

ELATT Post-16 Pathways Strategy

June 2026

About ELATT

ELATT is a London-based charity and education provider that has supported people facing barriers to education and employment for more than 40 years. We work with young people and adults from diverse and often underserved backgrounds, including learners with SEND, refugees, migrants and those experiencing disadvantage. Our purpose is to create opportunities through education, helping people build the skills, confidence and independence needed to progress into employment, further study and active participation in their communities.

We combine practical, career-focused learning with personalised support, wellbeing services, careers guidance and strong employer partnerships. Our approach is built on the belief that learning is an individual journey and that every learner should have access to high-quality opportunities, tailored support and clear progression pathways which enable them to achieve their full potential. Our values of Excellence, Community, Education and Collaboration underpin everything we do.

Introduction to the Post-16 Pathways Strategy

ELATT's Post-16 Pathways Strategy is built around a clear, inclusive and progression-focused model that aligns with the reformed national landscape while responding directly to the needs of its learners.

Our vision is underpinned by a strong focus on clear, measurable outcomes, with employment as the central goal for the majority of learners. All study programmes are designed with progression in mind, ensuring that learners leave with the skills, behaviours and experiences needed to move into sustained employment, apprenticeships or further study. This is particularly important given ELATT's learner profile, where many students require carefully structured pathways and longer transition periods to achieve positive outcomes.

Objectives of the Post-16 Pathways Strategy

To align ELATT's current SEND-focused Sixth Form with the 16–19 qualification reforms rolling out from 2027, emphasising broad vocational education and practical outcomes, whilst meeting the needs of ELATT's diverse student intake.

Why ELATT

ELATT is well placed to meet this need through its established partnerships with local authorities and its delivery of supported internships and employer-based programmes. These programmes provide structured work experience, build independence and develop key workplace behaviours.

A defining feature of ELATT's Sixth Form is the high level of support provided to learners. This includes strong pastoral care, tailored teaching approaches, SEND support and structured interventions that enable learners to engage, progress and achieve. Small group delivery, consistent routines and close working relationships between staff and students ensure that learners receive the support they need to succeed and progress towards greater independence.

Across all pathways, partnership working is central to delivery. Employer-led projects, live briefs, mentoring and work experience are embedded throughout the curriculum, alongside Extended Project Qualifications that develop higher-level thinking and research skills. This ensures that both qualification and non-qualification activity contribute to learner progress and that students are consistently exposed to real-world expectations and environments.

Core qualifications on the Study Programme

Level 2 (Intermediate Pathway)

- The Foundation Certificate (~250–300 GLH) will be the centrepiece of each student's timetable:
- **From 2027:** Level 2 Digital students start on the new 1-year Digital Foundation Certificate (~250–300 GLH).
- **From 2028:** Level 2 Business Administration students start on the Business & Administration Foundation Certificate (~250–300 GLH).
- **Aim:** Offer a supportive one-year programme covering core sector knowledge and skills, building confidence for progression to Level 3 (or employment) without requiring a two-year qualification.

Level 3 (Advanced Pathway)

- The V Level (360 GLH) will be the centrepiece of each student's timetable:
- **From 2027:** Level 3 Digital students start on the new 360 GLH Digital V Level course, replacing current L3 Digital vocational qualifications.
- **From 2028:** Level 3 Business Administration students move to Business-related V Levels (when those become available), aligning with reform timeline.

Full Study Programme (~600 GLH/year)

In addition to the Level 2 Foundation Certificate and Level 3 V Level, students will take the following courses as part of their full 600 GLH study programme at both Level 2 and Level 3:

- **English & Maths (GCSE or Functional Skills):** Added for any student without GCSE pass (approx. 100 GLH each).
- **Enrichment & PSD:** Weekly Personal and Social Development, employability workshops, and enrichment projects provide structured, supervised learning beyond the qualification.
- **Work-related Learning:** Short work experience projects or external/internal placements ensure practical exposure without relying on long external placements.
- **Optional Extra Qualification:** Where beneficial, a small additional qualification (e.g. a Level 2 Project or Employability Award, or the Extended Project Qualification at Level 3) may be included to broaden skills and contribute additional GLH.

Direct-to-Employment Support – Occupational Pathway via Non-Qualification

- **No in-house L2 Occupational Certificates:** Instead, we support employment-focused learners through supported internships (when available) and tailored work-readiness programmes (non-qualification).
- **Occupational Pathway Rationale:** Some learners will benefit more from structured work-based experiences and supported transitions into employment than from a qualification-led route. These pathways provide a flexible means of achieving meaningful employment outcomes while remaining aligned to individual learner goals and EHCP priorities.
- **Flexibility:** Such non-qualification routes can serve as a learner's core aim (with proper planning and RARPA evidence) if the EHCP priorities are centred on employment, ensuring compliance and meaningful outcomes.

Transition Timeline & Compliance

The transition to this model will be delivered in phases, aligned to the national rollout between 2027 and 2031, ensuring that ELATT remains compliant while maintaining stability and quality, incorporating a strong Level 1 foundation, delivering Level 2 Further Study programmes, embedding the Occupational pathway through supported internships and partnerships, and building a robust Level 3 model centred on V Levels and employer-linked project-based learning.

The route map is as follows:

Academic year	Level 2 change	Level 3 change	Operational focus
2026/27	Current Level 2 Digital and Business provision continues while replacements are prepared.	Current Level 3 Digital and Business provision continues as funded.	Preparation year: curriculum planning, staff development, materials, compliance checks, and progression mapping.
Sept 2027	New Level 2 Digital starts move to the Digital Foundation Certificate **	New Level 3 Digital starts move to the Digital V Level.	First reform implementation year, focused on Digital transition and safe teach-out of legacy routes.
Sept 2028	New Level 2 Business & Administration starts move to the Business & Administration Foundation Certificate **	New Level 3 Business & Administration starts move to Business-related V Levels when available*	Second reform implementation year, focused on Business & Administration transition and removal of remaining legacy starts.
2029/30	All new Level 2 learners are on reformed Foundation Certificates.	All new Level 3 learners are on reformed V Levels.	Steady-state model: reformed qualifications, supported work-readiness routes, and full compliance with the new funding landscape.

* As of June 2026, this qualification is not yet available

** Funding note: Legacy L3 Digital funding ends in August 2027, while L2 Digital legacy provision continues temporarily until replacement qualifications are fully in place. Legacy Business funding ends in August 2028.

Training and awareness raising throughout 2026 – 2027

To support this transition, staff training and curriculum planning are underway. Teachers are being upskilled for new curricula (e.g., understanding V Level content and assessments), and throughout 2026-2027, information sessions for parents/students will clarify the new options. We are leveraging our small class sizes and existing multidisciplinary staff to implement changes gradually without compromising support.

Resources & Capital Investment

We expect to have a modest DfE capital allocation of £10,000 to support our transition. This will be invested strategically – for example, in upgrading digital equipment (ensuring our labs meet updated requirements for the new Digital V Level), and improving accessibility (specialist software and furniture) to strengthen inclusive classroom practice. The fund is small but targeted, aimed at adapting facilities for the new pathways and enhancing the learning environment for SEND learners. This one-off investment will complement our existing resources, helping ensure we're fully equipped and ready to deliver the reformed qualifications effectively.

Conclusion

By focusing on V Levels at Level 3 and Foundation Certificates at Level 2, embedding strong English/maths and enrichment, and providing bespoke employment pathways, our Sixth Form will continue to meet the needs of our high-needs learners within the 16–19 Study Programme model. The strategy ensures a compliant, minimal-disruption transition to the reformed system by 2027–2030, enabling us to continue delivering person-centred education while fully adopting the new qualification framework and supporting successful learner progression.