

Points to consider for the design of an effective Adults Skills System

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Below are some points to consider in relation to the design of the adults skills system.

The System

- Lifelong learning needs to be inspiring to encourage people to aspire to achieve and progress. There is no longer a job for life and self-employment will increase.
- The adult skills system needs to give people the skills to help them prepare for the jobs of the future but as we do not know what the future jobs will be. Therefore the skills should not be job specific but transferable across sectors.
- The skills system needs to provide people with a scaffolding structure (framework around them) that enables them to move up, down, sideways and to progress in the work place.
- The skills system needs to enable people to develop skills that help them to be flexible in the work place.
- The skills system designed should help people to be resilient to the following: hired, fired, made redundant (get up and find a new job) and retraining.
- Where local authorities fit into the system is their ability to do really good outreach and their partnership links locally.

Skills

- CBI developed an employability skills framework that can be applied to the design of the adults system. [CBI Skills framework](#)
- Below is an example (DG employability skills framework) of an employer-led framework that has identified the employability skills needed for sustainable long-term success in the workplace.
 - **A Positive Attitude:**
 - **Self-Management:**
 - **Team Working:** co-operating, negotiating, persuading, contributing to discussion
 - **Business and customer awareness**
 - **Problem Solving:** Analysing facts and circumstances and applying creative thinking to develop appropriate solutions
 - **Communication and Literacy:** Application of literacy, ability to produce clear structured written work, oral literacy
 - **Application of Numeracy:** Manipulation of numbers, mathematical awareness and application in practical contexts

- **Application of Information Technology:** Basic IT skills, familiarity with word processing, spread sheets, file management and the use of Internet search engines
- **Leadership and Entrepreneurship.**

The role of Local Authorities

- Local authorities are good at outreach but their work needs to be supported by career information and clear progression pathways to further learning, employment, self-employment, as well as progression within the world of work.
- Adult learning should be a provision of learning, training and employment and there needs to be a policy outlining the council's role in the first segment of adult learning.
- Local authorities have a role in reaching out to the groups not currently engaging, thinking or considering lifelong learning.

Measuring outcomes

- There have been comments about measuring success for the hard to reach groups accessing adult education. It is often hard to produce tangible results. It is recognised the journey for those furthest from the job market does not lead straight into a job so this can be hard to measure. However the progress of their journey needs to be measurable. Maybe society needs to have higher expectations of the group at the low end of lifelong learning to make it measurable.
- It is important that the impact of adult learning is measurable and that there is a national system for measuring development. Nationally there needs to be consideration as to how this can be measured.

Economy

- The economy needs level 2. Level 2 work, careers and qualifications need to be given more value and status than it is given now by the system and employers.
- The new T levels being introduced by Government will be level 3 and above. Again missing out level 2.
- The economy needs to understand it should invest in level 2 tech training too.

Appendix A - Recommendation made in ***Adult Education – too important to be left to chance***

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 build capacity in the adult education workforce to make greater use of labour market intelligence and midlife reviews. There is a need to 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.

Appendix B – ***Adult Education – important for health and wellbeing.***

Six Key Recommendations

- 1.) The Institutes of Adult Learning and other adult education providers should work together with the health and social care sectors make most of the significant scope to produce portfolios of podcasts, videos, case studies and conclusive statistics to bring the evidence alive and readily available and so that this work is at the forefront of national policy dialogue. This should be supported through an organisation such as the Education and Training Foundation.
- 2.) Government and leading research bodies should support adult education, health and well-being organisations to develop a national tool(s) for measuring the impact of adult education on improving individuals health and well-being as a priority.
- 3.) The All-Party Parliamentary Group for Adult Education should work with the Institutes of Adult Learning and partners, including other relevant APPGs to disseminate policy briefings on specific aspects of this work to Ministers and health and well-being agencies and professional bodies.
- 4.) The Institutes of Adult Learning and regional adult education networks should be invited by those responsible for NHS 'Sustainability and Transformation Partnerships' (STPs), Health and Well-Being Boards, Clinical Commissioning Group (CCGs), Local/Combined Authorities and Local Enterprise partnerships (LEPs) to contribute to the development and delivery of health and well-being objectives at regional and local level and should present their findings to NHS Improvement.

The benefits of adult education for health and well-being are not widely known within health provision, particularly working with vulnerable groups in our society. To increase the demand and take-up of for adult education through links with the health sectors, we recommend that:

- 5.) The Institutes of Adult Learning (IALs) and adult education networks, work with Healthwatch, the Patients Association, trade unions and other representative organisations, who work with adults and family learning initiatives to advocate the health and well-being benefits of adult education to wider public.
- 6.) Adult education should be incorporated onto the Prescriptions for Patients systems across all NHS England. This needs to be promoted to all healthcare practitioners through local and national initiatives.