

Brent Start

Adult Education College

COURSE GUIDE 2026-2027



SUPPORTED BY
MAYOR OF LONDON



Welcome to Brent Start

Unlock your potential. From web designers to business owners, everyone has to start somewhere.

We've got courses available in everything from Digital Skills to Maths and English, you can even begin a new career path with a course in Health & Social Care.

In a time when the cost-of-living crisis is biting across the country and the job market is rapidly changing, we are committed to helping our residents develop the skills they need to boost their confidence and find good, secure work.

We look forward to seeing you!

Councillor Jake Rubin

Cabinet Member for Children's Services,
Employment & Climate Action



Thank you for taking the time to pick up this guide and to find out more about Brent Start.

We have a great range of courses, from those that give you the opportunity to try something new and meet new people, right through to formal qualifications. As well as a huge variety of subjects to choose from, there are also various levels for differing abilities and requirements.

Brent Start is a fantastic place to get the support you need to progress into a better job or to enjoy the wider benefits of learning, such as health and wellbeing and improving your confidence. Our highly experienced and dedicated staff will ensure you gain the skills and knowledge you need to prepare for a fantastic future.

Good luck and I look forward to welcoming you to Brent Start!

Marc Jordan

Head of Brent Start



Brent start welcomes applications from anyone wanting to improve their skills, irrespective of gender, disability, social class, family circumstances, marital status, sexual orientation, race, ethnic or national origin, or religion. We are an LGBTQ+ friendly organisation and at Brent Start you are free to learn in an open and supportive environment.

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TERM DATES: 2026-2027

Autumn Term:

Monday 14 September-Saturday 19 December 2026

Half Term: Monday 26 October-Saturday 31 October

Spring Term:

Monday 4 January-Thursday 25 March 2027

Half Term: Monday 15 February-Saturday 20 February

Summer Term:

Monday 12 April-Saturday 17 July 2027

Half Term: Monday 31 May-Friday 4 June

To view the
courses we
offer, scan the
QR code below



Why choose Brent Start for your studies?



Brent Start is an Adult Education service, offering part time courses to local residents aged 19+. We are funded by the Greater London Authority (GLA) and Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), to deliver high quality courses in venues across Brent.

Whether you want to gain a qualification in maths, English, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), digital skills, childcare, supporting teaching and learning, health and social care or be more confident with computers, or life in general, we offer a variety of courses to suit your needs. We also have a wide range of courses and workshops to help our residents get back into employment or develop new skills. You can also support your child's development through our Family Learning courses.

GUIDANCE FOR STUDY

Visit a Brent Start Centre and meet our friendly Learner Information Advice & Support Officers who can assist with choosing the right course for you.

LEARNING CENTRES

Our Hillside Centre located in Stonebridge has a learning resource facility for when you need to catch up on your coursework or homework. A member of Staff will also be around to assist.

We offer:

- Specialist Digital Skills Applications
- PC suite with full Microsoft Office package
- Windows 11
- Internet access
- Printing

CHILDCARE SUPPORT

Brent Start currently offers childcare support to some of our learners on accredited courses through local nurseries, giving our learners the opportunity to study.

DISCRETIONARY LEARNER SUPPORT FUND

- Brent Start can provide financial support to assist learners with the costs associated with learning, including a contribution to tuition fees, books and childcare fees. Visit a centre and speak to an adviser to find out if you're eligible to apply.

INSTALMENT PLANS

- Brent Start offers the opportunity to split some course fees into 3 payments made over the duration of studying.

ADDITIONAL LEARNING SUPPORT (ALS)

Brent Start believes high quality support is an imperative part of learners' success enabling every individual to reach their academic potential. Brent Start offers a variety of additional learning support methods depending upon the individual's needs. We offer one-to-one, workshop and in-class support across all mainstream courses.

Examination concessions are applied for where applicable and upon meeting the necessary criteria.

DYSLEXIA AND DYSCALCULIA

If you have declared you have a learning support need, such as dyslexia or dyscalculia, on your enrolment form, the ALS Coordinator will contact you after enrolment.

- We will request you to bring a copy of your report in advance so we can plan your support needs.
- You can self-refer for a dyslexic screening assessment
- Support in the Learning Centre
- Loan of equipment including laptops and reading pens

- Exam concessions assessments (where applicable). Please note concessions will only be granted when learners attend or receive additional support.
- Exam concessions (where applicable). Please note concessions will only be granted when students attend the Study Centres for support.

In addition, if you have declared any of the following, during your interview, we will ensure your needs are discussed.

HEARING IMPAIRMENT

If you have declared you are a British Sign Language user on your application form, an interview with the coordinator will be arranged to ensure Brent Start can meet your needs prior to the curriculum interview. A communicator is provided for both the inclusion and curriculum interview.

MOBILITY

An accessibility assessment and a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan will be in place for learners with mobility requirements.

MEDICAL NEEDS

If you have a medical condition that affects your health, please notify us at application/enrolment. Please let your tutor or the ALS coordinator know if your health needs change. Please request an appointment with the ALS coordinator at application or enrolment if you want to discuss any additional needs. With your agreement, all tutors involved in your teaching are informed of any learning difficulties and additional needs to ensure we support you at Brent Start.

If you have any queries please contact our Learner Information Advice & Support Officers.

Main Switchboard **020 8937 3950**

Our centres



The Hillside Centre is Brent Start's flagship learning site, offering a wide range of courses designed to support progression, employability and personal development.

With modern facilities and specialist teaching spaces, learners can access

programmes in ESOL, maths and English, digital skills, payroll and finance, Early Years, Health and Social Care, sugarcraft, sewing and balloon art. The centre caters for learners at all stages, from those returning to education to those working towards qualifications and employment.



The Library at Willesden Green

This centre offers an inspiring and accessible environment for learning at the heart of the Brent community.

The centre delivers a range of English and

ESOL, Maths and digital skills courses through the year.

The library aims to support learners to develop skills that enhance both their personal and professional lives.



Ealing Road Library, located in the heart of Wembley, is a welcoming community hub offering access to books, learning resources and community services. The library is also home to Brent Start's ESOL and Digital Skills courses, providing adults with opportunities to improve their English language, digital

confidence and employability skills.

In a friendly and supportive environment, learners can gain valuable skills that enhance their ability to navigate everyday life, excel in the workplace, and pursue further educational opportunities.



The Hillside Centre

Harlesden Library Plus is a vibrant community hub offering a broad range of accessible learning opportunities. The library's close links with local services create a supportive, resource-rich environment that fosters

lifelong learning and personal growth.

The centre focuses on ESOL, digital skills and Supported Learning programmes, helping residents develop essential skills for everyday life and work.

Introducing the Brent Skills Academy

We are proud to launch the Brent Skills Academy, an exciting evolution of the successful Brent Hairdressing Academy. This new identity reflects our commitment to broadening opportunities for local residents and providing a more inclusive, future-focused skills offer.

Building on a strong foundation of high-quality hair and beauty training, the Brent Skills Academy will now incorporate a dedicated IT and digital learning suite, located in the rear of the facility. This new space will enable learners to gain essential digital skills alongside practical vocational training, supporting progression into a wide range of careers.

Located in the heart of Harlesden, at 16 Craven Park Road, London, NW10 4AB, the Brent Skills Academy will serve as a welcoming and accessible community hub, providing local people with opportunities to learn, upskill and achieve their ambitions.

By combining creative and digital learning under one roof, the Academy will play a key role in promoting employability, digital inclusion and lifelong learning across the borough. Whether you are looking to start a new career, build confidence with technology or develop new skills for personal growth, the Brent Skills Academy offers a supportive environment to help you succeed.



Student Life at Brent Start

A Vibrant Community of Creativity, Culture and Connection

At Brent Start, learning goes far beyond the classroom. Our students are part of a dynamic and inclusive community where creativity and personal growth are celebrated every step of the way.

From showcasing handmade garments at our student fashion show – a dazzling display of talent from our sewing and fashion design learners – to celebrating the rich tapestry of backgrounds that make up our borough during our Cultural Diversity Day, student life at Brent Start is full of opportunities to connect and thrive.

We believe that enrichment is a vital part of the learning journey. That's why we offer a variety of events, workshops, and activities throughout

'Everyone on the course was very helpful, and learning alongside them was a very positive experience.'

the academic year that encourage students to:

- Share their skills and passions
- Celebrate cultural heritage and traditions
- Build confidence and communication skills
- Form lasting friendships and networks

Whether you're learning a new skill or preparing for employment, Brent Start is a place where you can grow – both personally and professionally – in a supportive and inspiring environment.

Join us at Brent Start and become part of a community where every voice is valued and every achievement is celebrated.



How to enrol



Please visit our website for a full list of courses at www.brent.gov.uk/brentstart. There are two ways to enrol on a Brent Start course:

ONLINE

Some courses have online enrolment. Visit our website to see the course details and enrol online.

IN PERSON

You can enrol in person for any of our courses by visiting a Brent Start centre; a list of the locations is on the back of this booklet.

Please note: Some courses require an initial assessment to ensure you are placed at the

right level. If this applies to your chosen course, we will let you know and help you to arrange a convenient time for your assessment.

Most courses begin in September, but we also have classes starting throughout the academic year.

Please call the team on the number below for more information.

If you have any questions, you can call Brent Start on **020 8937 3950** or email: brent.start@brent.gov.uk

Course costs options



SKILLS FOR LIFE AND EMPLOYMENT COURSES

These courses are free for many learners depending on your circumstances.

LEISURE AND WELLBEING COURSES

Discounts are available for those on certain benefits or earning under a certain amount.

FULL-COST COURSES

These courses are full price and no discounts will apply.

Are you worried about paying for childcare while doing your course?

You may be entitled to support for childcare costs. Please ask about this when visiting the centre.

Concessionary rates for various courses are available if you are in receipt of state benefits, on a low income (under £28,860.00 per year) and have settled status.

You may also be eligible to have the course fees paid through the Discretionary Learner Support Fund.

If you want to achieve your first full level 3 qualification, which is equivalent to a technical certificate or diploma, or two full A levels, you may be eligible to have the fees paid. Please contact us to see if you are eligible.

Courses and fees may be subject to change.

ESOL (English for speakers of other languages)

OPEN YOURSELF TO NEW STUDY AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES!

We can help anyone who needs to improve their English, up to Functional Skills Level 2, whether in order to study another subject such as accounting, childcare or health and social care, in order to get a better job or improve their job prospects.

If English is not your first language, our ESOL courses are likely to be more suitable but it depends a little on your level of English and possibly how long you have been in the UK. If you have Level 1 ESOL, you are likely to be ready to progress onto an English course.

ESOL COURSES English for Speakers of Other Languages (people who have English as a second or additional language)	ENGLISH COURSES English for native English language speakers or people who have lived in the UK for several years and have a good command of the English language
are designed for people who learnt English as an additional language, usually after learning their first language	are designed for people who can speak English fluently, often after speaking English all their lives
are designed for people who know less about life in the UK and are less familiar with a UK cultural context	are designed for people who have spent a lot of time in the UK (often all their lives) and are familiar with the UK cultural context of life
cover specific grammatical items explicitly at all levels	focus more on punctuation and improving spelling than grammar
help learners with both language (learning grammar and vocabulary) and skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking and pronunciation)	focus on helping learners with their reading and writing and improving their accuracy and fluency

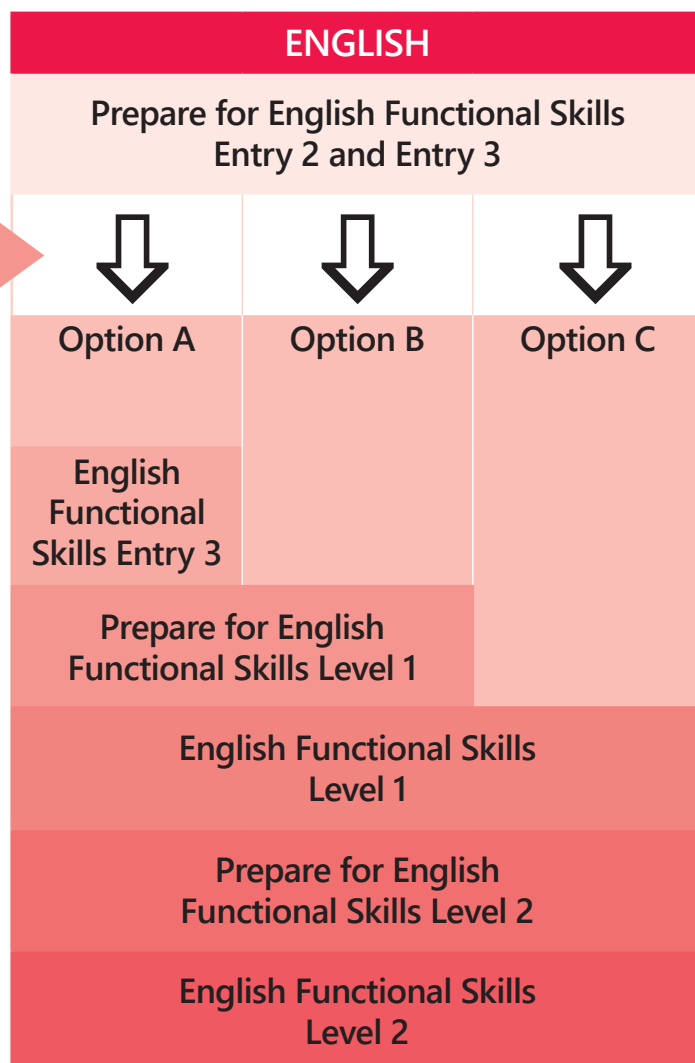
ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Everyone interested in improving their English needs to book and complete an initial

assessment to check their level and find out whether they should follow an ESOL or English course.



ESOL
ESOL Pre-Entry Complete Beginner
ESOL Entry 1 Beginner/Elementary/CEFR *A1
ESOL Entry 2 Elementary/Pre-Intermediate/CEFR*A2
ESOL Entry 3 Pre-Intermediate/Intermediate/CEFR*B1
ESOL Level 1 Intermediate/Upper Intermediate/CEFR*B2



ESOL and English levels and progression routes

	ESOL Levels	English Functional Skills Levels
Beginner	Pre-entry	
Elementary	Entry 1	
Pre-intermediate	Entry 2	Entry 1
Intermediate	Entry 3	Entry 2
Upper intermediate	Level 1	Entry 3
Advanced	Level 2	Level 1
		Level 2

DON'T TAKE OUR WORD FOR IT, READ WHAT OUR LEARNERS SAY.

- Everyone is happy and we love the school of Brent Start and the kind teacher.
- We are happy with classmates, college and staff.
- Our teacher makes the most difficult subjects feel easy to understand.
- We would like to thank the college management for their support and good organisation.
- We enjoy the friendly and comfortable learning environment.
- All the students in the class express their happiness with the lessons .
- We extend our thanks to the administration for providing us with this wonderful learning environment and for choosing such an exceptional teacher for us.

Quotes from learner feedback December 2025

OUR ESOL COURSES

We have a wide range of ESOL courses available for adults (19+) at all levels from beginners (Pre-Entry) to Upper Intermediate (Level 1). Our courses cover English grammar and vocabulary and help you with reading, writing, listening and speaking. The focus is on reading in term one, speaking and listening in term two and writing in term three.

There are also additional courses to support learners in specific areas

- ESOL Grammar and Writing for Higher Levels
- Car Theory Test to learn the vocabulary needed to help you pass the Theory Driving Test
- ESOL Grammar Booster to help with and practise key areas of grammar in a short, intensive course

At the end of some of our courses, if you are ready, you can take an exam and get a certificate. When you have an ESOL certificate in all four skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening) at Entry Level 3, you can apply for vocational courses such as Childcare or Health and Social Care. When you have an ESOL certificate at Level 1, you can then progress onto an English course and then GCSE English.

WHEN, WHERE AND HOW YOU CAN STUDY ESOL

Our courses are completely flexible, so you can build a timetable to suit your lifestyle. We have courses in the morning, afternoon and evening, as well as courses on Saturdays at a range of sites across the borough. You can choose how many hours you want to study each week, anything from just two hours up to ten or more.



ESOL learner Ami

'I was born and raised in India, where I completed my studies and began my career. I gained experience across various fields, including roles as an administrator, counsellor, manager, and site administrator, as well as working within a hospital setting. These diverse roles allowed me to develop a wide range of skills which have helped me to progress in my career path.

When I first arrived in the UK, I was eager to work although unsure which field to pursue but I soon realized that my previous hospital experience was a great asset, which led me to apply for healthcare assistant roles. After several interviews, I accepted an offer from a great company and although I started with only 5 to 8 hours per week, my employers recognised my potential and experience, and they gradually increased my hours.

My path to success was greatly supported by Brent Start. After discovering a course at the library, I contacted them and found the staff to be incredibly helpful. They guided me through my initial assessments and my ESOL teacher helped me secure my place on the course.

This programme has been transformative, helping me speak and write with greater fluency and confidence, particularly in using correct tenses in my daily life. I also enrolled in Level 1 Maths, which significantly built my confidence in the subject.

Brent Start provides excellent adult education, and I highly recommend it to friends and family. The atmosphere is calm and welcoming, and I have met wonderful teachers and made some great friends while on the course. I want to thank Brent Start for giving me the opportunity to talk about my journey today and hopefully inspire others to achieve similar success in their journey.'

English

Are you thinking of studying something like accounting, childcare or health and social care? You often need a minimum level of English to enable you to study other subjects. Do you want to get a better job or improve your employment prospects? Having a recognised English qualification will enhance your employment options.

We offer several English courses designed to improve the verbal communication, reading and writing skills of native English language speakers or people who have lived in the UK for several years and have a good command of the English language. There is a focus on improving spelling, grammar, punctuation and sentence structure but our courses will also help you develop the skills and confidence you need for real-life situations.

We run accredited courses leading to the nationally recognised Functional Skills in

English qualification at Entry Level 3, Level 1 and Level 2 as well as additional courses to support learners in getting ready to join the Functional Skills courses. Our English courses are free for eligible adults and include the following:

- English Functional Skills Entry Level 3
- English Functional Skills Level 1
- English Functional Skills Level 2

When, where and how you can study ESOL

WHEN, WHERE AND HOW YOU CAN STUDY ENGLISH

Most of our courses are one full day a week to best suit our learners' professional and other responsibilities. They take place at either our Hillside centre or Willesden Green Library.





English learner **Magalli**

'There is a particular kind of learning that goes beyond acquiring a skill. It changes how you see the world, how you connect with others, and how you understand yourself. That is what I found at Brent Start.

My English classes have reminded me of something essential – that real learning is never passive, never comfortable, and never boring. Dynamic, demanding, and deeply committed to bringing out the best in each of us, my teacher pushes us further than we expect to go. One of the things I value most is the freedom to ask anything. No question is too small, too obvious, or too ambitious. That kind of openness – where curiosity is genuinely welcomed – creates the conditions for real progress.

Through the texts we study, we explore English history, economics, and civilisation. Each session is as much a cultural immersion as it is a linguistic one. We are not simply learning grammar – we are learning how a society thinks, what it values, how it has evolved.

The entire staff – quietly, professionally, and with great warmth – works to ensure that every student can study in the best possible conditions with students from different nations, different backgrounds, all speaking English with different accents, and all sharing the same quiet determination to know more. Many of us hold qualifications from our respective countries and we arrive with experience, with perspective, with stories. There is something genuinely beautiful about seeing everyone together, learning side by side, each at their own pace, each with their own strengths.

At Brent Start, I have found something I did not expect to find. Joy. Peace. Mutual respect. And the reminder that learning – real learning – is one of the most human things we can do. Everyone is welcome here at Brent Start. And that, perhaps, is the most important lesson of all.'

Maths courses

We offer accredited Functional Skills Entry 1 to Level 2 and GCSE qualifications designed to support everyday life, further education, employability and career progression. Our engaging and practical teaching methods help learners build confidence in numeracy while developing critical thinking and problem solving

skills essential for personal and professional situations. A range of short courses is also available to boost learners' confidence with numbers including, Award and Certificate in Understanding Mathematical Techniques, Getting to Know Your Calculator workshop and tailored exam practice workshops.

Functional Skills Entry 1

Functional Skills Entry 2

Functional Skills Entry 3

Functional Skills Level 1
Equivalent to GCSE grades 1–3

Functional Skills Level 2
Equivalent to GCSE grades 4–9

Maths Progression Pathway

GCSE Stepping Stones
Preparation for GCSE

GCSE
Foundation/Higher Tier

COURSE CONTENT

The maths provision offers a structured pathway from foundational skills to more advanced study. The Basic Skills course introduces key topics such as number bonds, number operations, measures, shape and space. Functional Skills Entry Levels 1 to 3 build on this foundation, covering numbers, measures, shape and space and handling data, while developing essential problem-solving skills and introducing a range of methods to support learning and school-based work. At higher levels,

Functional Skills Levels 1 and 2 and GCSE Maths explore mathematical concepts in greater depth, enabling learners to tackle more complex, multi-step problems and improve career prospects. Functional Skills and GCSE courses are delivered over two days per week.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

No prior qualifications are required. However, learners must complete an initial assessment to determine their current level of subject knowledge.





Maths learner **Masoomah**

'It's never too late to start. I started maths Level 1 after being away from school for more than 30 years. Level 1 was fine, but the thought of GCSEs honestly scared me.

It all started with the encouragement and guidance of two of my friends in my English course. They suggested I should try an assessment to skip Level 2 and go straight to GCSE. I am so grateful to them for encouraging me to try. I'll never forget the moment my assessor, a kind lady who later became my teacher, told me I had passed. I was in total shock.

Moving into GCSE was a huge jump. It's a very busy year where you have to learn three years of work in just one. It's a lot of pressure, especially for adult learners like us who have forgotten much of what we learned years ago and truly have numerous family responsibilities. The first few months were tough as I tried to get my brain working again. But by studying with my hard-working classmates before and after every class, everything started to come back to me.

What I especially appreciate about this centre is the amazing support. The teachers and staff are very supportive and you always feel they want you to do well. As I am writing this, I have already finished my Paper 1 exam. I still have two more exams left. I hope all the students at this level are successful in their exams. To anyone afraid to start again: don't let fear stop you. If I could do it after more than 30 years, you can too!'



Finance and Payroll Courses

We deliver nationally recognised, accredited courses leading to accounting qualifications at Levels 1, 2 and 3, as well as Payroll qualifications at Levels 1 and 2. Our Accounting and Payroll courses provide practical, industry relevant skills in

accounting, bookkeeping and payroll transactions. They are ideal for individuals aspiring to enter, or already working within, the financial services sector, including banks, building societies, insurance brokers and self employed business owners.

Finance and Payroll Progression Pathway

Accounting	Payroll
Level 1 Award Computerised Accounting	Level 1 Award Computerised Payroll
Level 2 Certificate Computerised Accounting	Level 2 Certificate Computerised Payroll
Level 3 Diploma in Computerised Finance	
Level 3 Diploma Computerised Accounting	

COURSE CONTENT

The Computerised Accounting Level 1 and Level 2 qualifications provide a progressive pathway for developing knowledge and practical skills in computerised accounting, bookkeeping and banking procedures. Level 1 offers an introduction to key concepts, equipping learners with essential accounting skills supported by online materials, tutor guidance and practical simulations. Level 2 builds on this foundation and is designed for those with a basic understanding of manual bookkeeping, developing more advanced, vocationally focused skills in the computerised accounting process. The qualification covers complex transactions, including bad debts, depreciation, contra entries and bank reconciliation statements, enhancing learners’ ability to manage financial records effectively.

The Level 3 qualification develops advanced knowledge and skills in areas such as

cash flow management, VAT returns and partnership accounting, alongside the use of accounting software, budgeting and professional responsibilities within finance.

The Level 3 Finance qualification acts as a bridge between Level 2 and Level 3 Accounting, combining elements of accounting and payroll knowledge while providing practical, hands-on experience to help learners build a strong foundation for progression.

The Payroll Level 1 and Level 2 qualifications are designed to develop the knowledge and practical skills required to manage payroll transactions in a computerised environment. These courses provide a structured pathway from basic payroll procedures to more advanced operations. Learners gain skills in setting up company details, maintaining employee records, processing starters and leavers, and calculating pay, as well

as producing key payroll reports, such as payslips.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Computerised Accounting Level 1 & Computerised Payroll Level 1

No prior qualifications are required. However, learners must achieve a minimum of Entry 3 in Maths, English, and the Digital Skills initial assessment to join the course.

Computerised Accounting Level 2

Learners must hold a prior accounting qualification at Level 1, have achieved Level 1 or higher in both Maths and English and complete a satisfactory Digital Skills initial assessment.

Computerised Accounting Level 3

Learners must hold a prior accounting qualification at Level 2, have achieved Level 1 or higher in both Maths and English and complete a satisfactory Digital Skills initial assessment.

Computerised Payroll Level 2

Learners must hold a prior payroll qualification at Level 1, have achieved Level 1 or higher in both Maths and English and complete a satisfactory Digital Skills initial assessment.



Computerised Accounting Level 2

Nishitkumar

'I got a good opportunity to start my learning with Brent Start at the age of 40. I gained more knowledge while studying with Brent Start and tutors' teaching skills are amazing, so it is easy to grasp concepts.

I am currently undertaking five different courses in one year at Brent Start. My courses are VTCT Accounting Level 1, Digital Skills and File Management which I have finished. I am currently engaged with VTCT Accounting Level 2 and Get Ready for EDSQ courses. I have improved my knowledge during these courses.

These courses now help me with my personal work. But in the future, it can also help me get a good job in accounting or in the computer field. I am looking forward to getting a better job. With these courses, I have become more confident in interacting in the workplace and with others.

I appreciate the opportunity that Brent Start has provided me with at the age of 40 to learn these different courses. Furthermore, the tutors have been very helpful at every stage of the course.'

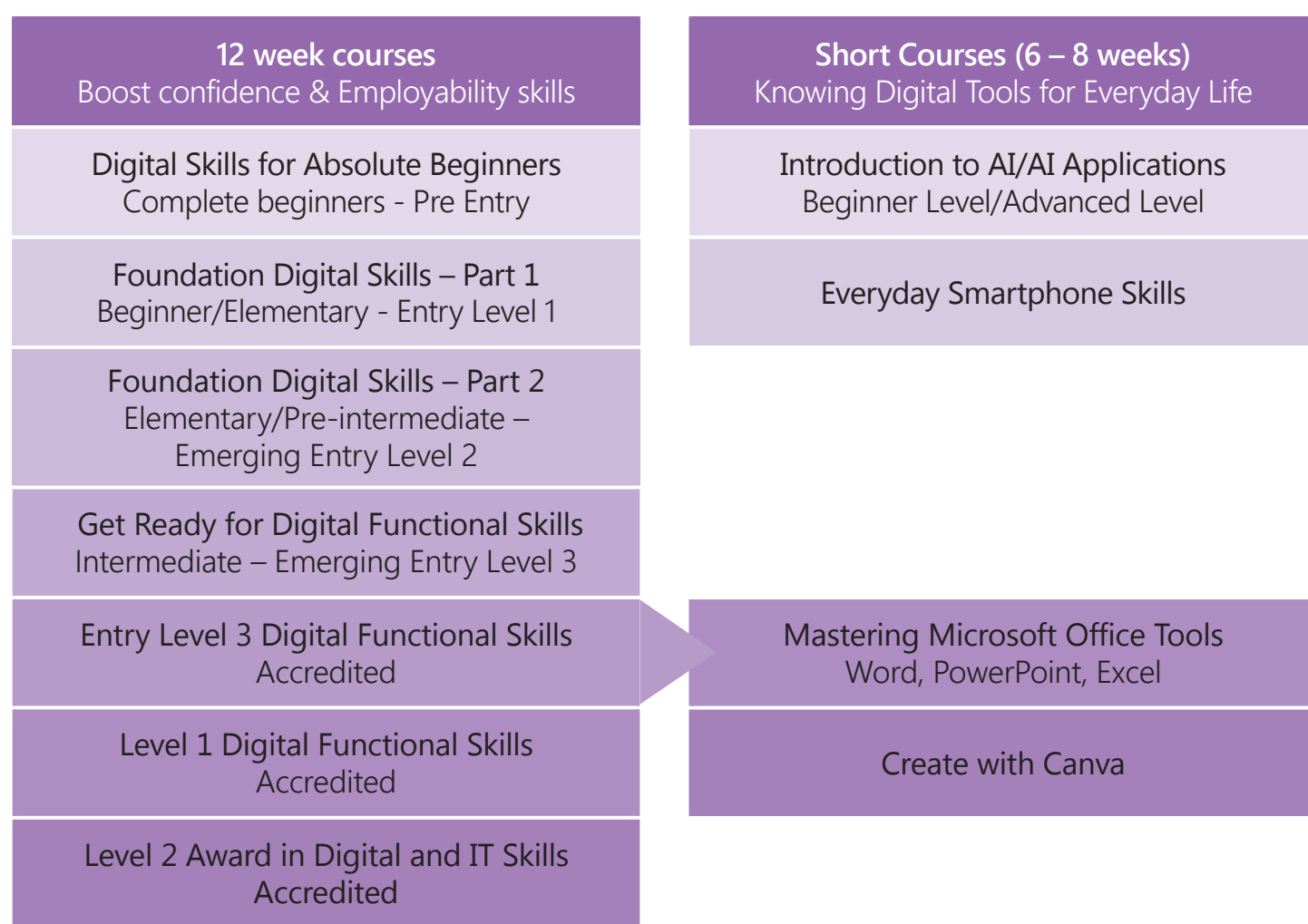
Digital Skills

In today's fast paced digital world, strong digital skills are essential as technology continues to shape everyday life. Our Digital Skills courses support beginners and intermediate learners to develop confidence in using computers and digital tools effectively for work, education and recreation, communication and daily tasks. Through

practical, hands on learning, learners learn to improve productivity, stay connected and make better use of digital services and online resources.

We also offer a range of short courses, such as Introduction to AI, AI Applications, Everyday Smartphone Skills and Create with Canva.

Digital Skills Progression Pathway



Foundation Digital Skills course

This beginner and foundation Digital Skills course (aligned to Digital Functional Skills qualifications at Entry Level and below) provides learners with practical, hands-on experience in essential computer and online skills for everyday life. Learners develop an understanding of basic computer use, file management and simple document creation, alongside using

digital devices confidently.

The course covers safe internet use, email, social media, messaging apps and digital communication tools such as Google Drive. Learners also explore online transactions, video calling and basic troubleshooting, with a strong focus on building confidence, independence and online safety.

Entry Level 3 and Level 1 Digital Functional Skills

These courses build core digital skills for everyday life and work, based on the national subject content for Digital Functional Skills qualifications. Learners develop confidence across key areas including managing information, creating digital content, communicating online, carrying out transactions safely and staying safe online.

Mastering Microsoft Office Tools

This Microsoft Office course develops practical skills in Word, PowerPoint and Excel, progressing to Excel Improver level. Learners gain confidence in creating documents, presentations and spreadsheets, including data entry, calculations and basic formulas.

ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Absolute Beginners, Foundation Digital Skills courses

No prior qualifications are required; however, learners must achieve a minimum of Entry 3 in the English initial assessment to join the course.

Entry Level 3 and Level 1 Digital Functional Skills

Learners must have achieved a minimum of Entry Level 3 in their English initial assessment and demonstrate foundation-level digital skills.

Mastering Microsoft Office Tools

Learners must have achieved a minimum of Entry Level 3 in their English initial assessment and demonstrate Entry 3 and above Essential Digital Skills/ Digital Functional Skills.



Level 2 Digital Skills for Work

Loraine

'I have been very lucky that a few years ago, at the Brent Start site at the top of Harrow Road, I was introduced to Digital Skills classes. This was my first experience using computers, where I learned to send emails, create an email address, use Word and organise files. These classes helped build my confidence and self-esteem, which I felt I was lacking at the time. My tutors were patient, kind, and supportive, especially when I was feeling low. Attending gave me purpose, helped me solve problems.

Although I have always been afraid of exams, I went on to enrol in further courses. This improved my outlook on life and helped me care better for my father, while also giving me time to focus on myself. I became calmer, more patient, and happier, which others noticed too. More recently, Brent Start has supported me again with my mental health and confidence. I even received an award at the Civic Centre from the Mayor. Now in my third year, studying Level 2, I continue to grow in confidence. With supportive tutors and classmates, I feel motivated to keep learning to succeed.'

Early Years and Health and Social Care Courses

Build a meaningful and rewarding career in education and care with a range of accredited Childcare, Teaching Assistant and Health & Social Care courses. Learners gain a strong understanding of child development, learning and behaviour, inclusive practice, safeguarding and person centred care through engaging, hands on learning delivered by experienced professionals. Whether supporting young children in early years settings, assisting

teachers in schools or providing compassionate care in health and social care environments, our courses combine theory with practical experience to prepare learners for real world roles, clear progression pathways and long term career success. A range of short courses is also available to boost learners' employability skills, including CV writing, academic writing and an 'Unlocking Maths Through Play' workshop and a phonics workshop.

Early Years and Health & Social Care Progression Pathway

Child Care	Teaching Assistant	Health & Social Care	
Entry 3 Award and Certificate in Caring for Children	Level 1 Award Preparing to Work in Schools	Level 1 Award in Preparing to Work in Adult Social Care	Level 1 Certificate in Introduction to Health, Social Care and Children's and Young People's Settings
Level 1 Diploma in Caring for Children	Level 2 Award in Support Work in Schools and Colleges	Level 2 Certificate in Health and Social Care	
Level 2 Diploma for the Early Years Practitioner Placement required	Level 2 Certificate in Supporting Teaching and Learning Placement required	Level 3 Diploma in Adult Care Placement required	

COURSE CONTENT

Caring for Children

This suite of qualifications develops learners' knowledge and understanding of caring for babies and young children, starting with basic life skills at Entry Level and progressing to more advanced childcare knowledge and practice. Learners build skills in child development, care routines, safety and supporting learning through play, with opportunities to develop both personal and vocational skills. The courses are suitable for a wide range of learners, including young people, parents and those with additional needs or English as an additional language. Progression routes include moving from Entry Level Award/Certificate to higher-level qualifications, leading to the Level 2 Early

Years Practitioner qualification, which enables learners to enter the workforce.

Teaching Assistant

This suite of qualifications supports learners in developing the knowledge and skills needed to work in school and college environments, starting with an introduction to the education sector and progressing to more specialised support roles. Learners gain an understanding of child and young person development, wellbeing, behaviour management, communication and professional relationships, as well as the wider school environment. The courses are suitable for a broad range of learners, including those new to the sector. They provide a clear progression route from

introductory study to the Level 2 Certificate in Supporting Teaching and Learning, preparing learners for roles supporting pupils in primary, secondary, special schools, or colleges, or for further study at higher levels.

Health & Social Care

Learners can progress through a clear and supportive pathway within health and social care, starting with the Level 1 Award in Introduction to Health, Social Care and Children's and Young People's Settings, which provides a foundation in understanding different care environments. Learners gain introductory knowledge of key topics such as autism awareness, helping learners appreciate individual needs and person-centred approaches. From here, learners can move on to further study and development of core knowledge and skills, preparing them for employment or higher-level qualifications. Progression can then lead to a competence-based qualification designed for those working or wishing to work in adult

social care where learners develop practical skills, build confidence and gain experience in real care settings. This pathway ultimately supports learners to become skilled care or support workers with opportunities to specialise, take on greater responsibility and potentially progress into supervisory or leadership roles within the sector.

Entry requirements:

Entry 3 and Level 1 courses

No prior qualifications are required; however, learners must achieve a minimum of Entry 3 in the English initial assessment to join the course and complete a satisfactory Digital Skills initial assessment.

Level 2 and Level 3 courses

No prior qualifications are required; however, learners must achieve a minimum of Level 1 in the English initial assessment to join the course and complete a satisfactory Digital Skills initial assessment.



Level 2 Certificate in Support Teaching and Learning **Milagrina**

'I began my journey at Brent Start with the Level 1 CACHE Teaching Assistant course and I am currently progressing through my Level 2 qualification while also studying English Level 1. This experience has been truly life-changing because my teachers have been incredibly supportive and helpful throughout my studies. I am also gaining vital hands-on experience by volunteering in a school, which allows me to put my learning into practice immediately.

My confidence in speaking has grown tremendously and my vocabulary has improved significantly, making me feel much more prepared for my future career. I now feel fully equipped to support children's learning and contribute positively to the classroom environment every day. I am excited to see where this professional path leads me next.'

Supported Learning

We offer accredited and non-accredited courses for adults with mild to moderate learning disabilities. We support learners in developing skills for life and work that will help them live independently in their communities.

The range of courses offered includes courses to develop learners' confidence, creativity and independent life skills, in addition to literacy, numeracy and digital skills. Safeguarding individual students' wellbeing is paramount and all supported students will receive training in being safe and keeping safe.

The Supported learning provision offers the following:

1. **Programme 1.** Four day Mon-Fri at Hillside Centre Stonebridge.
2. **Programme 2.** Two day Mon-Tue or Wed-Thurs at Harlesden Library Plus.

3. **Programme 3.** Pre-Entry Essential Digital skills. Fridays at Hillside Centre Stonebridge.
4. **Enrichment**-all learners will participate in enrichment activities to promote British Values, Community awareness, the development of personal, social and life skills whilst understanding their voice in the community.
5. **Health and Wellbeing**-all Supported Learning students participate in weekly sporting and gym activities to promote health and wellbeing, working with others and engaging in leisure activities.

Programme 1	Programme 2	Programme 3
Hillside Centre	Harlesden Library	Hillside Centre
4 days (Monday-Thursday)	2 days Mon & Tue (Group 1) or Wed & Thurs (Group 2)	2.5 hours per week Every Friday 1-3:30pm
Qualifications: 1. Functional skills Maths and English E1-E3. 2. Pre- entry Award in Essential Digital skills. 3. Enrichment 4. Health and Wellbeing 5. OCN Diploma 6. New learners will complete level based on IA (initial assessment).	Qualifications: 1. Functional skills Maths and English E1-E3. 2. Pre- entry Award in Essential Digital skills. 3. Enrichment 4. Health and Wellbeing 5. OCN Diploma 6. New learners will complete level based on IA (initial assessment).	Qualifications: 1. Pre-entry essential digital skills 2. New learners will complete level based on IA (initial assessment).

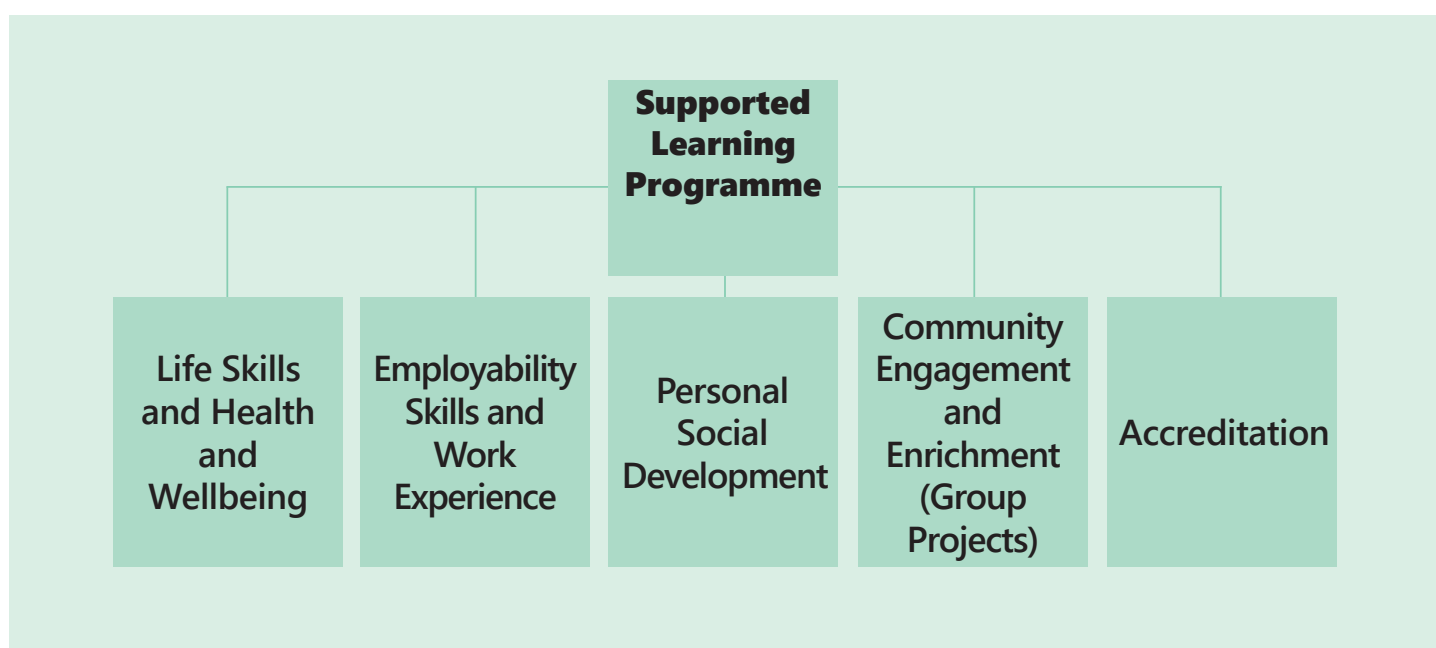
PROGRESSION:

The supported learning Programme at Brent Start is closely aligned with Preparation for Adulthood. This means all SEND students on programme are supported through a holistic and individualised programme of teaching and support that focusses on personalised targets which enables them to participate as

active citizens in their local community.

Brent Start's Supported Learning students are supported to access external agencies who can support with their progression whether it is in voluntary activities or employment. We work closely with DWP to ensure all students have access to the right support.

Supported Learning Programme Model



- Linked to initial assessment data, individual targets and progression routes
- Develop e-learning and e-safety content
- Informed by learner forums
- Develop Citizenship/British values
- Embed Prevent
- Explore therapeutic input within Health and Wellbeing i.e. music, dance and art therapy
- Embed relationship and consent training for learners
- Learners undertake voluntary work experience to develop their skills
- Maths, English and IT mandatory for all Supported Learning learners (contextualised i.e. money, shopping, etc)
- Digital Skills



Supported Learning programme

Shane

I have been part of the Supported Learning programme for two years. When I first started, I was quiet and tended to keep to myself. Over time, I have made significant progress. I have found my voice and now feel confident expressing my needs and ideas. I now socialise with other students and I have built positive relationships with both staff and peers at Brent Start.

My journey reflects the experience of many Supported Learning students - through encouragement and trust, I was able to open up, grow in confidence, and achieve my goals. My experience shows how the Supported Learning curriculum can bring out the best in students and support personal growth and independence. I have enjoyed the trips. I have been introduced to places that I would never have considered going to and this has developed my interests in activities and I will be going back to some of the places visited.



Supported Learning programme

Jermaine

I have been on the Supported Learning Programme for two years, during which I have worked hard and remained committed to my development. I have achieved Functional Skills qualifications in Maths and English at Entry Levels 1, 2, and 3, and I am currently working towards Level 1 in both subjects.

Alongside my studies at Brent Start, I work part-time at a restaurant. This role has helped me build valuable employability skills, and I am actively looking for further employment opportunities to continue developing my career.

As part of my progression planning, I am looking forward to joining an employment initiative with Brent Council Adult Social Care to help me succeed long term. I am proud of the progress I have made so far and look forward to continuing my journey towards employment and independence.



Supported Learning programme

Amadi

I have been part of the Supported Learning Programme for two years, during which I have made strong progress in my personal and academic development. I am also a published author, having written and published my own storybook in 2023 – an achievement I am very proud of.

During my programme, I have fully engaged with the curriculum. I have achieved Functional Skills qualifications in Maths and English at Entry Levels 1 and 2, while also developing my digital skills. I have taken part in a range of enrichment activities that have helped me grow in confidence and develop important life skills. I have also completed work experience and volunteered at Harlesden Library Plus, where I worked alongside library staff to gain employability skills, such as communication and teamwork.

I was honoured to be recognised at a Looked After Adults Award event, where I spoke about my experiences at Brent Start. I shared how the Supported Learning team has helped me develop important skills for life and learning and I was proud to thank them for their support. My journey shows how supported learning can help individuals build confidence, achieve their goals and realise their full potential.

SUPPORTED LEARNING

Celebrating equality, diversity and inclusion:



Community Learning

Community learning provision focuses on flexible, tailored learning that

- builds confidence
- re-engages with local residents
- reaches residents who are out of work, in low-paid jobs or with no qualification
- creates a clear progression route into high-demand technical roles
- has a significant self-employment and entrepreneurship potential
- supports local small and medium-sized enterprises and high street businesses
- is accessible and inclusive

Courses are available for beginners and more experienced students, with day and some evening/weekend classes. There is a range of non-accredited and accredited courses with an opportunity to progress to vocational, further training, volunteering within or outside Brent Start and/or apprenticeship, self-employment or employment.

- Hair & Beauty: Hairdressing, Barbering, Hair Extensions and Braiding, Make Up, Nail Art, Skincare and Facial massage
- Level 1 Certificate in Introduction to Hair and Beauty Sector (VTCT)

- Fashion Design, Clothes Design and Sustainable Fashion
- Sugar craft and Cake Decorating
- Balloon Decoration Designs and Gift
- Event Styling and Enterprise
- Business Start Up

You will need to book an initial assessment prior to enrolment to see if a course is right for you.

Community Partners

We work with several community partners in Brent who engage with most 'hard to reach' groups, such as carers, parents, senior residents, refugees and asylum seekers and many others.

Every year, we run a wide selection of courses, which can be tailored to the needs of communities and service users at various organisations across Brent, if you have service users who need courses in ESOL, maths, digital skills, employability, cooking, sewing, arts and crafts, health, and wellbeing. Classes are usually 1-3 hours per week for 5-10 weeks including tasters, one-day workshops, events' activities, and joint projects, starting as and when required.





Success story **Carlito**

'The courses I took at Brent Start's Hairdressing Academy were Cutting and Styling Women's hair, Barbering and Colouring techniques. These courses became the foundation of my confidence and skills. Because of the training and encouragement I received Brent Start, I went on to enrol in the Vocational Training Charitable Trust (VTCT) Hairdressing qualification to take my learning even further. I've recently earned my first couple of pounds by doing hair for my friends, and the trust they've shown me – along with their positive feedback – has been incredibly motivating. It reminded me that this path has real potential, not just creatively but financially as well.

My goal is to complete my VTCT qualification, continue building my skills, and eventually establish myself professionally in the hair and beauty industry. I hope to open a space where I can combine barbering, women's styling, and colour work, while also empowering clients through education and personalised service.

Brent Start played a huge role in helping me rediscover my direction. The supportive environment, offered by the the patient Brent Start tutors, and the practical training gave me the confidence to believe in my abilities again. I'm grateful for the opportunity to share my story, and I hope it encourages others to take that first step taking courses with Brent Start.'



Brent Start Learning Centres



**Brent
Start**

www.brent.gov.uk/brentstart

Telephone **020 8937 3950**

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