

Adult Education

WARWICK INSTITUTE *for*
EMPLOYMENT RESEARCH



Too important to be left to chance



A report commissioned
by the All Party Parliamentary
Group for Adult Education



All-Party
Parliamentary Group
for Adult Education

Five key recommendations

From the research, we highlight five key recommendations

Recommendation 1

Establish a national and regional strategy for adult education, health, employability and wellbeing – bringing together the different departmental interests led by a senior Minister to provide an accountability and quality assured framework at a national and regional level. There needs to be clear criteria for providers to capture, collate and disseminate the full benefits of adult education, including improvements to their health and well-being and participation as an active citizen against the accountability and quality-assured framework.

Recommendation 2

The new commissioning system needs to have an adult education framework that seeks to rebuild and rebalance resources fairly for adults across the different life-stages – national and local provision for adults' needs to reflect a coherent view of our changing social, economic and cultural context. The matter of identity, of how people describe who they are and the values they hold is an important conversation to be had with Commissioners in local areas. We learned from adults who were not engaged in adult education that many felt vulnerable, had limited choice on what was available when it comes to addressing their feelings of isolation, loneliness, mental and physical challenges.

Recommendation 3

Provide careers information, advice and guidance in local communities and building capacity in the adult education workforce to make greater use of labour market intelligence and mid-life reviews - broaden and strengthen the capacity of the adult education workforce, thus raising the profile of this important work – training and professional support should be available for all those involved in delivering education and training in various capacities.

Recommendation 4

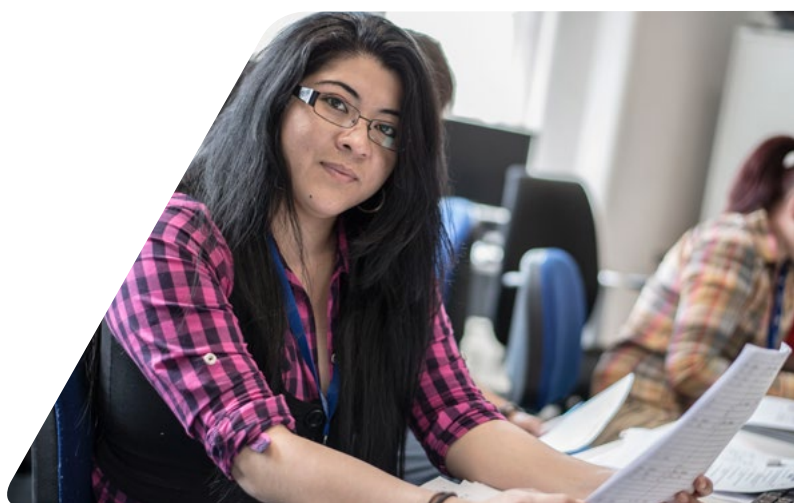
Ensure a systematic approach to identifying and gathering evidence on the full impact of adult education - data on the outcomes achieved by adult learners should not be overly bureaucratic but it needs to be openly available for individuals, employers and commissioners to enable informed choices.

Recommendation 5

More employers need to step up and offer opportunities to adults, particularly older adults keen to remain active in employment. Employers could offer so much more by offering adult education experiences on their premises through local partnerships.

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Introduction

“ Adult education can help change lives and transform societies – it is a human right and common good ”

European Adult Education Manifesto for the 21st Century.¹

‘A broad highway that all could travel.’ That’s how Keir Hardy – Britain’s first Labour MP – envisaged education for all back in the 1890s.² Since then, there is a mountain of evidence - be it in government data, books, reports and millions of individual case studies - that proves adult education has significantly changed so many people’s lives. Many adults have found their way onto the highway and have made up for lost time by discovering their potential and skills, achieving things they did not know they were capable of. Many have developed self-belief and resilience enabling them to be more active citizens or support their families and communities in a way they would not have believed possible. However, still not everyone finds it easy to get on that highway or to navigate their route along it. Too many of those who could benefit most from making the journey are missing out. That’s why the newly formed All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Adult Education is making educational provision for adults the focus of its first report. As the APPG’s Chair explained at the Group’s launch:

“ We need more opportunities and support for adults to learn throughout their lives, whatever their circumstances. Our world is constantly changing and learning helps many people to make the positive changes they need – whether it’s finding a better job or broadening cultural horizons. ”

(Chi Onwurah MP)³

The core principle of adult education is the conviction that learning should not be restricted to a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Adult education has proven to be extremely successful in performing multiple roles. For example, attending courses as adults at any age supports people to catch up on learning they missed out when they were younger so that they can reach their potential. It also enables individuals to tackle personal issues or circumstances or help them to respond to changing circumstances – often unforeseen – so that they can find a new direction or cope better with change and transitions throughout life. Above all, joining an adult education course can be an excellent way to meet different people from a very wide range of diverse backgrounds and learn specific new skills and knowledge. Everyone should have the chance to study and learn at stages throughout their lives. And that learning should be readily accessible in differing forms that meet a wide range of individuals’ needs. Yet, far too many people who could benefit simply do not know that this is for them.

1 European Association for the Education of Adults (2015) Manifesto for Adult Learning in the 21st Century. Brussels. Visit: <http://www.eaea.org/media/policy-advocacy/manifesto/manifesto.pdf>

2 <http://www.educationengland.org.uk/history/chapter03.html>

3 <http://wea.org.uk/news/New-Parliamentary-Group-for-Adult-Education.aspx>

Background

The APPG for Adult Education commissioned the Warwick Institute for Employment Research at the University of Warwick (April – June 2016) to conduct research into the needs of adult learners.⁴ This work was managed by nine Specialist Designated Institutions (SDIs) - City Lit, Morley College, Hillcroft College, Northern College, Ruskin College, Working Men's College, Mary Ward Centre, Fircroft College and the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) - each has its own identity, mission and distinctive approach, which adds to the rich diversity of adult education.

Our primary focus is on adult education, and on adults returning to learn. Learning can occur in education or training institutions (offline or online), the workplace (on or off the job), the family, or cultural and especially, community settings. We use 'learning' to refer to all kinds of formal education and training (organised/accredited). We also include non-formal (organised unaccredited) and informal approaches (not organised, e.g. learning from colleagues or friends) provided these have a degree of adult education focus.

The aim of the study was to scope the need, reach and areas for policy and practice development for adult education concerning disadvantaged adults. The report collected evidence through the following channels:

- **A literature review:** Some 45 sources of research and analysis have been identified and reviewed, spanning practice and experience across the UK and internationally.
- **A formal call for evidence:** There were 34 responses received to a formal call for evidence, ranging from individual adult education tutors to major organisations.
- **An online survey of adult learners:** An online survey attracted responses from 543 adults, all but 2% of whom had attended adult education courses and spanning age groups from under 30 to over 65.
- **Fieldwork:** A total of 169 adult learners currently or previously attending programmes run by six SDI providers and 39 adults not currently learning, but who were attending a private provider of support for people who are unemployed.
- **Town Hall meetings:** These two open meetings were held in the Wirral and Newcastle, attended by some 60 people interested or involved in adult education in a wide variety of roles.
- **Telephone interviews:** A total of 12 key stakeholder interviews were conducted with leaders from education, employment and community sectors to ascertain their views on and experience of adult education provision in England. The main purpose was to capture their voices and identify key emerging policy priorities.

By drawing on these varied sources, the aim has been to develop a full picture of the benefits of adult education for individuals, employers and communities focusing on what works well and what needs to be improved to make best use of the resources available for adult education, particularly in addressing the needs of those most disadvantaged in our society. This report provides an opportunity to relate recent research to adult education policy and practice of 2016 and look forward to the next five to ten years.

⁴ See <http://wea.org.uk/news/New-Parliamentary-Group-for-Adult-Education.aspx>

Adult Education: why does it matter?

“ Adult education at its best connects people, helps to reduce loneliness or feelings of isolation within communities; it can instill a sense of empowerment through the joy of learning and/or help people get back to work or positively change direction. ”

(Baroness Margaret Sharp of Guildford)

Latest figures from the Office of National Statistics (ONS, June 2016)⁵ indicate the UK population grew by half a million last year to 65.1 million. The largest percentage increase was in England and the lowest was in Wales. The older population has continued to rise, with more than 11.6 million people (17.8% of the population) now aged 65 and over, and 1.5 million people (2.3% of the population) aged 85 and over in mid-2015. Clearly, there is an urgent requirement for more adults to be economically active for much longer than in previous generations due to changes in state pensions and increased lifespans (Eurostat, 2014).⁶ Data from the Office for National Statistics shows that the number of 18 year olds in England is projected to decline overall between 2012 and 2020 and it will be 2024 before the 18 year old population recovers to 2015 levels.

With a shrinking population of traditional “working age” supporting a growing retired one, we all will need to do things quite differently from previous generations and learn to structure our lives, as well as public, private and third sector services, in new and differing ways.

“ The traditional notion of a three-stage approach to our working lives - education, followed by work and then retirement is beginning to collapse: life expectancy is rising, final-salary pensions are vanishing, and increasing numbers of people are juggling multiple roles. ”

(Lynda Grattan, Professor of Management Practice, London Business School & Andrew Scott, Professor of Economics, London Business School)⁷

Everyone’s lives involve transitions, but for a growing number the frequency and scale of these are increasing. Changes in the economy mean people are having to change jobs and fields of work more often than in the past.⁸ Portfolio work is on the increase: for example, someone might be driving a taxi part of the day, renting out the driveway for somebody who wants to park their car, looking after an elderly relative and working for a delivery company in the evening. We are all more likely to have to be far more versatile in coping in changing roles and changing personal circumstances.

⁵ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datalist>

⁶ See Eurostat 2020 indicators – employment. Available online: http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Europe_2020_indicators_-_employment

⁷ The 100 Year Life – Visit: <http://www.100yearlife.com/>

⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Population_structure_and_ageing

Some people are on journeys of personal transition, for example, coping with a disability, recovering from an accident, leaving prison, mental health or domestic issues, or addiction problems. Adjusting to a new phase in life, such as retirement, represents another form of transition which can be aided by the support, new skills and new interests that adult education can offer. Increasing migration has seen more adults arriving in England with more varied backgrounds and a wider range of educational needs to help smooth the path to cultural integration. There are plenty of reasons – economic, social and moral – to help adults reconnect with education. As the Prime Minister put it earlier in the year:

“ The economy can't be secure if we spend billions of pounds on picking up the pieces of social failure and our society can't be strong and cohesive as long as there are millions of people who feel locked out of it. ”⁹

(David Cameron, Prime Minister, January 2016)

Recent findings from the OECD (June 2016) outlines:

“ There are an estimated 9 million working aged adults in England (more than a quarter of adults aged 16-65) with low literacy or numeracy skills or both. This reflects England's overall performance in the Survey of Adult Skills - around average for literacy, but well below average for numeracy relative to other OECD countries in the Survey (OECD, 2013). These 9 million people struggle with basic quantitative reasoning or have difficulty with simple written information. They might, for example, struggle to estimate how much petrol is left in the petrol tank from a sight of the gauge, or not be able to fully understand instructions on a bottle of aspirin. Here they are referred to as 'low-skilled'. Weak basic skills reduce productivity and employability, damage citizenship, and are therefore profoundly implicated in challenges of equity and social exclusion. ”

(OECD, 2016, p.9)¹⁰

Digital technology is transforming almost every aspect of our public, private or work life (Davos, 2016)¹¹. For every individual - the learner, the worker and the citizen - the natural consequence of technological innovation is a requirement to continue learning throughout life. Adult education has brought computing skills to millions of adults who thought they would be left behind forever, through courses in village halls, libraries and community centres. But there are still millions more people who are unlikely to be able to book a doctor's appointment online, keep up with their children's work at school or have a good chance of sustained employment because of their lack of skills and/or confidence in using technology. There is significant scope to do more:

⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/prime-ministers-speech-on-life-chances>

¹⁰ OECD (2016) Building Skills for All: A Review of England – Policy Insight from the Survey of Adult Skills, Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Economic Development. Visit: <https://www.oecd.org/unitedkingdom/building-skills-for-all-review-of-england.pdf>

¹¹ <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/01/the-fourth-industrial-revolution-what-it-means-and-how-to-respond/>

“ Don't force new technology into old pedagogy... it's not about technology, it's about new ways of thinking. ”

(Bob Harrison, Chair of Governors Northern College & Education Adviser, Toshiba - Northern Europe, 2016)¹²



Millions of people define their well-being in terms of health (DoH, 2014).¹³ The UK Government's Foresight report on mental capital and well-being highlighted the costs of over £100 billion for mental ill-health in the UK, and £27 billion to UK plc in terms of sickness absence, presenteeism (i.e. the practice of being present at one's place of work for more hours than is required, especially as a manifestation of insecurity about one's job) and labour turnover. In addition, nearly 40% of all incapacity benefit at

work is due to the common mental disorders of depression, anxiety and stress. The World Health Organisation (2014)¹⁴ links well-being to social connections, economic security and income, natural and built environment, and education. We found that attending adult education courses could directly improve the lives of individuals and contributed positively to all these areas.

“ I hated maths at school but now I know I will need to improve my skills and get the qualification so I can train to be a nurse. ”

(Adult Learner)

“ It is good to have a safe and helpful learning environment. It is easy to stay at home. Being 'forced' to go out of the house once a week is not a bad thing at my age. ”

(Adult Learner)

“ I can make calls on my own now and speak to my daughter's teacher. ”

(Adult Learner)

“ I have gained so much knowledge. I can understand grammar. At last I know what a comma is. My text messages make more sense. When I write I can say what I want to say and not just what I can spell. ”

(Adult Learner)

Adult education provides many opportunities to equalise societies on a larger scale. In this context, education and skills deficits need to be addressed as a priority to improve the economic and social prosperity of all citizens. While the number of jobs in the UK is expected to rise by about 1.8 million over the period 2014 to 2024, that growth will be strongest for highly qualified managers and professionals.¹⁵ In contrast, the jobs that have traditionally enabled those with little in the way of qualifications to get into work and get on will be in decline. For example the number

¹² <http://www.setuk.co.uk/>

¹³ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/277566/Narrative_January_2014_.pdf

¹⁴ World Health Organisation (2014) Second joint meeting of experts on targets and indicators for health and well-being in Health 2020, London, 3-4 April 2014

of openings for process, plant and machine operators, skilled tradespeople, and administrative and secretarial roles will all be in decline over the coming years. By 2024, it is expected that only 2% of those in employment will have no formal qualifications.¹⁶ In the years ahead, skills and qualifications will play an increasingly central role in determining individual employability, career progression and earnings potential.¹⁷

In the adult learner survey, respondents were asked about what skills they had improved as a result of their learning. A significant number reported that their subject knowledge had improved (68 per cent). A high proportion of learners felt that they had increased their confidence and self-esteem, as well as improving their learning and study skills. The table below presents the range of skills improved as a result of attending an adult education course. Respondents were asked to tick all those that applied.

Table 4.6 Skill Improvement (n-531)

Skills	Number of Responses	Percentage	Skills	Number of Responses	Percentage
Subject knowledge	368	68%	Research	109	20%
Confidence	254	47%	Problem solving	108	20%
Creative	197	36%	Teamwork	96	18%
Self esteem	189	35%	Analytical	86	16%
Learning	182	34%	Computing or digital	84	15%
Communication	164	30%	Organisational	76	14%
Critical Thinking	145	27%	Reading	72	13%
Language	120	22%	Numeracy	55	10%
Study Skills	110	20%	Other skills	50	9%

Adults already beyond school age should have the chance and encouragement to start accumulating skills and qualifications that will lead to better, more fulfilling life chances. They should also be better equipped to support their families and local communities. However, there is a serious decline in the numbers of students participating in Level 3 courses¹⁸, as well as enrolment of part-time and mature students in higher education¹⁹, mainly as a result of funding and policy decisions. The number of 24+ adults participating in education at level 3 and level 4 (A-level / Diploma) in 2013/2014 fell to 57,100 from 400,000 in 2012/2013, a drop of 86%” (Hughes 2014)²⁰. Nationally, adult education providers indicate there is a government policy ‘lopsided fixation’ on both young people and apprenticeships, at the expense of other forms of adult education. Yet, the evidence base shows adult education often plays a significant role in reaching out and engaging people in learning through often outstanding partnerships with community groups, local authority departments and public services.²¹ The very wide range of provision provides a first step back into learning for so many and leads them onto pathways into work.

15 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/514285/Working_Futures_Headline_Report_final_for_web__PG.pdf

16 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/514285/Working_Futures_Headline_Report_final_for_web__PG.pdf

17 <http://news.cbi.org.uk/news/our-package-of-measures-to-build-a-better-off-britain/>

18 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/530819/SFR_commentary_June_2016_final.pdf

19 Office for Fair Access (2016) Outcomes of Access Agreement Outcome Monitoring for 2014/2015, London: May 2016, pp. 7.

20 Hughes, D, (2014) In Ed. Coryton, D., Basic Skills Bulletin, 169, Education Publishing Company

21 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/483347/Ofsted_annual_report_education_and_skills.pdf

Whats happening in the current system?

“ Adult education isn't simply a leisure activity – it is the life blood for conversation in any vibrant community and local economy ”

(David Hughes, CEO, Learning and Work Institute)

As the post-16 sector moves into a period of major transition and uncertainty, *New Challenges New Chances (BIS, 2011)*²² remains a key reference point for adult education providers in England. A new *Skills Vision* document is currently being developed by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). It is crucial that this new policy document recognises the positive impact of adult education (in all its forms), especially provision that takes place in community-based settings. There is a potential risk of a narrow (employment-focused) definition of outcomes that fails to recognise individuals and communities also benefit greatly from social, education and health-related outcomes. Feedback from learners (via survey responses and fieldwork visits) found that their adult education courses gave them opportunities for improving mental health and well-being, intercultural and community relations, family and parenting, physical health and new attitudes and behaviours derived from both informal and formal learning.

“ I had a motorbike crash and lost hope – coming here has changed my life. ”

(Adult Learner)

“ I couldn't write when I left school. I had no certificates. At last I'm waking up my brain and this should help me get a better job. ”

(Adult Learner)

Funding for adult education has slipped down the policy agenda of successive governments and therefore has not been seen as a high priority. Now, after almost ten years of consistent cash cuts the adult education budget is fixed in cash terms for the next four years at £1.5 billion.²³ Financial support is increasingly moving towards loan funding for adult education at level 3 and above. From 2016-17, the Skills Funding Agency will merge will the two strands of funding: (i) adult skills funding - which broadly supports accredited provision for adults; and (ii) community learning funding - which broadly supports non-accredited provision for adults and families into a single '*Adult Education Budget*'. Funding in 2016-17 for apprenticeships will be separate from the Adult Education Budget. The new single budget includes regulated and the more flexible non-regulated provision so that learners can, if required, get a foothold into learning before progressing to the next stage at a higher level which then must be accredited. Traineeships are also within this budget. The arrangements for provision aimed at the most disadvantaged who are more likely to benefit the most, have yet to be agreed at a local and regional level.

22 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/145452/11-1380-further-education-skills-system-reform-plan.pdf

23 https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/485969/BIS-15-615-skills-funding-letter-2016-to-2017.pdf

Across England, there are some worrying trends such as:

- analysis of the Individualised Learner Record (ILR) of 2013-14 indicates that, compared to the 2012/2013 academic year, there has been a drop by 31 per cent in the volume of learners aged 24+ on courses eligible for 24+ Advanced Learning Loans funding (BIS, 2016)²⁴
- a high number of adults with low English and maths skills (OECD, 2016)²⁵
- an increasing demand for provision in ESOL with long, often with unmanageably large waiting lists (AoC, 2015)²⁶.

There are economic and social costs to not providing basic skills and significant gains in providing them, as discussed more fully in the full report (http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/ier/research/adult_education)

“ Skills are the number one business priority. They’re crucial for raising our productivity and staying globally competitive. ”

(Caroline Fairbairn, Director General, Confederation of British Industry)

Area Reviews are well underway across England. These aim to ensure colleges, local councils, employers and other training providers determine the Further Education model for young people and adults that works best for their area (BIS, 2015)²⁷ – working towards fewer, larger colleges. All areas are required to undertake a full review of further education and skills provision, and to have agreed arrangements with the Government for managing financial risk. There is a clear expectation from the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills:

“ Ultimately we would expect funding agencies, local areas with devolution powers and Local Enterprise Partnerships only to fund institutions that are taking action to ensure they can provide a good quality offer to learners and employers, which is financially sustainable for the long term. ”

(Nick Boles MP, Minister of State for Skills)

Whilst some *Area Reviews* include adult education providers, such as SDIs and local authority providers, it is widely considered prudent for these providers to be pro-active in this regard - new local models for adult education and skills will emerge beyond 2017-2018. Some brief examples of what is working well include:

- Good quality provision demonstrated by high achievement rates and positive Ofsted outcomes nationally for local authority providers and many further education (FE) colleges and Specialist Designated Institute (SDI) providers.
- Inter-generational learning is starting to grow, involving parents and grand-parents learning alongside children.

24 BIS (2016) Evaluation of 24+ Advanced learning Loans: An Assessment of the First Year, May 2016, London, p.16. Available from: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/522875/BIS-16-22-evaluation-of-24_-advanced-learning-loans-an-assessment-of-the-first-year.pdf

25 OECD (2016) Building Skills for All: A Review of England – Policy Insight from the Survey of Adult Skills, Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Economic Development. Note: The OECD concluded that low attainment in basic skills was “profoundly implicated in challenges of equity and social exclusion”.

26 AoC (2015) The experience of colleges using new ESOL QCF Skills for Life Qualifications, London, p.14. Available from: <https://www.aoc.co.uk/sites/default/files/The%20experience%20of%20colleges%20using%20new%20ESOL%20QCF%20Skills%20for%20life%20qualifications.pdf>

27 H M Government (2016) Reviewing post-16 education and training institutions: Updated guidance on area reviews, London, March 2016. Available from: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/520838/BIS-16-118-reviewing-post-16-education-and-training-institutions-updated-guidance-on-area-reviews.pdf

- Partnership work with trade unions where workplace and community learning centres have been able to reach learners who face major barriers in accessing adult education and training.
- Community provision, for adult education, such as U3A, which is filling gaps in other provision, local authorities further education (FE) colleges and Specialist Designated Institute (SDI) providers are also making significant contributions to outreach and community activities.

In the absence of the adult education providers being involved systematically in all the reviews throughout England, there is real danger that provision for adult community learning could be easily overlooked – **simply left to chance**. The voices of adult learners need to be heard so that planned provision is relevant and linked to their individual needs. In the findings from the reports’s ‘Call for Evidence’, Town Hall meetings and interviews with senior leaders, there was a stated danger that national policy for adult education could disappear by 2020.

Devolution of political and financial powers is creating the emergence of strategic partnerships and new delivery arrangements at both a local, and sub-regional/regional level.²⁸ As of March 2016, devolution deals with nine areas have been agreed (p.3).²⁹ Discussions have also taken place on further devolution to Greater London. For example, London has recently appointed a new ‘Skills Commissioner’. Similar approaches are likely to emerge in other geographical areas with Commissioners influencing the use of the Adult Education Budget from 2017-18, followed by full devolution of the budget from 2018-19 in those areas that have skills in their devolution deals and meet the required readiness conditions. Local and newly Combined Authorities will be accountable for the allocation of funds with Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) in setting the agenda and identifying priorities within local communities. It is therefore critical that the contribution of adult education including its contribution to improving health and well-being (which are pre-requisites for progression into and within employment) must not be lost or forgotten within current and any new devolution arrangements.

“ Only the providers who invest time and resources in reaching out to their communities and building trusted partnerships can be truly effective in providing a first step to re-engagement in learning. Adult learning is critical to helping many people turn their lives around.”

(Dr Sue Pember OBE, Director of Policy, HOLEX)³⁰

For example, the unique characteristic of many adult education providers though not all is that they prioritise taking adult education out to the community and in doing so, are particularly successful at engaging those who benefit from this the most. They do this because they:

- use sub-contractors with local / specialist expertise e.g. voluntary service organisations working on specific housing estates or with specific disadvantaged groups;
- use local venues for learning (libraries, community centres, children’s centres, hostels);
- have detailed demographic information regarding local wards and local learning needs;

²⁸ There are around 150 local authority providers, most of the GFE colleges have adult skills budgets and community learning funding – as will third sector providers and a few independent learning providers.

²⁹ <http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN07029>

³⁰ The HOLEX network of Community Learning and Skills providers draws its membership from local authority services, specialist designated institutions and voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations.

- have good links with local elected members, including Health and Wellbeing Board members;
- use 'Pound Plus' approaches to add value to the public purse;
- have close links with key local services, e.g. Job Centre Plus, mental/physical health services, social housing, Troubled Families, and/or community development teams.

“ Adult learning has a direct impact on cost savings...especially social services and those funding mental and physical health. I would have been on anti-depressants if I didn't come here for the writing group. It has given me a sense of belonging and purpose. ”

(Town Hall participant)

“ It might sound trivial to some, but I could not have survived without the support of adult education. I was on the verge of a breakdown and had to rebuild my life. I was becoming more introvert and a loner with negative thoughts about life. By sheer chance, I started on an art therapy course which is helping me build a more successful life. ”

(Town Hall participant)

“ I live mostly in a “white” village and I'm beginning to make friends with learners from other cultures, that I would not normally meet...At first I was worried about talking to Bangladeshi students, in case I said anything to upset them. ”

(Adult Learner)

Ofsted's recent work on 'British Values' (2016)³¹ examines how well providers prepare learners for successful life in modern Britain and promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different backgrounds, faiths and beliefs. A new 'Citizen Skills Entitlement' for adults, proposed by the Learning and Work Institute, merits further consideration.³² Take up of individualised learner records (ILRs) and the 24+ learning loans requires further work. Building on this, the idea of an education savings account for adults recently mooted by a Specialist Designated Institute (SDI) for adults to draw upon through the course of their lives, as and when necessary, is also worthy of further exploration. For example:

“ An Education Savings Account (ESA) would enable individuals to save for their future education and skills needs to meet the changing requirements of the labour market. This could also encourage and attract employer contributions, particularly if government were to allow tax relief on employer contributions. In a practical way this would create longer-term and more stable funding streams to support vital investment to improve productivity and economic growth ”

Ruth Spellman, CEO & General Secretary, Workers' Educational Association

³¹ For example, Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council. – Visit: <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/53722>

³² <http://www.learningandwork.org.uk/our-work/life-and-society/citizens-curriculum>

These ideas should act as a trigger for meaningful dialogue about the role of adult education in the context of lifelong learning – for example, there is a new Skills Agenda for Europe and a move towards a recently proposed Skills Guarantee (June 2016) .³³

With their new commissioning role, Combined Authorities, Local Authorities and Local Enterprise Partnerships' (LEPs) planning strategies that focus on employability skills and employers' needs will also greatly benefit from understanding the importance of engaging more adults in learning i.e. finding ways to connect with non-participants in education and training to help prepare them for work-readiness and/or active citizenship. Whilst adults (particularly older learners over 65) may not be an immediate priority for the LEPs, it is clear that local (and national) partnerships that co-invest in adult education are likely to see significant returns on investment and productivity over time.

There is very little research on the monetary value of adult education and almost certainly nothing on the value of the impact of adult education on different domains in life. A recent BIS report (2016)³⁴ notes available evidence on employment and earnings returns to Community Learning is sparse. Some European studies³⁵ highlight both the economic and social returns on investment. A few examples of added-value savings identified from the literature review include:

- Adults participating in a part-time course leads to: improvements in health, which has a value of £148 to the individual; a greater likelihood of finding a job and/or staying in a job, which has a value of £231 to the individual; better social relationships, which has a value of £658 to the individual; and a greater likelihood that people volunteer on a regular basis, which has a value of £130 to the individual. (Fujiwara, 2012)³⁶
- Using a well-being valuation method, researchers' estimate that the value of undertaking a part-time course has a positive effect on people's life satisfaction which is equivalent to £1,584 per year. The corresponding value of one part-time course is £754.³⁷
- In the 2011 census, more than a third (37.6%) of those who were economically inactive with no qualifications were long-term sick or disabled. While it's hard to pin down the nature of the link, US research shows people with better levels of education have lower levels of chronic health conditions.³⁸
- Family learning and supporting parents with their children's education increases the overall level of children's development by as much as "15 percentage points for those from disadvantaged groups.... It embeds changes in attitudes, behaviour, understanding and skills in the family. Evidence from the USA shows that for every \$1 spent on family learning there is a \$12 return"³⁹.

³³ http://ec.europa.eu/education/news/2016/0610-education-skills-factsheet_en.htm

³⁴ BIS (2016) *Mapping investment in adult skills – which individuals, in what learning and with what returns?*, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, London. Visit: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/523037/bis-16-47-mapping-skills-investment.pdf

³⁵ http://www.eaea.org/media/policy-advocacy/adult-education-policy-in-europe-country-reports/country-reports_2015.pdf

³⁶ This draws on the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS). On average people who undertake part-time learning take two courses per year and therefore the researchers divide the annual values by two to get a per-course unit of value. Visit: <http://www.learningandwork.org.uk/content/valuing-impact-adult-learning>.

³⁷ Dolan et al (2012) *Valuing Adult Learning: Comparing Wellbeing Valuation and Contingent Valuation*, London: London. Visit: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/34598/12-1127-valuing-adult-learning-comparing-wellbeing-to-contingent.pdf

³⁸ http://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2012/p0516_higher_education.html

³⁹ Baroness Howarth of Breckland, OBE (2013) *Family Learning Works: The into Family Learning in England and Wales* – see also: J. J. Heckman et al. (2010) 'The rate of return to the HighScope Perry Preschool Program', *Journal of Public Economics*, Elsevier.

Adult learner participation or non-participation

“ I was lucky to have a friend who knew about this college. It should not be left to luck! ”

(Mature Adult Learner)

The focus groups with learners revealed that there was often a strong personal history behind their reasons for joining an adult education course. This was sometimes: a dramatic change in circumstances through, for example, illness, injury, redundancy or grief; a determination to escape from personal conflicts, be they an addiction or difficult circumstances at home; or a personal determination to achieve personal goals, including entrepreneurial activities and/or to continue to be active in their retirement. Some adults involved in the fieldwork stated:

“ I wanted to re-engage after my injury. ”

(Adult Learner)

“ I was a stay-at-home Mum and wanted to do something for myself. I was getting depression. I started with literacy and I've done 6 short courses and now I'm doing peer mentoring. ”

(Adult Learner)

“ I'm future proofing. Who knows what will happen to me. I want to be independent as long as possible – shopping and booking services online may not be just nice things to have... ”

(Adult Learner)

“ This short course on digital technology will help me grow my small media business. It has been a life-line. The equipment seems excellent and the tutor have very good expertise and explains the techniques very well. ”

(Adult Learner)

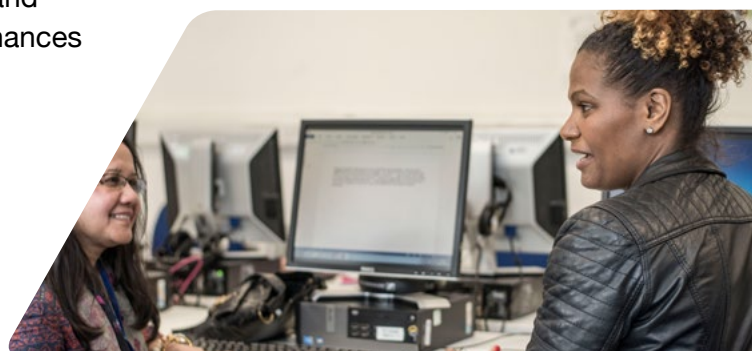
The online survey explored how the learners found out about their courses, what encouraged them to join, any barriers they have had to accessing the provision and the impact or benefits of taking part. The findings showed that attending a course can have a positive impact on improving: knowledge and skills for personal goals (84 per cent); motivations to keep learning (71 per cent); being able to make well informed decisions about their next steps (58 per cent); and confidence in dealing with new situations (51 per cent).

“ Adult learning keeps you young and it keeps your brain active – especially when you’re learning something new – stretching yourself. This is important for your well-being. Attending classes can also combat loneliness.”

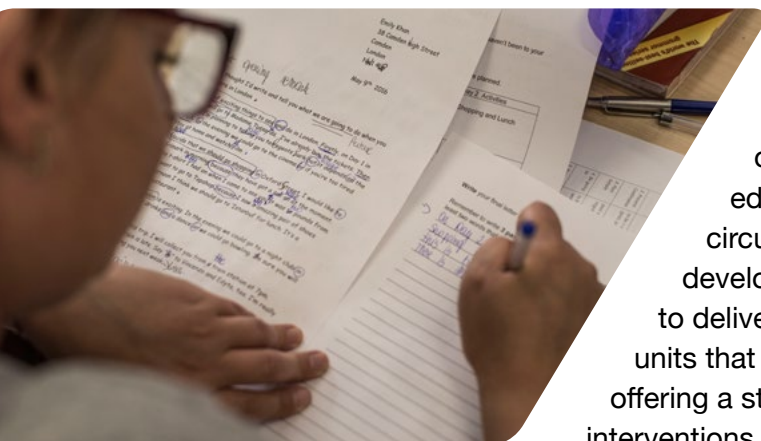
(Older Adult Learner)

However, nearly all the adults interviewed who were not in learning who were unemployed had little awareness of adult and community learning. Many knew about vocational and employability courses run by colleges or private training providers and felt that these were low level courses that might not help them gain employment. Very few of them said that they had a written career or job plan and they were unaware of the role adult and community learning could have in increasing their chances of sustained employment.

Disadvantaged adults are not a homogenous group. The examples from the learners above show that disadvantage can strike at any time, as well as be ingrained through life-long poverty, disability, depression, learning difficulties and/or isolation.



For example, it is clear that most providers of adult education have invested in reaching out to people who are disadvantaged one way or the other. Many of whom would not know about adult education and what it could do for people in their circumstances. Yet, adult education providers have developed the expertise, teaching skills and resources to deliver non-qualification provision and/or bite-sized units that successfully engage these adults in learning again, offering a stepping stone to success. Any policy or practical interventions need to reflect this and provide flexibility.



“ When I developed arthritis a couple of years ago, I knew I couldn’t continue in construction. I felt on the scrap heap. I started a few adult learning courses to help me look for a new direction and found social sciences. I build my way up to level 3 and I am now at university, with a career ahead of me.”

(Older Adult Learner)

“ Many of the tutors have been adult learners on similar courses, so they know what you are going through. They emphasise/not sympathise. The supportive learning environment they create allows you to go beyond what you believed to be your boundaries.”

(Older Adult Learner)

Leading to successful outcomes

“ The quality of teaching is so important ”

(Adult Learner)

“ They found out I was dyslexic and the support has made all the difference. At last I know I am not stupid! ”

(Adult Learner)

“ Knowing that I'm on my way to a better life. I will not give up. ”

(Adult Learner)

Respondents were asked in the survey what had encouraged them to join their course. A significant proportion reported that the course subject had been a source of encouragement (80 per cent), whilst location and transport links were a further important factor (42 per cent) together with the reputation of the college, course or tutor (42 per cent). For adults not engaged in learning, a desire for more tailored and flexible local provision that meets their needs was a common theme.

Learners in the focus groups were asked about what motivated them to stay, for example:

“ The teachers are very good and patient. They are good at relating English and maths into your everyday life. ”

(Adult Learner)

“ The fact that the peer mentoring course is 2 days over 6 weeks gives you a chance to reflect on your learning. ”

(Adult Learner)

“ I didn't fit into a FE college, but I fit in here. It feels less stressful – more like a 'little learning break' – but you know you're learning. ”

(Adult Learner)

The most significant outcomes reported by adults in the survey was an improvement in: knowledge and skills for personal goals (84 per cent); motivations to keep learning (71 per cent); being able to make well informed decisions about next steps (58 per cent); and confidence in dealing with new situations (51 per cent).

Participants in the survey and fieldwork reported evidence of adult education providers responding directly to their needs in a wide range of community settings. For example:

- *Community and collective learning* – provision ranging from archaeology to volunteering with strong elements operating in disadvantaged constituencies.
- *Cultural awareness* – highlighted by some as enriching and essential during the fieldwork activities.
- *Co-construction of meaningful curriculum* between tutors and adult learners – specialist support for those able to pay and those most disadvantaged – various types of adult education providers, including the SDIs, do many of these well and to the benefits of many.
- *Co-development of training* – adult education tutors, parents, health advisers, employment specialists, employers/employees, mentors and administrators coming together within communities, though there is significant scope for more to be done in this regard.

In some cases, we found evidence of students dropping out of their course mainly for financial and/or family reasons. But reaching into local communities is something adult education providers are particularly good at. While the research has identified the full benefits of adult education to so many individuals, providers do not generally collect this information as a matter of course. Many learners may know privately that the course has helped them overcome significant barriers to learning, work and participating in their daily lives, but this may not be recorded or discussed with the tutor or provider. This means that the true value of what leads to successful outcomes for adult learners is generally unknown by the general public and key policy makers.

“ Cross boundary working between institutions and professional bodies is essential, creating a single teaching profession from early years, through schools, FE, adult education and HE. Without this professional interchange adult education will never come out of the rock from which it is under and get the support it merits from the wider profession and the establishment. ”

(David Russell, CEO, The Education Training Foundation (ETF)).

Moving forward in bringing together the skills and assets of all partners to deliver a public service (both online or offline) for adult learners’ consumption is now essential.

New local, regional and national arrangements must rely heavily on a range of collaborative and partnership activities, with both a national (*top-down*) and regional/local (*bottom-up*) level. Success lies in having a clear mandate and set of priorities that capture the voices of adults, particularly *those most in need of support*.

Front-runner devolution areas may choose to share frameworks of this type with other geographical areas, including activities with professional bodies and membership organisations. Community-based adult education providers should be included – and their bids taken seriously – given their unique contribution to community engagement and active citizenship. There should be real opportunities ahead to build on the expertise and capacity to deliver in local communities. Post-devolution, local Skills Commissioners will be required to make investment decisions - which is why their role is so central to the sustainability of adult education now and in the future.

Active citizenship, democracy and participation. People who participate in adult education have more trust in the political system, participate more in society, by voting, by volunteering or taking active roles in communities.

Life skills for individuals. Adult learners feel healthier, lead healthier lifestyles, build new social networks and experience improved well-being.

Social cohesion, equity and equality. Adult education provides many opportunities to equalise societies on a larger scale and to create fairer societies as well as more economic growth.

Employment and digitalization. Workplace learning is one of the key drivers for adults' participation in lifelong learning. At the cusp of enormous digital changes, adult education can help in closing the digital gap.

Migration and demographic change. Civic education and intercultural learning can create integration-friendly cultures. Language and basic skills training will enable migrants to become active citizens in their new home countries. Learning seniors are more active, volunteer more, work longer and are healthier.

Sustainability. From environmentally friendly consumption and transport to energy efficiency, citizens need a lot of information and innovative spaces to develop new lifestyles, new projects, and new approaches. Adult education can help provide the information, the debate spaces and the creativity

Source: Extract from: European Association for the Education of Adults - Manifesto for Adult Learning in the 21st century, Brussels, December 2015.



What needs to change?

Since the Inquiry into the Future for Lifelong Learning (Schuller & Watson, 2009)⁴⁰ much has changed in the education and employment landscape; however, many of their initial observations remain highly relevant today. New evidence gathered as part of this shows the era of an ageing population is truly upon us. Disadvantaged adults can be brought back to learning, and encouraged to develop, through their families, in differing community settings, including in the workplace. But this needs leadership and coherent policies along the lines of those found in countries such as: Australia, Austria, Canada, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Norway, Sweden, and New Zealand.⁴¹ These countries have adult education policies and frameworks that provide examples of innovative policies and practices. However, we found many examples of engaging and life changing adult education in the regions of England, but these are largely hidden to the general public, policy-makers and Ministers with very uneven provision, particularly in disadvantaged areas.

I. Strengthen the infrastructure for adult education

Current government policy for adult education in England has failed to respond to the major demographic challenge of an ageing society, to growing cultural diversity and variety in life, and changing employment patterns as young people take longer to settle into jobs and older people take longer to leave work. There is a need to halt the significant reductions in adult education provision by ensuring that adult education is appropriately funded beyond 2020 and to further safeguard the Adult Education Budget, as part of ongoing settlements between the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and HM Treasury. With the likelihood of further cuts to government budgets post-Brexit, local Skills Commissioners (who will hold the Adult Education Budget purse strings once a locality's budget is devolved) will need robust data to identify key priorities and investment decisions.

Planned local commissioning for adult education within devolved responsibilities should be based on a **set of broad national adult education standards and priorities** that recognise the wider social, cultural and economic benefits of adult education and not just focus on training in employment skills.

A **national adult education framework** that brings together health, social care, well being, cultural and scientific development, alongside skills and employability would be a major step forward. The **devolved and locally-led strategic plans for adult education** could then be linked to both local and national accountability and quality frameworks. A **ministerial champion working at a cross-departmental level** would add gravitas, authority and connectivity to disjointed policies.

“ We're living here so we need to speak English...it's better for the country and for the society that we have English skills. There are therefore high returns for the investment in helping us all improve our language skills. ”

(Adult learner)

Devolution is creating a patchwork quilt of very uneven provision. **The role of a national organisation(s) within a national adult education framework** is important for accountability and equity purposes. Transparent policies and practices are necessary for key areas such as basic skills, ESOL and digital inclusion. The adult learners on ESOL courses highlighted the importance of provision that directly helps learners achieve their personal goals, be it to support their children in school, gain a job or participate in their communities. ESOL provision is also essential for those whose English is above level 2 and who may, in some cases, need sector-specific language support.

“ We are obviously a society in the midst of tremendous turmoil, working against a background of globalisation, technological change and demographic transformation. All of these changes are demanding a level of personal reinvention that we haven't seen for a century or more, and the need for readily available adult education is growing every day. ”

(Trevor Phillips, OBE, Chair of Trustees, Workers' Educational Association (WEA))

There is **no ESOL policy in England** - instead ad hoc guidelines are being developed at a grass roots level. In Scotland (June 2015)⁴² and Wales (June 2014)⁴³ a national ESOL policy exists. In England, there is also a need for **'parity of entitlement' for ring-fenced funding for ESOL provision** to be considered part of basic skills funding and workforce development arrangements.

Many adult learners are looking for **flexible 'step on step off' provision**, yet the move has been to reduce flexibility by suppliers. As it currently stands, a single institution has to be responsible for awarding a qualification. This leaves little incentive for institutions to collaborate around credit accumulation and transfer. Making progress in this area would be a significant boost to flexible learning. For example, changes might support mixed modes of study through different providers to add up to a qualification – allowing a student to combine distance learning delivered by one provider with more traditional on-site provision through another.

While government motivation for promoting regional/cross-sectoral strategic partnerships may initially be financial, there are further opportunities for adult education to be embedded in differing types of partnerships and delivered locally. That is particularly the case if it is to stretch out successfully into communities to reach more of the most disadvantaged, those who have become lost to education. Some examples might include:

- *Co-operation on providing adult education through innovative approaches* e.g. working on employer premises, outreach, mobile delivery and/or blended learning and educational guidance for careers and other life issues, such as mid-life reviews, parenting, inter-cultural relations, community engagement or retirement, particularly for targeted or marginalised groups in their local communities.

42 <http://www.esolscotland.com/>

43 <http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/20373/1/140619-esol-policy-en.pdf>

- *Collective actions between and across agencies* on tracking adult learner progress, using open source data, intelligence sharing, information exchange and pooling of resources to achieve maximum impact for adult learners. In some cases, clustering provision and/or sharing expertise across institutions or membership bodies may become more necessary.

2. Focus on life skills and prosperity

With an ageing population and as retirement ages rise, people are facing longer working lives with the consequent need to update skills and add to their knowledge. Adult learners feel healthier, lead healthier lifestyles, build new social networks and experience improved well-being. **Life design models** such as those found in Australia, Canada and New Zealand can provide stimuli material for further discussion at a local level. Life skills now include new ways of thinking about careers and the dynamic context in which they evolve. And the pace of change can only increase in the years ahead.

Most importantly, **profiling the current life design work delivered by SDIs** will demonstrate to **new local Commissioners and local strategic partnerships** the real value of its impact. For example, it is effective in getting people hooked on learning through ‘bite-sized’, short and/or residential courses that can transform outcomes for people in deprived communities, reduce social exclusion, increase social mobility and enable families to break the cycle of deprivation.

A new **‘Citizen Skills Entitlement’ for adults**, proposed by the Learning and Work Institute, merits further consideration (see also: Mid-Life Health Check below).⁴⁴ The idea of an **education savings account for adults** recently mooted by a Specialist Designated Institution for adults to draw upon throughout their life, as and when necessary, is also worthy of further exploration.

Blended and online learning offers many students the vital skills they need in their everyday lives. According to ‘Go on UK’, 23% of people in the UK lack digital capability and it is as important as literacy and numeracy. A highly effective way to develop and keep up-to-date the digital skills of adults is to embed use of digital into face-to-face teaching and to offer a blended approach to learning. While many courses include some form of multi-media resources, there is a lack of investment in adult education tutors, many of who are part-time workers) who need to be equipped and trained to provide differing forms of ‘blended learning’ e.g. webinars, massive open online courses (MOOCs) etc.

3. Information, advice and guidance

“ More must be done to attract more people to adult learning. Many people do not have a clue how the system works. ”

(Adult Learner)

“ I was advised by my GP to come. They need more information to attract more people to adult learning. ”

(Adult Learner)

Adult learners highlighted the importance of knowing where to find opportunities and where their course might lead to, particularly those who had been reignited with the joy of learning. Many were not fully aware of the National Careers Service. **Highly visible and accessible information and career guidance** is crucial in achieving educational support for career transitions and other life issues, such as **mid-life reviews, parenting, community engagement, or retirement**. The world has changed fundamentally over the last decade. We have seen the disappearance of the job for life, the emergence of the knowledge economy and loss of many unskilled and semi-skilled jobs. Millions of people work in jobs today which didn't exist when their parents left education and first went into work. New types of jobs are beginning to emerge e.g. urban farmers, virtual reality experience designer, remote health care specialist, end of life planner and many more. We learned from adults that many felt they had limited choice on what was available when it comes to addressing feelings of isolation, loneliness, mental and physical well being.

4. An evidence-based system

“ The provision and quality of adult learning remains patchy, and those who need it most currently get the least of it. More work is needed to support adult learning in local communities – this should be a key ingredient in adult education developments in the 21st century.”

(Andreas Schleicher, Director for the Directorate of Education and Skills, OECD).

An evidence-based system is required to gather robust information on the take-up rates of adult education loans by disadvantaged groups, and more policy dialogue and critique is needed on the effectiveness of this practice. The voices of adults need to be captured regularly, particularly those not engaged in adult education. Data on the outcomes achieved by adult learners should be openly available for individuals, employers and commissioners to enable informed choices – not just formal qualifications achieved. This should include course starts and completions, and employment, earning, progress and destinations and the wider impact of investing in adult education. Some providers' practice in recognising and recording learners' progress and achievement is very effective, but this is the minority – in far too many providers Ofsted inspection reports show that the process is too narrow and the good practice needs to be shared more widely.

5. Employers, skills and productivity

The great majority of jobs already require digital skills to some level and the proportion will rise further in the years ahead. Those seeking to take up apprenticeships and other work opportunities will need to be equipped with the basic skills to learn and progress successfully. Where employers and trades unions identify basic skills needs among their workforce they should be able to arrange for adult education provision in the workplace. Cedefop (2011)⁴⁵ and Unionlearn (2016)⁴⁶ already demonstrate this can be achieved but this requires investment. The use of incentives to skill, reskill and upskill employees, including releasing them to continue training, was identified in the as a priority.

45 Cedefop (2011) Learning while working: Success stories on workplace learning in Europe. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2011.

46 <https://www.unionlearn.org.uk/english-maths-and-ict>

Five key recommendations

From the research, we highlight five key recommendations

Recommendation 1

Establish a national and regional strategy for adult education, health, employability and wellbeing – bringing together the different departmental interests led by a senior Minister to provide an accountability and quality assured framework at a national and regional level. There needs to be clear criteria for providers to capture, collate and disseminate the full benefits of adult education, including improvements to their health and well-being and participation as an active citizen against the accountability and quality-assured framework.

Recommendation 2

The new commissioning system needs to have an adult education framework that seeks to rebuild and rebalance resources fairly for adults across the different life-stages – national and local provision for adults' needs to reflect a coherent view of our changing social, economic and cultural context. The matter of identity, of how people describe who they are and the values they hold is an important conversation to be had with Commissioners in local areas. We learned from adults who were not engaged in adult education that many felt vulnerable, had limited choice on what was available when it comes to addressing their feelings of isolation, loneliness, mental and physical challenges.

Recommendation 3

Provide careers information, advice and guidance in local communities and building capacity in the adult education workforce to make greater use of labour market intelligence and mid-life reviews - broaden and strengthen the capacity of the adult education workforce, thus raising the profile of this important work – training and professional support should be available for all those involved in delivering education and training in various capacities.

Recommendation 4

Ensure a systematic approach to identifying and gathering evidence on the full impact of adult education - data on the outcomes achieved by adult learners should not be overly bureaucratic but it needs to be openly available for individuals, employers and commissioners to enable informed choices.

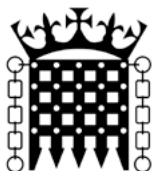
Recommendation 5

More employers need to step up and offer opportunities to adults, particularly older adults keen to remain active in employment. Employers could offer so much more by offering adult education experiences on their premises through local partnerships.

Over the next five to 10 years there is a need to build on outstanding practices that are often unique to current adult education provision. **Adult education should be a national priority.** A series of policies and practices are needed so that the benefits of adult education are not taken away from those who need it most. **A national debate** can forge that sense of shared national purpose for adult education. And it is a debate in which, as well as the local commissioners of adult education, many more citizen voices should be heard – the voices of those for whom the services should be designed and those adults who have most to gain from them. This really is **too important to simply be left to chance.**

Appendices

Commissioners



All-Party
Parliamentary Group
for Adult Education

**INSTITUTES
FOR ADULT
LEARNING**

Responses to the formal Call for Evidence⁴⁷

- Adult and Community Learning Alliance (ACLA), West Midlands Combined Authority
- Association of Colleges, London
- Celia Kelly, Liverpool
- CITB, London
- Compass
- Dr Roberta Jacobson OBE, Hon. Senior lecturer, IHE, UCL
- Greg Coyne, Director for Curriculum and Quality, Workers' Educational Association, London
- Horex, Worcestershire
- Joseph Rowntree Foundation, London
- Margaret Greenwood, MP
- Martin Yarnit, retired, Worcester
- NCFE, Newcastle-upon-Tyne
- OECD, Paris
- OFFA, Bristol
- Ofsted, London
- Olive Home, retired teacher, London
- Open University, Milton Keynes
- QAA, Gloucester
- The Co-operative College, Manchester
- The Reading Agency, London
- The Universities Association for Lifelong Learning
- Tom Schuller
- TUC unionlearn, London

This is a summary of '*Adult Education: Too important to be left to chance*', a report for the All Parliamentary Party Group (APPG) for Adult Education.

Dr Deirdre Hughes OBE, Karen Adriaanse & Dr Sally-Anne Barnes
University of Warwick, Institute for Employment Research (IER)

The full report is available from:

Website: http://www.warwick.ac.uk/go/ier/research/adult_education

Email: deirdre.hughes@warwick.ac.uk

Telephone: 0044 (0) 753 354 5057

Other supplementary papers available include:

The Evidence-based Literature Review:

http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/ier/research/adult_education

Call for Evidence responses:

http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/ier/research/adult_education

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