

Recommendations



Practical approach toolkit: Building engagement with adult social care providers

These recommendations are based on proven practice and lessons learned from Harrow, Richmond and Uxbridge Colleges' successful approach to engaging adult social care providers in local skills development. Each recommendation includes practical ways to achieve measurable impact. For further detail, refer to the building blocks outlined in the toolkit.

At the end of this resource, you'll find a list of resources to support implementation.

Planning and preparing	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Start with a clear vision, listening-first approach and evidence-based case for investment to secure leadership and stakeholder buy-in.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Map sector challenges and provider priorities through conversations, not assumptions, to ensure relevance and trust.■ Link proposals to Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIPs) and demonstrate how engagement improves learner readiness and provider confidence.■ Highlight risks of inaction, such as continued recruitment struggles and poor alignment between education and practice.			
Action			

Planning and preparing	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Plan how and when you will work with providers from the start and make these routines consistent across all sites so the approach is clear, repeatable and sustainable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Schedule forums and borough network meetings well in advance, balancing frequency with provider capacity and operational pressures. ■ Define success metrics beyond attendance – focus on what could be achieved (curriculum influence, placements and repeat collaboration) for meaningful impact. ■ Write down clear steps for how co-design will work and how facilities can be used, so that collaboration becomes a normal, everyday part of delivery and decision-making. 			
Action			

Planning and preparing	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Secure leadership buy-in and allocate dedicated project resources early.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Appoint a sector-credible lead and project manager to maintain momentum and accountability. ■ Ensure governance structures and reporting cycles are agreed before implementation to avoid drift. ■ Allocate time and budget for staff CPD so educators can confidently use advanced spaces and technology. 			

Action

Planning and preparing	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Standardise learner experience and facility specifications across sites for consistency and credibility.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Consult providers on equipment choices and layout to ensure realism and parity with workplace standards. ■ Align curriculum delivery and enrichment activities across campuses to reassure providers of quality and uniformity. 			

Action

Digital and technology	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Use familiar digital channels to convert initial interest into actionable engagement opportunities quickly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Share calls-to-action and updates via registered managers' WhatsApp groups for immediate visibility and response. ■ Match easy digital communication with real, practical benefits (e.g., access to facilities or having a say in the curriculum) so that providers stay engaged after the first interaction. 			

Action

Digital and technology	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Make participation easy with hybrid formats and cross-campus 'screen-in' sessions to overcome travel and time barriers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Where possible, connect the immersive rooms across sites so providers can give live talks and demonstrations to multiple campuses at the same time, without needing to repeat the session. ■ Share video highlights from showcase events to extend reach, create momentum and encourage future participation. 			
Action			

Digital and technology	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Include immersive and digital care tools in joint sessions with students and providers, so learners can practise in environments that feel like real care settings and are better prepared for modern ways of working.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Demonstrate AI and digital documentation tools to build fluency in contemporary care systems and compliance processes. ■ Combine clinical and interpersonal training in realistic environments to mirror workplace expectations and improve learner confidence. 			
Action			

Financing and investment	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Combine capital and revenue funding to secure engagement and ensure sustainability beyond initial grant periods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Communicate funding time lines clearly to manage expectations and avoid over-promising to stakeholders. ■ Embed provider engagement into core training strategy to prevent engagement dropping when short-term grants end. 			

Action

Financing and investment	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Reduce cost and duplication through co-commissioned training models that maximise shared resources and sector collaboration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Publish an annual calendar for mandatory training hosted at training sites to streamline planning and delivery. ■ Providers bring their own trainers (either internal colleagues or a commissioned third-party learning provider) while FE staff join for CPD, creating mutual benefit and reducing duplication. ■ Networks book places collectively to lower unit cost and improve access for smaller providers with limited budgets. 			

Action
This area is intentionally left blank for action items

Involving key stakeholders	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Leverage Skills for Care as a trusted connector to reach smaller providers and build sector-wide engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Attend borough registered managers' meetings to meet providers in familiar settings. ■ Use network chairs as co-hosts and advocates to validate offers and encourage practical participation. ■ Share facilities for network meetings free-of-charge to build trust and showcase collaborative intent. 			

Action

Involving key stakeholders	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Make engagement reciprocal and practical to ensure mutual benefit and sustained collaboration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Require joint CPD when providers use facilities, reinforcing shared learning and sector alignment. ■ Invite providers to give talks to students, offer structured placements, and review the curriculum tasks, so training reflects real-world practice. ■ Offer opportunities for providers to influence assessment design and scenario realism. 			

Action
This area is intentionally left blank for recording actions

Governance and implementation	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Appoint a sector-credible lead and project manager to maintain accountability and momentum across delivery phases.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Run six-week reporting cycles against objectives to track progress and identify risks early. ■ Maintain an issues log and progress tracker for transparency and consistency. ■ Monitor engagement quality alongside quantity to ensure depth of collaboration. 			
Action			

Governance and implementation	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Quality assure engagement and teaching through continuous feedback loops and collaborative review.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Observe placements to identify mismatches between taught standards and workplace norms. ■ Use forum reviews to validate realism of scenarios, infection control and documentation practices. ■ Benchmark against sector best practice to maintain compliance and cultural alignment. 			
Action			

Outcomes, impact and learning	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Demonstrate tangible improvements in learner readiness and provider confidence through immersive practice and structured collaboration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Learners gain hands-on experience in realistic environments and placements, reducing onboarding time and improving retention. ■ Look for examples of providers reporting reduced induction costs and greater trust in training provision due to curriculum alignment with workplace standards. ■ Showcase success stories of joint CPD and curriculum co-design to reinforce credibility and sector-wide impact. 			
Action			

Outcomes, impact and learning	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Evidence sector-wide benefits by embedding collaboration into everyday practice and creating sustainable engagement routines.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Continue to offer regular forums and borough network meetings to maintain dialogue and trust beyond initial funding cycles. ■ Share use of facilities for CPD and training to maximise return on investment and strengthen workforce pipelines. ■ Ensure engagement becomes a standing capability, not a one-off project, enabling rapid adaptation to emerging care needs. 			
Action			

Outcomes, impact and learning	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Raise the profile of adult social care and challenge outdated perceptions through innovation and partnership.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Showcase immersive technology and hybrid engagement formats to position care as a skilled, future-ready profession. ■ Promote collaborative achievements via forums, newsletters and social media to attract new talent and strengthen sector identity. ■ Use provider advocacy and peer influence to cascade engagement across borough networks and smaller providers. 			

Action

Outcomes, impact and learning	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Plan for long-term sustainability by embedding trust building and mutual benefit into every engagement activity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Maintain transparency about funding time lines and avoid over-promising to protect credibility. ■ Reinforce reciprocity – providers gain access to facilities and influence curriculum, while colleges secure placements and expertise. ■ Advocate for policy and funding alignment to support ongoing collaboration and sector resilience. 			

Action

Further support

- [Adult Social Care Workforce Data Set \(ASC-WDS\)/Workforce Intelligence reports](#)
– Use workforce data to evidence the case for change, benchmark your performance with others (e.g., how retention rates compare) and identify issues, opportunities and risks
- [Skills for Care area support](#) – Get support from dedicated locality managers. They help adult social care providers and sector stakeholders with workforce development, planning, wellbeing, recruitment and retention, service integration, and signposting to local networks and events.
- [Local networks](#) – Join a peer support networks for adult social care providers, including front line managers, deputy managers, learning and development leads and CEOs etc.
- [Induction](#) – Use this comprehensive induction toolkit for social care employers, which offers structured check lists, role-specific guidance, and inclusive best-practice resources to effectively onboard new starters.
- [The Care Workforce Pathway](#) – Develop your workforce with clear roles and career progression.