

IMPACT OF ADULT LEARNING ON HEALTH AND COMMUNITIES

European Agenda for Adult Learning 2015-2017

England Impact Forum 17 January 2017

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Scotland's Learning Partnership



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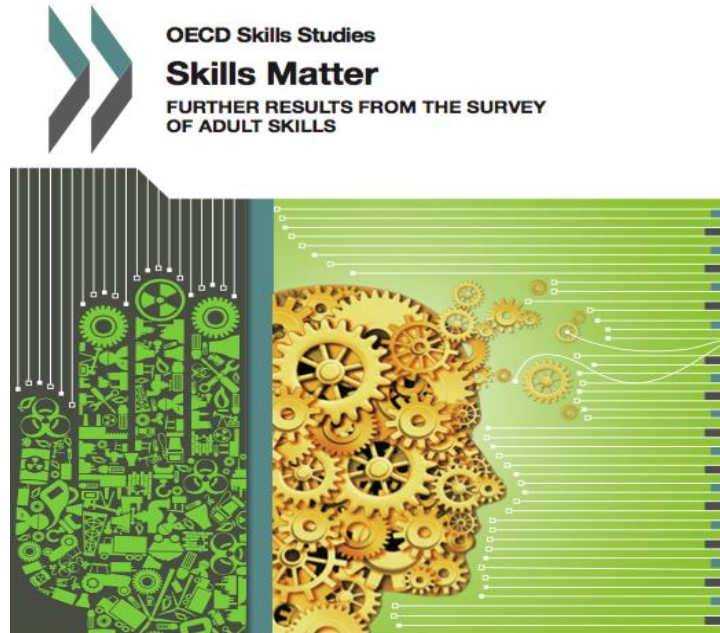
Research and development projects on:

- adult basic skills (the Citizens' Curriculum),
- digital skills,
- and young adult employability.

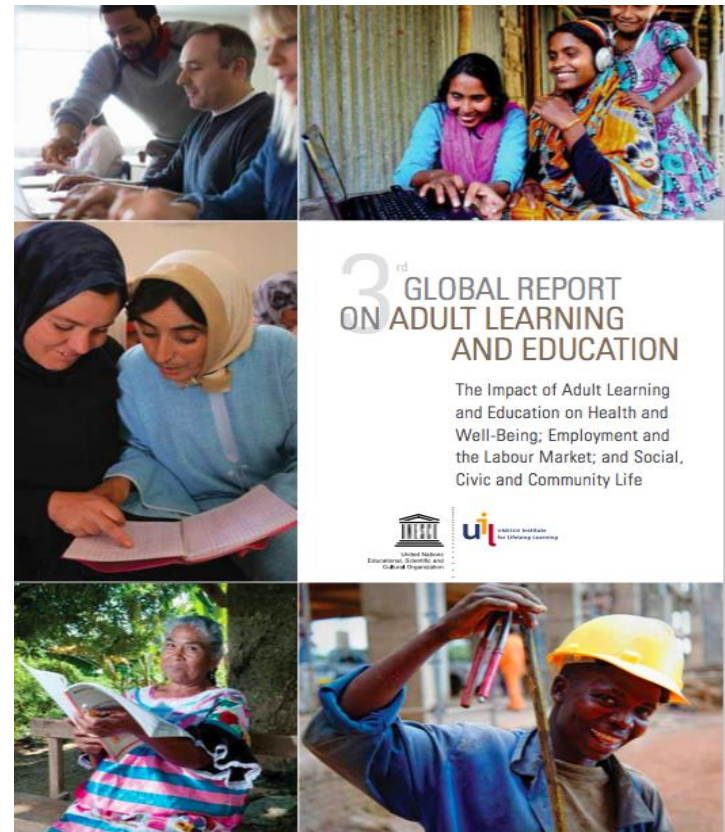
Final report in 2017 to include evidence of the **impact of adult learning** on three broad themes: *health, work, communities*

Outputs... Outcomes... Impact

OECD (2016)



UNESCO (2016)



Adult Community Learning in Wales

WG30154



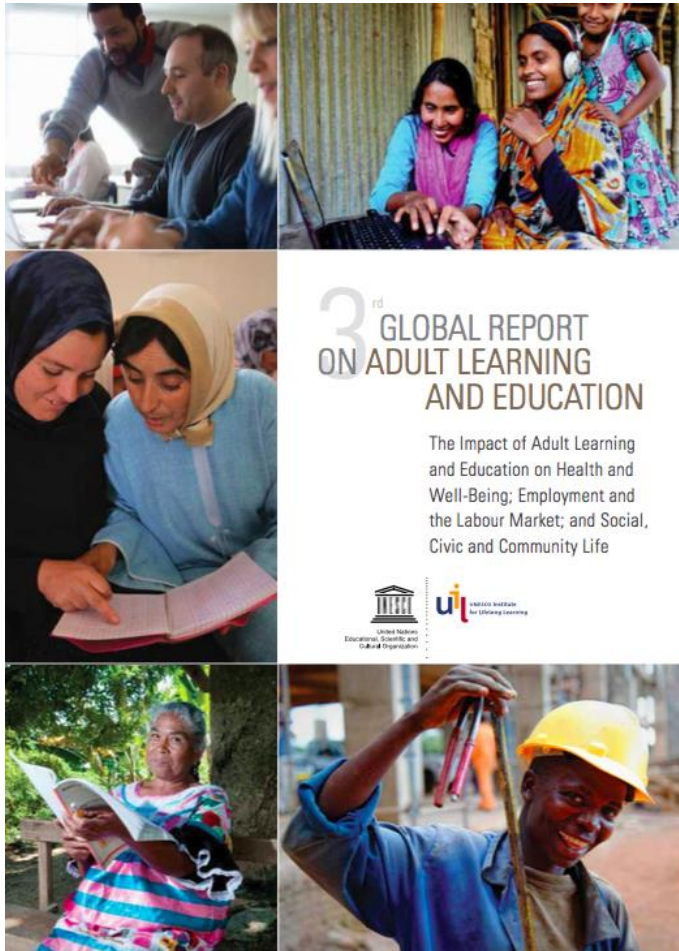
PUBLICATION DATE:
21/10/2016

A review of Adult Community
Learning in Wales



“ACL contributes to a wide range of Welsh Government strategic priorities and outcomes, including re-engaging hard-to-reach groups in learning, connecting communities, developing skills and supporting health and wellbeing.” (6)

GRALE (2016)



- 139 UNESCO member states responded to a monitoring survey
- Identifies trends in adult learning and how it responds to a changing world
- Looks at the impact of adult learning in 3 areas

GRALE (2016)

Figure 0.1
The overlapping benefits of ALE



The “overlapping benefits” of ALE

“...no matter where in the world they live, adult learning and education [ALE] helps people become healthier, to improve their economic prospects, and to be more informed and active citizens.”

GRALE 3 (21)

Links between health and ALE

The report argues that these links are **more important** than ever, for three main reasons:

1. The cost of health services is rising ...
2. The idea of 'health' has broadened to include well-being ...
3. The growing recognition that single sectors can no longer solve problems on their own ...

1. Cost of health services is rising

Driven by societal factors such as:

- Unhealthy lifestyles
- Ageing populations
- Lack of health-related knowledge

2. Idea of health has broadened

“Education and learning are a means of achieving such well-being, as they enable people to develop a greater degree of control over the quality and meaning of their lives...

“Mental health is particularly relevant here.”

GRALE 3 (68)

3. Single sectors can no longer solve problems on their own

Health outcomes depend on much more than healthcare system. Cites 2009 study in Canada, where **50% of health outcomes were attributed to socio-economic factors**. Of the rest:

15% = biology / genetics

10% = physical environment

25% = healthcare system

GRALE 3 (68)

It's complicated

The positive effects of education:

“on happiness and well-being result from a variety of intermediary processes , which probably included **higher income, non-alienating work, household composition, health behaviours, emotional resilience, social capabilities** and, amongst older adults, **better physical health.**”

Sabates & Hammond (2008) Quoted in GRALE 3 (77)

But complexity is interesting...

When you consider the whole lifespan and how our health and educational needs change over that time...

As well as the type of learning we access at different stages of the life course

And how we support others: such as younger or older dependents

And context matters too

What is regarded as 'healthy' in one community could be considered harmful in another.

“Policy-makers therefore need to understand how health and education work together in local contexts...”

GRALE 3 (69)

The type of learning matters...

“Much of the research on the impact of education on health focuses on formal education rather than non-formal or informal learning. It also prioritises school and higher education for young people rather than ALE. **The rationale, however, for investing in education applies to all ages and forms of education.**”

GRALE 3 (69)

Formal, non-formal, informal

“Different forms of ALE... may work better among different **age** groups and at different **stages** of people’s lives.”

Research cited on community-based approaches in China, and the music and arts curriculum in UK. But of course, these concepts overlap where learners are empowered to co-design...

GRALE 3 (72)

Types of impact

- On the healthcare system
- On the workplace / learning place
- On healthier attitudes and lifestyles
- On health inequalities

Health care system

- Reducing costs, preventing hospitalisation
- Making delivery more effective
- Understanding materials, information
- Navigating the system, asking questions
- Complying with medical instructions
- Recognising the need for prevention / screening etc

[HEALTH] WARNING!

“But it cannot be assumed that there is a simple linear path from better education to better health.”

A caveat that you will find in the final Health research paper for this meeting...

Research review paper on health and adult learning (2016-7)

The impact on physical and mental health and well-being:

- Participation and how learning is organised
- Who benefits most?
- What learning benefits most?
- How are health outcomes defined and measured?
- The role of professionals

Final Report

- What are the challenges in the area of health and well-being in England?
- Which policies (in health, education, infrastructure etc.) are these reflected in?
- What evidence should we present to show how ALE addresses these?
- How do policies (in health, education, infrastructure etc.) need to change to help address this?

Social, civic, and community life

INDIVIDUAL LEARNING GAINS

- Literacy and numeracy
- Practical skills
- Life skills
- Cultural learning

BENEFITS TO COMMUNITIES AND SOCIETIES

- Social cohesion, integration and inclusion
- Social capital
- Participation in social, civic and community activities
- Learning Communities: Ethical Economies, Ecological Awareness and Environmental Sustainability

GRALE 3 (107)

Communities Research Questions

What is the role that adult learning (formal, non-formal, and informal) plays in social, civic and community life?

- How does it support individual citizens and their families contribute to the communities they live in?
- How does it help citizens become more active in civil society and political life, more tolerant of diversity and more aware of environmental issues?
- How does it promote cultural development, from the arts to spirituality, helping citizens become well-rounded and resourceful in shaping their societies?

Feedback and ideas to:

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