

Annotated Bibliography

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A number of texts are here identified which are likely to be of further interest to those wishing to explore further issues raised in the research report.

Foster, P., Howard, U., Reisenberger, A., *A sense of achievement: outcomes of adult learning*, FEDA 1997

This 'FE Matters' report, one of a number of publications in the 'Widening Participation' series, is based on a research study undertaken during 1996/7 into ways of recognising the outcomes of non-accredited learning, which built on a number of earlier studies. These and the context are reviewed together with the outcomes of a national Colloquium on the subject to which contributions were made by a number of 'designated' institutions (funded by the FEFC to deliver non-accredited as well as accredited programmes) and by HMI, FEFC, FEDA and NIACE. The report traces and summarises the emergent 'philosophy' of 'learning outcomes' with particular reference to the NVQ model, Open College Network accreditation and credit frameworks. It also identifies and discusses assessment and accreditation issues. A series of case studies are presented which exemplify the practical application of 'learning outcomes' approaches. The penultimate chapter proposes a model and a practical framework for developing 'learning outcomes' strategies. The final chapter sets non-accredited learning in the context of the development of a culture of lifelong learning, with perspectives from the Employment Department, the FEFC and OFSTED.

Hayes, A., Lavender, P., Reisenberger, A., and Vorhaus, J., *Outcomes of adult learning: taking the debate forward*, FEDA/NIACE, 1999

A collection of papers, with one exception presented at the 1999 Further Education Research Network (FERN) conference. The first, by Peter Lavender, summarises and synthesises progress to date in the development of appropriate ways of identifying, recording and valuing learning which does not lead to qualifications. Close reference is made to inspection frameworks and related evidence requirements. In the context of proposing ways forward, a number of aspects are discussed, including the identification of planned learning outcomes, recognising and recording progress and achievement, the range of possible outcomes from learning, the measurability of unanticipated and beneficial outcomes and how the intrinsic benefits of learning can be captured and valued. Lavender offers an indicative checklist of necessary systems developments and evidence sources for providers.

The second paper by John Vorhaus is a response to the first. Vorhaus argues that there is a need to consider the nature of the cohort of adult learners accessing the non-accredited curriculum and their purposes in so doing. He argues in favour of prioritising the development of formative rather than summative assessment, and discusses practical considerations in recording and providing evidence of progress. Vorhaus identifies a potential tension between designing learning programmes including appropriate formative assessment to meet and address individual needs, and the drive to obtain reliable quantitative data for aggregation purposes.

The third paper, by Amanda Hayes, discusses accreditation and qualifications in the context of both equality of opportunity and public funding and accountability. Hayes identifies the need to clarify the relationship between 'measurement' of individual learner progress, the evaluation of course quality and judgements about provider

performance. In the final paper Anna Reisenberger discusses the requirements for a framework to support and recognise adult achievement which takes place outside of the formal qualifications frame of reference including ‘threshold’ quality criteria for providers. The use of incentives to encourage adult progression and the potential contribution of a national credit framework are also explored.

Greenwood, M, and Merton, A., Taylor, S., *An evaluation of non-schedule 2 pilot projects*, LSDA/NIACE, 2000

This report summarises the outcomes of the evaluation by the Learning and Skills Development Agency and NIACE of the 1999-2000 FEFC-funded ‘non-Schedule 2’ pilot projects. The FEFC funded 40 FE providers to work in partnership with other organisations and agencies to develop innovative non qualification-bearing programmes designed to widen participation by attracting new learners and offer progression to accredited programmes. Providers were required to develop ways of identifying and recording learners’ progress, achievement and progression. The report discusses the extent to which these objectives were achieved. Learners’ views of the programmes and the place of non-accredited learning in the wider context of raising standards and social inclusion are also discussed.

Greenwood, M., Hayes, A., Turner, C., Vorhaus, J., (eds.), *Recognising and Validating Outcomes of Non-accredited Learning – A Practical Approach*, LSDA, 2001

This report describes, illustrates the work of providers and practitioners who have developed, implemented and evaluated ‘learning outcomes’ systems and approaches, as a way of capturing achievement in non-accredited learning. A number of case studies provide detailed accounts of these systems in use and critical analyses and evaluation of the benefits, challenges and issues. In most cases illustrative examples of documentation used are provided. An interim account is given of research in progress into learners’ perceptions of such systems. The report concludes with an overview by John Vorhaus of what can be learned from the case studies, in the context of the introduction of the Common Inspection Framework. Vorhaus proposes a nine-stage framework/process for recording, validating and celebrating adults’ learning progress and achievement, as exemplified to a greater or lesser extent within the case studies.

Dewson, S., Eccles, J., Tackey, Nii Djan, Jackson, A., *Measuring Soft Outcomes and Distance Travelled: a review of current practice*, DfES research report 219, 2000.

A review of literature and practice on ‘soft indicators’, ‘soft outcomes’ and ‘distance travelled’ including a survey of 300 ESF (Objective 3) funded projects in this field. This study was undertaken with a view to informing the development of a model for measuring ‘distance travelled’ as well as proposals and recommendations for monitoring ‘soft indicators’ at national level.

The report consider the nature of ‘soft’ outcomes and indicators, reviews and evaluates systems in use for monitoring and measuring ‘soft’ outcomes and ‘distance travelled’ and discusses the feasibility of developing a single model for the measurement of these. The report concludes that it would be inappropriate to seek a ‘one size fits all’ single national monitoring system.

Dewson, S., Eccles, J., Tackey, Nii Djan, Jackson, A., *Guide to Measuring Soft Outcomes and Distance Travelled*, Institute for Employment Studies, 2000

This guide aims to assist providers in understanding and implementing systems for recording 'soft' outcomes and 'distance travelled'. It is aimed particularly at organisations running projects under ESF Objective 3 in Policy Field 2, Equality of Opportunity for all and promoting social inclusion. The authors assert the importance of identifying and giving credit for progress in relation to 'soft' outcomes. These are defined as key work skills e.g. problem solving, team working; attitudinal skills e.g. confidence; personal skills e.g. self-awareness; and practical skills e.g. financial literacy. A system of assessment which is built around 'the positive affirmation of beneficiaries' current (and developing) skills is advocated, as is the development of a range of ways of capturing and producing evidence of achievement.

Turner, C., *Squaring the Circle: Funding non-accredited adult learning under the Learning and Skills Council*, NIACE, 2001

This paper considers how non-accredited learning might be supported under the Learning and Skills Council. Turner explores the scope for funding such learning, and sets this in the context of quality assurance and improvement arrangements. Issues affecting the development of a quality framework for non-accredited provision are discussed, including questions of evaluation and measurement of learning progress and achievement, and the role of non-accredited learning in the wider context of raising standards and lifelong learning. The paper proposes three series of quality criteria for demonstrating and determining eligibility for funding. These are expressed in terms of what is provided for learners, by way of information and advice, tutor support, appropriate individual learning programmes for learners and associated resources; features of the provision and programmes including curriculum design, delivery and assessment methods and resources to support learning; and providers' resources, systems and arrangements including those to quality assure and effectively manage the provision. In each case sources of indicative evidence are suggested. The paper concludes with a number of questions for further discussion.