matters to businesses right across the country – small and big. Businesses that develop their employees' numeracy skills can boost productivity, increase profits, and improve employee retention. With the launch of this investment prospectus, all local areas across the United Kingdom will be able to receive funding to deliver bespoke adult numeracy programmes over the next three years. Up to £430 million will be available across all four nations.

Through Multiply, we want to see these local areas invest in meaningful participation that boosts people's ability to use maths in their daily life, at home and work – and enable adults to achieve formal qualification that can open doors for them (such as into a job, progression in a job, or progression to further study). Adults who need to improve their

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<sup>1</sup> [nn124\\_essentials\\_numeracyreport\\_for\\_web.pdf \(nationalnumeracy.org.uk\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Survey of Adult Skills \(PIAAC\) - PIAAC, the OECD's programme of assessment and analysis of adult skills](#)

numeracy (up to, and including, Level 2 or equivalent) will be able to access free flexible courses that fit around their lives – whether that be in person or online, at work or in the evening, part time or intensive. This prospectus sets out how.

In addition to providing funding to local areas to deliver innovative solutions to increase adult numeracy levels, Department for Education will also be launching a national digital numeracy platform later in 2022. This will give people the ability to learn at their own place (including at work, or at home), and pace. Through the platform, we hope to see people sign up for personalised free online tutorials, to help them build their confidence and take the stepping stones towards a maths qualification. We also intend to signpost to Multiply courses in local areas and would welcome your support in ensuring this.

We'll also be launching a programme to test innovative approaches to reducing adult learning barriers and improving adult numeracy (such as through randomised control trials) and build the evidence base on what works – helping inform local areas' approach to Years 2 and 3 of the programme.

## Prospectus aims

This prospectus invites the GLA, Mayoral Combined Authorities, and upper tier/unitary authorities outside of these areas in England, to develop investment plans for bespoke adult numeracy programmes, against the national menu of interventions set out below. These programmes should be delivered across the Spending Review period (2022-23 to 2024-25), with the aim that provision starts for the 2022-23 academic year. Investment plans should be submitted no later than 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022.

In return for funding, we expect local areas to measurably improve adult functional numeracy levels locally. That includes through increasing the number of adults participating in, and achieving, adult numeracy qualifications up to and including Level 2 (both GCSE Grade C/4 or above, and Functional Skills Qualifications).

Provisional maximum funding allocations for local areas in England are [on the Multiply web page](#). Further technical guidance providing detail on performance measurement, grant management and data collection is also [on the Multiply web page](#). This guidance should be carefully considered alongside this prospectus as local areas develop their investment plans.

Multiply funding and delivery in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland will be covered in the broader [UKSPF prospectus](#).

## Multiply success measures

The overall objective of Multiply is to increase the levels of functional numeracy in the adult population across the UK. We have identified the following success measures for the whole programme at a national level:

1. **More adults achieving maths qualifications courses** (up to, and including, Level 2 – with GCSEs and FSQs as the qualifications of choice in England – or equivalent) and an **increase in participation in numeracy courses**. We expect local areas to evidence improvements in functional numeracy, rather than solely participation in Multiply interventions.
2. **Improved labour market outcomes** e.g. fewer numeracy skills gaps reported by employers, and an increase in the proportion of adults that progress into sustained employment and / or education.
3. **Increased adult numeracy across the population** – this overall impact, which goes beyond achieving certificates or qualifications, will track both the perceived and actual difference taking part in the programme makes in supporting learners to improve their understanding and use of maths in their daily lives, at home and at work - and to feel more confident when doing so.

DfE will evaluate Multiply nationally against these and other success measures and local areas will be asked to collect data in order to inform this evaluation. In their investment plans, local areas may wish to identify local measures of success against their stated ambitions for the programme in order to understand the impact and benefits at a local level.

Further information on the national evaluation, local success and performance measurement and data collection can be found in the technical guidance [on the Multiply web page](#).

## Multiply menu of interventions

We want local authorities to have the flexibility to determine what provision is needed to deliver high quality, innovative numeracy interventions that meet the needs of local people and the national aims for Multiply. Some of these interventions will lead to attainment of a qualification, but non-qualification provision should also be developed where more appropriate.

To support local areas to identify the right provision, we have designed a menu of interventions which they can draw down from – choosing a mix of interventions that best suits each area. These interventions should be for adults aged 19 and over.

This menu is based on the growing evidence base on the barriers that hold people back from addressing their numeracy skills and what works in tackling poor adult numeracy, as well as engagement with local areas, providers and other numeracy organisations.

**Please note that interventions delivered with Multiply funding need to be additional and differentiated from that which is already fully funded through the Adult Education Budget (AEB) legal entitlement and should not displace that provision.**

- a) **Courses designed to increase confidence with numbers for those needing the first steps towards formal numeracy qualifications.** This includes using best practice to engage new learners such as a cross-agency / partnership approach, working with local employers (for example, to deliver in-work confidence building courses), or the design of new teaching material. We know that adults with poor numeracy are more likely to have had negative experiences at school and may have a “fear factor” in addressing their numeracy needs. That’s why we want to see local interventions that help de-mystify maths by putting it into everyday, relatable, context; and help boost an adult’s confidence to take the next step towards a qualification.
- b) **Courses designed to help people use numeracy to manage their money.** This includes focussing on people who are in serious debt (for example through linking with debt advisory services), but may also be an element built into broader numeracy courses where appropriate. The primary aim of the course should be to improve people’s functional numeracy, rather than simply duplicating existing provision in this area.
- c) **Innovative numeracy programmes delivered together with employers – including courses designed to cover specific numeracy skills required in the workplace,** with employers committing to offer career progression conversations for those achieving a qualification / completing a course. We know some of the biggest barriers that prevent adults from engaging in skills training are cost and time, including time off work. That’s why we want to see local interventions that are delivered in partnership with employers, such as in the workplace and / or

targeted at priority sectors to national and local economies (such as construction, manufacturing or adult social care). Areas should be conscious of potential links between this type of Multiply intervention and wider UKSPF interventions providing tailored wrap-around support to help people in employment address barriers to accessing education and training.

- d) **Courses aimed at people who can't apply for certain jobs because of lack of numeracy skills and/or to encourage people to upskill in numeracy order to access a certain job/career.** This could, for example, be done in partnership with job centres and large employers in your local area, such as NHS Trusts. We know that attainment of maths Level 2 is an important stepping stone into and within work, not just for the next career move but equips adults with evidence of their numeracy skills as they upskill or change jobs throughout their working lives. That's why we want to see courses that better fit around the needs of adults and employers across the country.
- e) **New intensive and flexible numeracy courses targeted at people without Level 2 maths, leading to a Functional Skills Qualification.** FSQs are specifically designed to provide skills for for work, study and life and can be delivered flexibly throughout the year. We know achievement of an FSQ demonstrates a sound grasp of mathematical skills and evidences the ability to apply mathematical thinking effectively to solve problems successfully in the workplace and other real-life situations. That can include:
- a. Flexible FSQ (or equivalent) courses offered outside of the workplace for local workers that can attend at irregular times.
  - b. FSQ (or equivalent) courses run in the workplace for employees of local organisations, that allow people to study during/around working hours.
  - c. Intensive short courses for people e.g. who are unemployed in order to achieve an FSQ (or equivalent) in maths (entry level, level 1 or level 2).
  - d. Intensive/flexible e.g. 12 week courses to achieve an FSQ (or equivalent) in maths (entry level, level 1 or level 2) that are also accessible for people in work.
  - e. Fully remote or blended courses for any of the above e.g. using the digital online platform.
- f) **Courses for parents wanting to increase their numeracy skills in order to help their children, and help with their own progression.** We know the evidence suggests that improving the education qualifications of a parent can also positively impact of the attainment of their child; as well as accrue benefits to the parent themselves. That's why, where local areas can demonstrate the impact, we are interested in family numeracy programmes, such as those delivered in schools or through numeracy toolkits.



- g) **Numeracy courses aimed at prisoners, those recently released from prison or on temporary licence.** In line with the Prisons Strategy White Paper, we want to ensure that people are equipped with the numeracy skills and qualifications that help increase their prospect of finding work on release and contribute towards reducing reoffending. Most prisoners have low levels of education and 42% were excluded from school<sup>3</sup>. Of the prisoners who undertook an initial assessment between April 2019 and March 2020, most were at entry level 1-3 (equivalent to primary school): 57% in English and 61% in maths; and 29% had a learning difficulty/disability (LDD)<sup>4</sup>, although a recent study by the Criminal Justice Joint Inspectorate estimates that this could be as high as 50%<sup>5</sup>. That's why we are interested in courses that may include peer-mentor led approaches; family learning sessions; or other bite-sized learning opportunities which complement existing provision.
- h) **Numeracy courses aimed at those 19 or over that are leaving, or have just left, the care system** – given that we know these young adults are more likely to be not in education, employment or training (NEET), with the most recent data showing that 41% of care leavers aged 19-21 were NEET, compared to 12% of young people that age in the general population. We are particularly interested in interventions that help care leavers with their financial awareness and budgeting skills.
- i) **Numeracy activities, courses or provision developed in partnership with community organisations and other partners aimed at engaging the hardest to reach learners – for example, those not in the labour market or other groups identified locally as in need.** We know that there is no one-size-fits-all when it comes to learning, that not all people will recognise that they necessarily have low numeracy, and that many future learners may not be close to stepping into a classroom. These courses include innovative ideas for wrap around support if local areas can evidence the value for money link to improving numeracy; considering how to use other “touch-points” (such as money advice, community or housing services) to improve people’s numeracy skills; or dedicated community numeracy champions to drive up engagement. Areas should be conscious of potential links between this type of Multiply intervention and wider UKSPF interventions providing employment support for economically inactive people. We will also provide local areas flexibility to use some Multiply funding for activity to maximise the reach of the programme and make sure interventions engage those

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<sup>3</sup> [Prisoners' childhood and family backgrounds \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

<sup>4</sup> Prison Education Statistics 2019/20 ([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://publishing.service.gov.uk))

<sup>5</sup> Criminal Justice Joint Inspectorate *Neurodiversity in the Criminal Justice System: A review of evidence* (2021)

learners that are hardest to reach. This could include, but is not limited to, communications; reaching out to people via employers, ‘touch points’ such as housing and other community groups, in order to encourage people to take the first steps towards participating in formal learning. Further details on this are available in the technical guidance.

- j) Additional relevant maths modules embedded into other vocational courses.** We know that adults often learn best when they can see the practical application of their learning - for example, ratios for mixing paint, or assessing roof angles, or calculating the number of bricks needed. That's why we'd also like to see numeracy learning brought into other vocational courses, so people can build their skills in parallel.

We recommend including assessment of potential learners wherever possible and appropriate in relation to any/all of the above interventions with the aim of signposting them into provision that best meets their needs.

We are willing to consider proposals that are “off menu” where local areas can demonstrate an extremely strong rationale for doing so, and can evidence impact and value for money.

Financial incentives for employers on employees achieving a qualification may be considered but, only on a case-by-case basis. Areas would need to evidence an extensive value for money analysis, displaying the value in utilising the investment in this way, including the learner reach it will achieve.

As we gather evidence from local areas about what works to improve adult numeracy throughout the programme, we will share this amongst local areas – and update the menu of interventions – to inform delivery in Years 2 and 3.

We are aware that local authorities may wish to propose interventions that rely on FE teachers or tutors for successful delivery. Some local areas may need to build workforce capacity to deliver their selected Multiply initiatives successfully, for example, to invest in recruitment campaigns to target key teachers, to invest in dedicated training and support for existing staff, or support numeracy champions and tutors.

Spending on workforce capacity building must directly support the delivery of local areas’ interventions, and areas should explain this in investment plans under each intervention. Areas should, at a high level, identify the workforce required to deliver interventions, and, if necessary, how they plan to use funding to increase capability. We expect plans to detail how it does not duplicate existing HM Government programmes supporting FE Workforce recruitment and retention. They should also show how they will ensure that any action to support their Multiply workforce needs will not be to the detriment of other priority programmes they are delivering.

Local areas will be expected to consider the Public Sector Equalities Duty (PSED) in any

provision they develop through Multiply, including but not limited to gender, age, disability and race. This will also include promoting equality through their recruitment processes; offering information, advice and guidance; ensuring that the structure and content of the activities delivered are suitable and appropriate; and ensuring that provision is accessible and flexible where necessary.

We also want to be able to recognise where adults have improved their numeracy skills through Multiply, aside from attainment of a formal qualification. That could include an increase in the number of adults participating and acquiring and evidencing skills through non-qualification provision, or towards a qualification. We will work with local areas, sector experts and providers to determine how that can be achieved through both activity delivered locally and via the online platform.

# General principles of use of Multiply funding

## Geography

Multiply funding will be distributed to the Greater London Authority, all Mayoral Combined Authorities, and upper tier/unitary authorities outside of these areas in England.

Provisional allocations are [on the Multiply web page](#).

## Target Audience

Target learners are adults 19+ who have not previously attained a GCSE Grade 4/C or higher maths qualification. They can either be working towards a maths GCSE or Functional Skills Qualification, need specific numeracy skills for their work or progression, or just want to brush up on the skills to help them get on in life and work.

## Existing arrangements

Interventions should not displace, replace and / or duplicate any existing adult numeracy provision, such as activity funded through the existing Adult Education Budget (AEB) statutory entitlement for maths qualifications. Multiply boosts funding for adult numeracy, enabling local areas to deliver more innovative approaches and reach more people. We expect local areas to demonstrate how this is complementary and different to AEB interventions, in their investment plans.

We also expect investment plans to pay due regard and coordinate where possible with wider skills and employment interventions in local areas (for example through Skills Advisory Panels), such as interventions funded through the broader UKSPF (e.g. in district council investment plans) or other programmes, to avoid duplication of provision through Multiply and ensure effective wrap-around support is available where applicable.

## Funding allocations

Provisional three year allocations are [on the Multiply web page](#). This is the maximum available to local areas. A confirmation of allocation, grant agreement and first payments will follow when we are satisfied with the investment plan. We expect funds allocated to be ringfenced for Multiply purposes in the relevant FY by the local authority/MCA/GLA. Further technical guidance is [on the Multiply web page](#) and grant agreements will detail the arrangement including the funding mechanism, legislation and assurance.

## Partnerships

Each area (upper tier/unitary authority/MCA/GLA) should submit their own investment plan. We welcome joint interventions carried out between two or more local authorities where there is added value in these. We also encourage local areas to develop interventions in partnership with providers and employers, as well as other partners in their local area as we see this as important to maximising value for money and ensuring

delivery of effective solutions for learners.

### **Funding non-learning activities and capacity support**

In recognition of the need to establish the programme on a successful footing, local areas will be permitted to use some Multiply funding for administrative expenditure, in order to build the necessary capacity for successful delivery. Further detail is set out in the technical guidance. As part of our grant agreements with local areas, we will require details of how this will be spent. This amount will be reviewed by Department for Education ahead of Years 2 and 3, based on Year 1 delivery.

### **Peer to peer support and sharing evidence of what works**

We are keen to facilitate peer learning and networking opportunities for local areas involved in the Multiply programme. We will convene a series of events in April/May 2022 in order to discuss any initial concerns as local areas develop investment plans. Networking events will then be held in each year of Multiply to enable peer to peer support and sharing of best practice amongst local areas and with sector experts, providers and employers.

As we gather evidence from local areas about what works to improve adult numeracy throughout the programme, we will share this amongst local areas to inform delivery.

**More detailed technical guidance covering requirements such as data collection, reporting frameworks, assurance and grant management is [on the Multiply web page](#). We recommend that local areas use both the technical guidance and this prospectus to develop investment plans for Multiply.**

## Investment plan criteria

In order to qualify for Government funding, investment plans must meet the criteria below. Plans will be reviewed against these criteria over the summer, with the Department for Education and local areas agreeing success measures to be met before memorandums of understanding are issued.

We expect areas to submit plans for the full three-year funding allocation. However, we will accept more tentative plans for years 2 and 3, to enable local areas to build on the growing evidence base from year 1 of the programme on what works to improve adult numeracy. We will revisit investment plans, and allocations before each year of Multiply in order to approve any amendments.

All proposals should have the backing of local leaders in the authorities in which they are situated.

### 1. Deliverability

Reaching those most in need of improved numeracy skills may be challenging and will require strong coordination in local areas. **All interventions should include detail of their deliverability by addressing each of the points below:**

- a) Partnership working with local education providers, employers, voluntary and community sector organisations, Job Centres, and others.
- b) Plans for engagement with other, local touchpoints where there may be interaction/identification of people with low numeracy skills such as housing providers, debt advisory services, schools, Family Hubs, and others.
- c) If lack of workforce is identified as an issue for deliverability of Multiply, this should be evidenced clearly and linked to a proposal on how you plan to use funding to increase capability. Plans should also address any impact of proposed interventions on current educational provision and how this will be managed.
- d) If you intend to use some of your allocation for admin to support delivery you should outline how you plan to use these funds.
- e) An ability to deliver new activity starting in financial year 2022-23 and covering the three years of the Multiply Programme.
- f) Evidence of the benefits of the proposal and how you will ensure/protect value for money.

### 2. Evidence of need and demand

- a) Available data on local adult numeracy levels, for example on historic and current participation and achievement, from existing employer surveys, etc.

- b) A clear understanding of current provision support by the Local Skills Plan or LSIP
- c) Short explanation of why improving adult functional numeracy matters to your local area.

### **3. Interventions**

- a) What interventions you will deliver, to improve functional adult numeracy in your local area, drawing down from the menu of interventions in this prospectus, and including detail on deliverability as above.
- b) A short explanation of how the above interventions will not displace or duplicate the maths entitlement funded through the Adult Education Budget.

### **4. Strategic Fit**

- a) Investment plans should demonstrate how interventions fit with the Government's wider ambitions set out in the [Levelling Up White Paper](#) and [Skills For Jobs White Paper](#), in particular:
  - i. Putting employers at the heart so that provision leads to progression into or within employment, or to further study.
  - ii. Ensuring people can access training and learning flexibly, as part of our commitment to lifelong learning – i.e. delivering Multiply provision alongside wider DfE programmes, such as Bootcamps, as appropriate.
  - iii. Offering new opportunities to access high quality work and progress in the workplace.
  - iv. The Levelling Up 'skills mission' that "by 2030, the number of people successfully completing high-quality skills training will have significantly increased in every area of the UK."
- b) Interventions should also demonstrate how they are a strategic fit locally e.g. how they fit with a local areas labour market and skills strategies, covid recovery strategies and/or LSIP (where one exists), and critically, respond to adult numeracy needs locally.
- c) We expect to see join up and coordination where appropriate with the wider UKSPF, including in upper tier authorities where other UKSPF funds are administered by lower tier authorities.

### **5. Engaging and motivating learners**

Local areas should set out how they intend to engage and motivate

learners to achieve their proposed interventions. This should include:

- a. Reducing negative attitudes to maths and addressing barriers to participation.
- b. Raising awareness of Multiply locally.
- c. Engaging with local employers and identifying and engaging with local touch points (such as housing associations, JCPs, debt advisory services, health services, other community organisations and / or buildings) where people with low numeracy skills could be identified, supported direct and / or signposted into provision.
- d. Identifying, where possible, clear progression routes that people can follow once they have improved numeracy skills / a qualification, e.g. being able to apply in a certain field / job or further study course, being able to progress in a certain workplace.
- e. Identifying further study courses that require numeracy / a maths qualification and targeting people who may be interested in these courses.
- f. Embedding additional relevant maths modules into vocational courses.
- g. Incorporating Information, Advice and Guidance into courses.

### **Measuring success**

The technical guidance sets out details of the data to be collected from providers, practitioners, learners and employers over the course of the programme in order to inform programme-wide monitoring and evaluation. It also sets out how DfE will analyse this data and share it with local areas to inform local planning, decision-making and delivery.

In investment plans we expect local areas to consider what further data collection, evaluation or research may be appropriate to build on the DfE data collection in order to meet local priorities and assurance.

### **You Tell Us**

Please let us know if you do not currently have the capacity to develop an investment plan for Multiply and effectively deliver on this funding.



## Assurance, accountability and reporting

While flexibility and innovation will be key to reaching those who most need Multiply, we expect areas to provide assurance, accountability and reporting around the funding:

- a) In agreeing investment plans, we will agree outcome expectations for local areas based on the approved investment plans, and areas will report progress against these on a regular basis. This is detailed in the technical guidance [on the Multiply web page](#).
- b) In signing off investment plans, areas will be asked to commit to working with the Department for Education and ESFA on data collection and other activity to support the overarching evaluation of the programme.
- c) Allocation amounts may be subject to change in Years 2 and 3 according to delivery against agreed outcome expectations and spend against allocation profiles. Further guidance on management of under-spends can be found in the technical guidance [on the Multiply web page](#).
- d) Areas will need to capture individual learner data and more detail is available in the technical guidance [on the Multiply web page](#).
- a) Areas will also need to capture information from and about learners, teachers and providers in order to enable effective evaluation of the programme. More detail will be issued on requirements. The Department for Education will be establishing formal 'keep in touch' and peer support arrangements around the programme, that we expect local areas to engage in.

## Application process

A template for investment plans will be issued shortly.

Investment plans are invited from the Greater London Authority, all Mayoral Combined Authorities, and Upper Tier authorities outside of these areas in England.

Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland should refer to the [wider UKSPF investment framework](#).

Local area investment plans should be submitted by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022 to [Multiply.investmentplans@education.gov.uk](mailto:Multiply.investmentplans@education.gov.uk)

Once investment plans are assessed and approved, provisional allocations will be signed off, grant agreements will be put in place and first payments made in September 2022.

For further information or to discuss a proposal ahead of submission please contact DfE at [Multiply.investmentplans@education.gov.uk](mailto:Multiply.investmentplans@education.gov.uk)



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