

Evidencing the Impact

a resource to support the voluntary sector to evidence the impact of adult learning



Foreword from Jackie Howie, Lead Officer, Learning Link Scotland
Foreword

Learning Link Scotland is delighted to present this resource. In 2009, we published our evaluation pack “Explaining the Difference”, which aimed to enable organisations to explain the difference adult learning made to learners and communities. The pack was widely used and the Logic Model it was based on has proved fruitful in both explaining the difference adult learning makes and in summarising project plans for funders. In 2014, Learning Link Scotland initiated a refresh of “Explaining the Difference”, bringing the references up to date and ensuring that the guidance within the pack can support organisations to evidence impact.

Our aspiration in creating “Evidencing the Impact” is that the guidance will provide a way of making life easier for members and partners but also a means by which the sector can collectively measure and demonstrate its impact not only on individuals’ and communities’ lives but on the economy and society, creating a fairer Scotland.

We would like to thank Education Scotland for funding this endeavour, the stakeholder group for offering useful advice and expertise, the pilots for sharing their experiences with us, and a special thanks to Evaluation Support Scotland for their continued support for Learning Link Scotland’s work in evaluation.

We want you to read it, talk about it with colleagues and partners, use it, try new things, and share the results with us and colleagues.

Jackie Howie
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1. The “Evidencing the Impact” resource

What is the purpose of this resource?

Evidencing the Impact builds on the “Explaining the Difference” pack, published by Learning Link Scotland in 2009. It responds to calls from the voluntary sector for user-friendly guidance on how to evidence clearly the impact of adult¹ learning on individuals, on communities and on life chances. In several sections we have used information from the original pack and we acknowledge the work that went into its production.

This resource is designed to provide organisations with:

- an understanding of the key national policy drivers to provide context for any evaluation
- an opportunity to learn about and reflect on the terminology we use to talk about evaluation (such as “output” and “outcome”)
- information about the range of evaluation tools that are available, such as the Logic Model or Return on Investment Framework, outlining their structure and where to find them
- information about the various quality frameworks that voluntary sector adult learning providers may need to respond to, such as *How Good is our Third Sector Organisation?* and *How Good is Our Community Learning and Development?*
- signposting to further information and guidance about evaluation and evidencing impact.

Who is Evidencing the Impact for?

This resource will be useful to:

- staff and volunteers in voluntary organisations who deliver learning to adults
- staff and volunteers in voluntary organisations who are partners to organisations delivering adult learning (for example, where they refer adults to learning opportunities in partner organisations)
- managers and workers delivering community learning and development in non-voluntary sector settings, such as those in local authorities, prisons, probation, and college outreach provision and
- people involved in community development activity that has a learning dimension.

Organisations are likely to use the resource in different ways depending on their type (for example a local authority as opposed to a small charity) or on what they want to use the resource for. Voluntary or third sector organisations might find themselves investing a lot of time engaging clients in ‘pre-learning’ activities ahead of projects, and they will need to evidence the impact of this important part of their work. For local authorities this pre-learning work might be less important than the delivery of courses.

¹ By “adult” we refer to anyone aged 16 or above.

How did the resource come about?

In 2009, Learning Link Scotland worked with Evaluation Support Scotland to run an action learning project on the topic of evaluation. The project placed an emphasis on **explaining** the difference that adult learning makes, and how adult learning activity contributes to outcomes in the short, medium and longer term, and on a number of levels: outcomes for learners, for communities and to society.

The partners brought together voluntary adult learning providers to build a collective vision of the difference they make and how they contribute to local and national outcomes. The participants used a “logic modelling” approach to show the link between inputs, outputs and outcomes. The project, which resulted in the “Explaining the Difference” pack, was welcomed by Scottish Government and HMIE.

In the autumn of 2014 Learning Link Scotland, funded by Education Scotland, brought together a stakeholder group to review the pack and to refresh it. The motivation for the refresh was partly to move the emphasis of the resource from **explaining to evidencing** impact, and partly to generate through a pilot new evidence of the impact of adult learning generated by the voluntary sector in Scotland.

The stakeholder group set terms of reference that would ensure the new resource would be:

- more focused on evidencing impact
- clearer in its guidance for evidencing gathering
- more succinct
- ready for organisations to use with colleagues and partner organisations
- illustrated with “possible scenarios” so that organisations can understand how they might use the tool in their contexts
- illustrated by video clips explaining the use of tools
- a gateway to further learning about evaluation and tools that can be used to evidence impact against a range of quality frameworks

The stakeholder group’s members were:

- Jackie Howie, Learning Link Scotland
- Edith MacQuarrie, Education Scotland
- Shirley Howitt, Workers’ Educational Association (WEA) Scotland
- Elaine Webster, Scottish Language Dictionaries
- Emma Whitelock, Lead Scotland
- Sam Ross, Rosemount Lifelong Learning

The work to develop the resource was led by Daniel Sellers, an educational consultant.

Piloting the refreshed pack

A pilot phase took place during January and February 2015, when ten of Learning Link Scotland’s member and partner organisations, and Learning Link Scotland itself, used the pack to evaluate and evidence impact of their work.

Feedback from the pilot provided suggestions for changes to strengthen the resource, as well as some illustrations of its practical use. In addition, clear learning points emerged that future users of the resource might benefit from reflecting on:

- **the importance of *dialogue* in the evaluation process** – it is not a process to be undertaken by an individual in a room on their own; rather it should actively involve colleagues, service users, partner organisations and others. In the pilot, dialogue appeared to be key to the successful development of some organisations' logic models, for example.
- **the process of evaluation and evidencing impact was often thought by participants to be as, if not *more*, important than the final documentary evidence** – participants said that they enjoyed and found value in the chance to reflect deeply, consider projects from multiple angles, and to engage with colleagues and partners as they did this.
- **assumptions you make should be reflected on as a fundamental part of the evaluation process** – identifying assumptions you are making can be very challenging; for example, if you are assuming that family learning makes a positive difference to outcomes for children and their parents, then do you have evidence to support this, in case you were asked to provide it? By identifying assumptions you are ensuring you are clear in your justification for a particular project or programme, or for undertaking it in a particular way.

Illustrations of ways in which the pilot group used the revised resource appear in Section 4 below.

Outcomes and the national policy context

Voluntary organisations delivering and evaluating their adult learning provision should take account of national policies, strategies, action plans and frameworks that have links to their area of work. Gathering evidence of impact that can show a link with high level work can support funding reports and applications.

A number of policy areas have been developed by the Scottish Government and its agencies in recent years, all with an emphasis on outcome-focused delivery — in other words, interventions should be delivered with clear, meaningful results in mind. The question is: *what difference will this make, whether to individuals, to communities, or to society, and can that difference be identified and measured?*

Following the Concordat in 2007 between local authorities and Scottish Government, there has also been a conscious move to localism, partnership working and transparency in the delivery of public services. In its National Performance Framework, the Scottish Government outlined its Key Purpose and National Outcomes to be embedded in the work of local authorities and their partners. Beneath these National Outcomes sit several Indicators which are used to indicate whether Scotland is making progress in a particular area.

*One Scotland - Programme for Government 2014-15*² is still informed by the Key Purpose and builds on the following themes: Creating More, Better Paid Jobs in a Strong, Sustainable Economy; Building a Fairer Scotland and Tackling Inequality; Passing Power to People and Communities; Creating More, Better Paid Jobs in a Strong, Sustainable Economy. Adult learning has much to contribute to all of these.

² <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2014/11/6336/downloads#res-1>

Policies relating directly to adult learning in Scotland³

Adult Learning in Scotland: a Statement of Ambition⁴

In May 2014 Education Scotland launched its statement of ambition for adult learning. Its aspiration is that Scotland becomes the best place to learn. The Statement has three core principles, that adult learning should be lifelong, life-wide, and learner-centred. It recognises the key and distinctive role that adult learning plays in helping to develop the person, the family, communities and society.

The next stage in achieving this ambition will be a strategic implementation plan.

CLD Strategic Guidance and Regulations⁵

The community learning and development strategic guidance was published in June 2012.

The guidance provides a clear statement that the purpose of community learning and development (CLD) is to empower people, individually and collectively, to make positive changes in their lives and in their communities through learning.

It is addressed to Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs). However, it has much wider relevance and is for all those involved in planning, managing or delivering CLD services or using a CLD approach to support individuals and communities.

It describes how CLD delivers government policy outcomes in communities. It clarifies the Scottish Government's expectations of Community Planning Partnerships (CPPs) and other public sector partners for how CLD services should be delivered.

It re-emphasises the Government's commitment to CLD's aims and describes how these will be part of an overall strategic approach to be taken forward by a range of partners including Government itself, Education Scotland and the CLD Standards Council.

The Requirements for Community Learning and Development (Scotland) Regulations 2013 (the CLD Regulations) came into force on 1 September 2013.

The CLD Regulations place a requirement on the local authority to initiate, maintain and facilitate a process which ensures that CLD in the area of the local authority is secured in such a way that it:

- identifies target individuals and groups
- considers the needs of those target individuals and groups for CLD
- assesses the degree to which those needs are already being met
- identifies barriers to the adequate and efficient provision of relevant CLD

³ descriptions of the policy documents and strategies are drawn from the documents themselves or from the webpages that host them (spring 2015).

⁴

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/communitylearninganddevelopment/adultlearning/communitybasedadultlearning/statementofambition.asp>

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/communitylearninganddevelopment/about/strategicguidance/aims.asp>

- In meeting this requirement, the local authority must involve and consult those representative of both the target individuals and groups and CLD providers within the area of the local authority.

The local authority must consult on and publish specified information every three years. The first of these plans should be in place no later than 1st September 2015, with subsequent plans published at three yearly intervals from the initial date of publication.

Adult Literacies in Scotland 2020⁶

In December 2010 the Scottish Government launched its renewed strategy for developing adult literacy and numeracy (literacies) skills through the delivery of high quality adult learning provision.

The implementation of the strategy is led by Education Scotland through a national Strategic Implementation Group with representation from national stakeholders in the strategy's success.

In 2015, Education Scotland will make a five-year statement on the progress of the strategy and highlight the commitments for the remaining five years of ALIS 2020. These commitments will tie in with the implementation of the Adult Learning Statement of Ambition.

Scotland's Adult ESOL Strategy 2015-2020⁷

The Adult ESOL Strategy for Scotland aims to support Scotland's ambitions for growing the economy and to encourage active citizenship in a diverse and pluralistic society.

The Strategy has been refreshed to take account of new and developing policy.

It maintains the vision and principles of the 2007 strategy and recognises the achievements that have been made since then. It seeks to build on the achievements to date and to provide renewed strategic direction framed within the Scottish Adult Learning Statement of Ambition.

Curriculum for Excellence⁸

Curriculum for Excellence aims to achieve a transformation in education in Scotland by providing a coherent, more flexible and enriched curriculum from 3 to 18.

The curriculum includes the totality of experiences which are planned for children and young people through their education, wherever they are being educated. Curriculum for Excellence aims to create:

- Successful Learners
- Confident Individuals
- Responsible Citizens, and
- Effective Contributors

⁶ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2011/01/25121451/0>

⁷

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/communitylearninganddevelopment/adultlearning/ESOL/policy/strategy.asp>

⁸ <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/thecurriculum/whatiscurriculumforexcellence/>

One of the important features of Curriculum for Excellence is that learning outside the classroom and the institution is valued and can be accredited. It is possible that learners can gain credit for learning that takes place in non-formal adult learning settings.

2. How to use this resource

Section 3 of this resource contains guidance and tools for evaluation. It contains five sections:

- A. **Understanding evaluation**, which gives an overview of evaluation as a concept, its purpose, how and when it takes place and who should be involved
- B. **Evaluating adult learning**, which describes some typical features of adult learning provision and emphasises the need to evaluate all aspects of programmes, despite their likely complexity
- C. **Components of evaluation**, which provides an opportunity to learn about the terminology used to describe the processes of evaluation
- D. **Evaluation tools**, which provides an overview of evaluation tools that can be used to measure the impact of adult learning
- E. **What to do with your evidence**, which gives guidance on how to use the evidence of impact you have gathered during an evaluation

Section 4 contains illustrations of ways in which voluntary organisations and their partners can use the guidance and information in this resource

Appendix 1 provides outcomes and indicators that can be used to evaluate different stages and aspects of adult learning programmes

Appendix 2 provides information and links to quality frameworks containing outcomes and indicators that you might want or need to refer to as you evaluate adult learning programmes.

3. Guidance and tools

A Understanding evaluation

What is evaluation?

Evaluation in adult learning is the process of formally identifying the value or success of a programme, course or learning session.

Why evaluate?

Evaluation is important for understanding whether your work is having the desired impact on individuals, groups or on the organisation itself. The findings will help you make changes that are necessary, or to build on what is working well. Evaluation can also uncover impacts that you did not plan for – what we often refer to as unexpected results, impacts or outcomes.

How to evaluate?

Evaluation is about asking the right questions of the right people at the right time. These questions should be objective and should seek answers relating to what it is you want to know. Evaluations tools already exist which can help you to formulate questions and to plan how and when to ask them. These tools often consist of set processes or templates which you can use in your own context.

Who is involved in evaluation?

You should involve and ask questions of everyone involved in the delivery of the programme, and everyone who benefits from the programme. You can also ask questions of people in partner organisations, such as those who refer adults to you, or where adults progress to at the end of your programme.

B Evaluating adult learning

The voluntary adult education sector is part of a broader landscape of learning provision for adults. It targets individuals and groups who might face barriers to accessing more formal educational opportunities, such as those in colleges. Learning tends to be non-formal or informal, with a focus on individual or group needs and interests. Accreditation of learning is possible but is not the only goal. Typical achievements in adult learning include building confidence, personal development and the application of new skills. Other achievements can include work skills and increased community integration and the confidence to contribute their ideas to the development of local learning opportunities.

Quite often voluntary sector adult learning involves engagement, or pre-learning, activity to support individuals and groups to consider the benefits of entering learning. Learners are encouraged to become involved in the development of the learning programme, organisation and local and national policy.

Other factors that distinguish the voluntary adult education sector are:

- the use of volunteers and the encouragement of learners to become volunteers themselves
- the role voluntary adult learning providers play in identifying the learning needs of disadvantaged groups and ways that others can improve their policy or provision.

The evaluation of adult learning sessions, programmes and organisations and policy, requires all of the above to be taken into account. Evaluation should take account of the whole continuum of provision, as complex as it might be, from pre-learning activity, through to induction, the delivery of learning and teaching, any assessment that takes place, and the short, medium and longer-term outcomes for learners and their communities.

C Components of evaluation:

No matter what tool, methods or quality frameworks that we use to evaluate the impact of adult learning, we need to understand a number of common terms.

Term	Examples
<p>Inputs are the resources you put in to make the work happen</p>	<p>Money, people, time, premises or equipment</p>
<p>Outputs are the activities or services you put on for your users</p>	<p>Classes, courses, events or one-to-one sessions</p>
<p>Participants or Beneficiaries are the people that you reach with your outputs</p>	<p>Usually the people who take part in the activity or use the service, such as adult learners</p>
<p>Outcomes are the changes and differences that result from your activities (these could be short, medium or long-term, depending on your timescale)</p>	<p>Service users getting a job as a result of attending a job skills course; adult learners have made decisions about their next steps; increased health and wellbeing</p>
<p>Indicators are what you use to measure whether outcomes have been achieved</p>	<p>Achievement of qualifications; demonstration new skills; increased engagement of individuals in group activities</p>

Are you really measuring outcomes?

Read the following statements and see if you can tell which are outcomes. What are the ones you rejected?

1. We use volunteers to run a community cafe.
2. Learners say they enjoy the experience.
3. As a result, people have improved work skills.
4. 20 people attended our job search training session.
5. 10 people found a job thanks to the training.
6. We have raised £20,000 in funding so that we can build a children's playground.

Answers:

1. This is an output. The difference the activity makes to volunteers would be an outcome.
2. Enjoyment is important, but is more about satisfaction for the volunteers than an outcome in itself.
3. Yes, this is an outcome.
4. This is an output: part of the service or activity that is put on for people.
5. Yes, this is an outcome.
6. Not an outcome. Raising the money is an output, or activity. The money itself is an input for future work that it will help to fund.

Timescales for outcomes

Outcomes can be planned according to whatever timescale you have identified for your project or programme. This timescale can include immediate and longer-term outcomes.

A short project might be more reasonably focused on outcomes that occur in the near future: its short-term outcomes might occur during the project or within days of its end, and its long-term outcomes might be planned to have occurred within weeks or a few months.

A longer programme, such as a year's employability skills course, might plan to measure outcomes that occur 18 months or two years down the line, or even longer, though short- and medium-term outcomes might include, for example, increased confidence.

More about indicators

Some outcomes are easy to measure because they are **hard outcomes** — there is something tangible that you can count. For example, if the outcome is to increase employment, the indicator of this would be the number of beneficiaries who have moved into employment.

Other outcomes are **soft outcomes** and are more difficult to measure. You need to set proxy indicators. These are things that might reasonably show that your outcome is happening. For example, if the outcome is to increase young people's self confidence, an indicator might be whether a young person is able to participate in group activities or express their views clearly.

The indicators should be able to show whether things have stayed the same, improved or worsened. This means looking for levels such as:

- Level of knowledge
- Level of skills

- Types of behaviour

Often you need a **baseline measurement** so you can compare progress. So, for example, you may gather information on learners' skills, knowledge or abilities at the start of the programme, so that you can measure their progress at different stages and at the end of the programme.

Developing key indicators

Discuss the key purpose of your organisation with colleagues. Has it changed? Do you have new priorities? What are your short term, medium and longer term outcomes?

You can follow a three-step process to help you develop indicators:

Step 1

For each outcome, ask yourself what it would look like if you had achieved it. Allow yourself to imagine all sorts of possibilities and come up with as many as you can think of in a list. These are your **potential indicators**.

Step 2

From your list of potential indicators identify those that you can collect information on and think about how easy it will be to collect that information. The ones that you choose will become your **key indicators**.

Step 3

Check out with other stakeholders (such as funders, partners and users) whether the key indicators that you have chosen are the most relevant ones to the outcomes to be achieved.

You may find that some of the indicators that you develop are relevant to more than one of your outcomes.

Where to find evidence that your indicators have been met

Common sources of evidence

Client/third party tells you

Behaviour changes

Records

Hard evidence

Common Methods

Record casual feedback, Questionnaires, Interviews, Focus groups, Video diaries, Exercises, Mapping and visual progress tools

Observation notes

Attendance sheets, Record of activities, Use of services

Tracking what happens and comparing statistics (e.g. illness, employment, debt, non-attendance)

Appendix 1 contains outcomes and indicators that can be used at different stages of the delivery of adult learning programmes.

D Evaluation Tools

There are several evaluation tools available for measuring the impact of learning programmes. These tools are usually:

- **templates** for creating diagrams showing the relationship between investment and results, or for setting out quantitative and qualitative indicators that will be used to measure the success of particular aspects of a programme, or
- **processes** that can be followed, usually with the use of structured questions, to examine and evaluate aspects of a programme in a systematic way.

Table 1 below describes tools that have been developed for evaluations in any context, but which can very usefully applied to adult learning. The table provides links to more information, videos describing how individuals have used the tools, and examples.

Table 2 below provides information and links to evaluation tools that have been developed specifically for evaluating community learning and development activity, including adult learning. Because they have been designed for use in a particular context these tools also contain indicators that can be used to measure whether outcomes have been achieved.

Table 1

Evaluation tools that are applicable to any context:

Tool	Description and links to more information	Examples of use
Logic Modelling	A logic model tells the story of your project or programme in a diagram and a few simple words. It shows a causal connection between the need you have identified, what	The following logic models were produced during the Explaining the Difference project. Case studies describe how each organisation applied the concept in its own context.

Tool	Description and links to more information	Examples of use
	<p>you do and how this makes a difference for individuals and communities.</p> <p>You can use logic modelling to <i>plan</i> a project or programme (as an “architectural” approach), or to examine and record ways in which a project or programme has produced outcomes <i>after</i> it has ended (as an “archaeological” approach).</p> <p>Logic modelling formed the heart of the Explaining the Difference project.</p> <p>This link⁹ provides information about the purpose of logic models, how they can be used, and to see case studies describing how members of the original project developed logic models for their own organisations.</p> <p>An online tutorial¹⁰ teaches you more about logic models and gives you the chance to create your own example.</p> <p>This video¹¹ features Emma Whitelock of Lead Scotland describing the ways in which she and her organisation have used logic modelling as a way of evidencing the impact of their projects.</p> <p>You can download blank logic model templates here¹².</p> <p>The logic model needs to reflect organisations’ particular contexts, purposes, circumstances and focuses of interest. Therefore it is important to recognise that different organisations’ (and individuals’) logic models will</p>	<p>All the logic models and associated case studies are available on Learning Link Scotland’s web page¹³.</p> <p>(1) Rosemount Lifelong Learning: Making a Difference Programme</p> <p>(2) CraigOwl Communities: Employability Programme “Skills for Success”</p> <p>(3) Lead Scotland North Lanarkshire Project: pilot Creative Computer Class</p>

⁹ <http://www.learninglinkscotland.org.uk/media/189672/the%20process%20of%20logic%20modelling.pdf>

¹⁰ http://www.learninglinkscotland.org.uk/lls_tutorial/

¹¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yFajjYkqRj0>

¹² <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/evallogicmodelworksheets.html>

¹³ <http://www.learninglinkscotland.org.uk/what-we-do/projects/evidencing-the-impact.aspx>

Tool	Description and links to more information	Examples of use
<p>Return on investment evaluation planning</p>	<p>vary in focus and might look dissimilar.</p> <p>The measurement of “return on investment” usually refers to financial reward that following financial investment.</p> <p>However, it can be used to measure the success of a project or programme according to any number of indicators that you are seeking.</p> <p>It is particularly useful for <i>planning</i> for impact <i>before</i> or at the start of a project or programme (for example, a pilot learning programme).</p> <p>How to plan to measure return on investment:</p> <p><u>Identifying stages of the programme</u> You start by considering the stages of the programme at which you want to measure impact. We might choose four stages, such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. pre-learning or engagement 2. learning 3. application of learning 4. long-term impact of the programme <p><u>Identifying outcomes and indicators</u> You then decide what success will look like at each stage, and identify indicators that will help you to understand whether that success has been met.</p> <p>For example, at Stage 1 – pre-learning or engagement, you might want</p>	<p>NHS Education for Scotland have used return on investment frameworks to plan to measure the success of projects.</p> <p>In 2014 they evaluated the pilot of a Scottish Vocational Qualification. The report (which you can read here¹⁵) used indicators that had been identified in a return on investment framework at the start of the project. The framework itself forms an appendix to the report.</p> <p>The organisation ABDI, which offers qualifications and training in measuring return on investment, offers a number of resources and examples on its website¹⁶.</p>

¹⁵ [http://www.theadmincentre.nes.scot.nhs.uk/media/314463/svq2%20mid-point%20evaluation%20report%20\(final\).pdf](http://www.theadmincentre.nes.scot.nhs.uk/media/314463/svq2%20mid-point%20evaluation%20report%20(final).pdf)

¹⁶ <http://www.abdi.eu.com/resources/>

Tool	Description and links to more information	Examples of use
	<p>to see the outcome, Individuals see the course as relevant to their needs and interests.</p> <p>The hard indicator might be: more than 60% of the people who attended the information evening signed up for the course.</p> <p>You can also plan for qualitative indicators, such as, More than 70% of those who sign up for the course see it as relevant to their personal development.</p> <p><u>Identifying evidence sources</u> You need to plan where to look for evidence against each of the indicators. Sources for the above indicators could be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • register at information evening, and • course application forms <p>This video¹⁴ features Karen Adams of NHS Education for Scotland describing the ways in which she and her organisation have used return on investment methods as a way of evidencing the impact of projects.</p>	

¹⁴ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i76Sqxqazc8>

Table 2

This table details and provides links to tools that are designed for measuring the impact of adult learning activity. Some of these tools refer to “self-evaluation”. Self-evaluation is the process of evaluating programmes that you run, or your own organisation, using indicators that relate to outcomes you are seeking. It is a way of improving continuously. You might self-evaluate using external frameworks, but the point is that you are choosing to undertake the activity.

Framework	Description	Relevant outcomes/indicators
<p><u>How Good is Our Third Sector Organisation?</u>¹⁷ (Education Scotland)</p> <p>available from April 2015</p>	<p>A quality framework for measuring the impact of services provided by third sector organisations, though not specific to adult learning.</p> <p>This new resource has been developed to support the third sector. The resource complements the work of Evaluation Support Scotland and others such as the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations to assist third sector organisations to self-evaluate and to improve more effectively.</p> <p>The quality indicators within <i>How good is our third sector organisation?</i> (HGISTSO) focus on the impact of third sector services on improving the life chances of children, adults and families, and increasing community resilience.</p> <p>The emphasis on impact and outcomes reinforces the principle that self-evaluation is not an end in itself and is worthwhile only if it leads to improvement. The new resource is designed to help organisations to evaluate</p>	<p>This quality framework is organised under six key questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What key outcomes have we achieved? 2. What impact have we had in meeting the needs of our stakeholders? 3. How good is our delivery of key processes? 4. How good is our operational management? 5. How good is our strategic leadership? 6. What is our capacity for improvement?

¹⁷ <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/h/hgiotso/hgiotso.asp>

Framework	Description	Relevant outcomes/indicators
	<p>their current performance and to identify priorities for action. HM Inspectors will use the same set of quality indicators in external evaluation of organisations, thus developing a partnership approach to internal and external evaluation.</p> <p>The <i>HGIOTSO</i> resource is designed to be used flexibly in the context of local situations and in a way that ensures that key issues will be addressed. The approach to self-evaluation is generic enough for use in the wide and diverse range of third sector organisations.</p> <p>You can download it from this Education Scotland webpage¹⁸.</p>	
<p><u>Statistics and Stories</u>¹⁹ (University of Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Council), 2013</p>	<p>The <i>Statistics and Stories</i> guidance was published in 2013. It was created from a partnership of the University of Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Council. It aimed to support community learning and development workers (particularly grass roots workers) to generate evidence of the effectiveness of their interventions and to build confidence across the field in doing so.</p>	<p>The guidance takes readers or trainees through ten reflective questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why does gathering evidence matter? 2. What is evidence? 3. Who gathers evidence?

¹⁸

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/communitylearninganddevelopment/support/selfevaluation/hgiotso/hgiotsopublication.asp>

¹⁹ <http://www.communitydevelopmentalliancescotland.org/frontpage/statistics-and-stories-2>

Framework	Description	Relevant outcomes/indicators
	An online interactive version is available on iDevelop ²⁰ .	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. How do you go about gathering evidence? 5. What is the best evidence you have gathered? 6. Why was it the best? 7. How did you get it? 8. What happens to the evidence? 9. What would be useful to people in gathering evidence? 10. Where should tools and guidance be held?
Learning, Evaluation and Planning (LEAP) ²¹ SCDC, 2007	<p>For carrying out an evaluation with a focus on adult learning.</p> <p>The LEAP framework supports a partnership approach to achieving change and improvement in the quality of community life.</p> <p>The LEAP approach is based on 5 principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We should plan and act according to need • We should be clear about what we hope to achieve and whether we've achieved it - planning and evaluation should be outcome focused • We should recognise that achieving change depends on building on and using people's strengths and abilities - planning and evaluation 	<p>The LEAP planning and evaluation cycle is based on 7 questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the need we are trying to address? 2. What specifically needs to change? 3. How will we know if change has taken place? 4. What will we actually do? 5. How will we make sure we're doing it as planned? 6. How successful have we been and what have we learned? 7. What now needs to change?

²⁰ <http://www.i-develop-cld.org.uk/mod/article/view.php?id=798>

²¹ <http://www.scdc.org.uk/what/LEAP/>

Framework	Description	Relevant outcomes/indicators
	<p>should seek to build on capacity and develop assets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We should plan, act and evaluate in partnership and involve communities as key stakeholders • We should be committed to learning from what we do, and from each other and applying this learning to improve our effectiveness and efficiency <p>Find out more at: http://www.planandevaluate.com</p>	
<p><u>How Good is Our Community Learning and Development?</u>²² Education Scotland, 2006</p>	<p><i>How Good is our Community Learning and Development?</i> (HGIOCLD?) is designed to support evaluation of the quality of services delivering community learning and development (CLD), including adult literacies, in Scotland. It is in its second edition, so is known as HGIOCLD? 2.</p> <p>It outlines an approach to self-evaluation which can be used by senior managers, local managers or practitioners working directly with young people, adults and community groups. It is also the framework which inspectors will use to evaluate the quality of your organisation during formal inspections.</p>	<p>Evaluate achievement against a six point scale.</p> <p>The framework is based on six high-level questions which can be answered by evaluating the quality of CLD provision systematically across ten Key Areas.</p> <p>High-Level Question (HLQ) 1: What key outcomes have we achieved?</p> <p>HLQ 2: How well do we meet the needs of our stakeholders?</p> <p>HLQ 3: How good is our delivery of key processes?</p> <p>HLQ 4: How good is our management?</p> <p>HLQ 5: How good is our leadership?</p>

²² http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/resources/h/genericresource_tcm4654473.asp

Framework	Description	Relevant outcomes/indicators
		HLQ 6: What is our capacity for improvement?
<p>Evaluating Community Projects²³ Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2005</p>	<p>Provides step-by-step advice on how to evaluate a community project.</p> <p>The guidance has a strong focus on using and sharing evidence you gather.</p> <p>The full guide and a summary are available on the Joseph Rowntree Foundation's website²⁴.</p>	<p>The guidance proposes that community projects use five steps to evaluate their projects:</p> <p>Step 1: Review the situation Step 2: Gather evidence for the evaluation Step 3: Analyse the evidence Step 4: Make use of what you have found out Step 5: Share your findings with others</p>
<p>Literacies in the Community²⁵ (City of Edinburgh Council, 2000)</p>	<p>For measuring the impact of adult literacies provision in Scotland.</p> <p>The Literacies in the Community (LiC) pack was developed in the early days of Scotland's first adult literacies strategy. It remains a useful and relevant resource for planning, delivering and evaluating high quality adult literacies provision.</p> <p>It contains thorough guidance on self-evaluation and sets out quality indicators against which the Scottish Government required local adult literacies partnerships to report until 2007 (at which point the Concordat was put in place).</p>	<p>Indicators are judged on four levels against four levels, with Level 1 representing the least well-developed service and Level 4 the most.</p> <p>The indicators are organised under two headings: Learning Programme; and The Organisation.</p> <p>Learning programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entry pathways • Learning and teaching • The curriculum • Guidance and support • Exit pathways

²³ <http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/evaluating-community-projects-practical-guide>

²⁴ <http://www.jrf.org.uk/publications/lending-hand-value-light-touch-support-empowering-communities>

²⁵ <http://www.aloscotland.co.uk/alo/viewresource.htm?id=265>

Framework	Description	Relevant outcomes/indicators
		The organisation <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Policy and planning• Resources• Staffing• Management• Staff development• Monitoring and evaluation

E What to do with your evidence

Once you have used evaluation to gather evidence of the impact of your work, you can use that evidence in a number of ways, including applying for funding for future programmes.

In August 2014, the Knowledge Translation Network published its [Evidence for Success](#) guide. This guide offers easy-to-follow, step-by-step guidance and resources to support organisations to use evidence to influence policy and practice. It is for anyone who wants to use evidence to improve policy and practice, regardless of the level of experience they have in doing so. Therefore, it is intended that this guide will also be of value to a wide range of stakeholders, including: practitioners, service managers, funders and commissioners, and policy makers and planners.

4 Illustrations of ways people have used this resource

The following illustrations show ways in which organisations might use this resource to evidence the impact of their work. The illustrations are drawn from the pilot of the resource and demonstrate a range of applications.

Mini case study 1:

Scottish Language Dictionaries had developed a free, downloadable app to enable users of Scots to check and learn Scots words. The organisation wanted to launch the app at a high school and to involve the local community. They were keen to measure and record the impact of the event itself in order to assess whether such events should be replicated with future resources.

Elaine Webster, the education and outreach officer, said:

[Evidencing the Impact] supported our focus on increasing the impact of our resources. It gave a framework which demonstrated the complexity of impacts, assumptions and the short/medium and long-term aspects of impact. Communicating this in a diagrammatic way is (and will be) useful for discussion with current and potential partners as well as internally. It helped identify the key areas to look for evidence.

She concluded:

It was essential for me to try out a 'worked example' to check my understanding. I worked through the 'outputs' and 'outcomes' examples and read the background material which I was comfortable with but applying the toolkit to a 'worked example' really tested and clarified my understanding.

Mini case study 2:

A local authority adult learning service in a rural area wanted to plan how to reach more single dads in the community and bring them into adult literacies learning. The focus of the learning would be on the dads' own learning, as well as their children's. The adult learning co-ordinator worked with two of her staff over two afternoons to create a logic model. The logic model would help them to plan the best what they

needed to invest and do in order to achieve particular outcomes for this group of individuals. The process enabled them to challenge and justify key assumptions (for example, that parents improving their skills will impact on their children's achievement), to consider external factors that might help or hinder the process, and then to think through in detail what needed to happen in terms of engagement and delivery of the programme. It also helped them to think through how they would measure the impact of the programme after its completion.

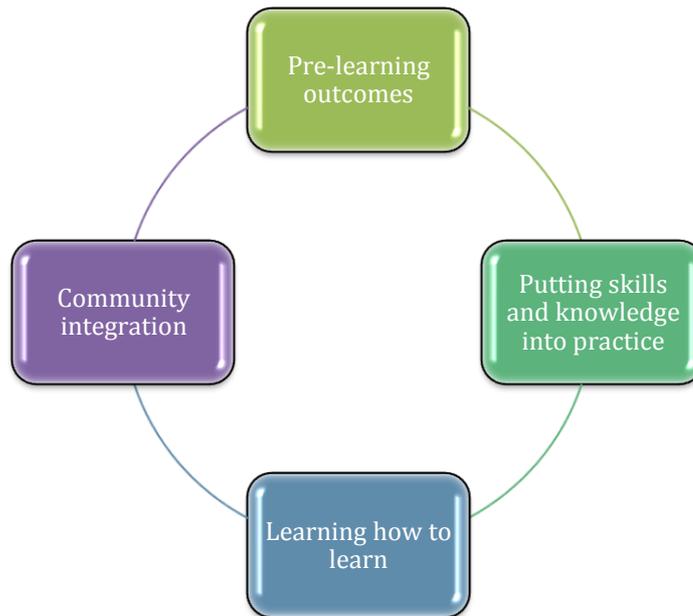
The co-ordinator said:

We felt clearer about what evidence we are looking for ... we have a clearer idea before we start a project and we have a clearer idea of what we want to achieve at the end of a project. We feel we have a more focussed approach instead of just seeing how it goes.

Appendix 1

Outcomes for adult learning

The original Explaining the Difference project group developed tables of outcomes and indicators that they might use to measure the impact of their adult learning programmes.



1. Pre-learning outcomes

outcomes	indicators
Engaged participant	Attendance at events Taking part in discussion and activities Extent to which they feel 'they belong' Thinking about next steps Overcoming barriers e.g. childcare
Improved knowledge of educational options	Level of information about options Applications to courses
Better able to articulate current skills and support needs	Ability to state needs Use of support services Ability to draw up a realistic action plan/ Personal Development plan (PDP)
Better able to overcome barriers	Ability to state needs – barriers and what needs to be overcome

	Use of support services Take up provision/ courses Extent to which barriers addressed
Increased confidence and motivation to take up learning opportunities	Take up of learning opportunities Level of comfort/ enthusiasm in trying new courses
Decisions made about next steps	Choice re learning opportunities Take up learning

2. Putting skills and knowledge into practice

outcomes	indicators
Increased knowledge and skills	Assessment of skills before and after Qualification awarded
Put skills and knowledge into practice	Level of confidence Uptake of volunteering opportunities Able to take on new things Applying for jobs Applying for further courses/qualifications Level of engagement with others Planning for the future
Qualifications and/or experience	The qualification Work placement Volunteer experience Progress to higher or other education
Increased pride in self	They tell us Level of interaction with others Ability/willingness to move on Level of assertiveness Personal presentation
More work ready	Level of communication skills Appropriate CV Level of team working Appropriate behaviours Level of understanding of the labour market: how realistic Level of motivation Level of preparedness for interviews Level of ability to use variety of job search strategies

3. Learning how to learn

outcomes	indicators
Learn how to learn	Awareness of what helps and hinders learning Level of confidence Learner identity Level of motivation Challenge to tutoring approach

Increased motivation	Participate in the learning process Learner persistence
Increased confidence	Ability to cope with course content Level of comfort/enthusiasm in the learning process Participate in the learning process

4. Community integration

outcomes	indicators
Increased social contacts and networking	Groups belonged to Sources of support Friends at the learning centre Awareness of/using other facilities Volunteering or giving support to others
Improved understanding of other cultures/communities	Having friends from different backgrounds Awareness of/using other facilities that are non-traditional for that learner Giving support to others from a wider back-ground Number of sources of support from other backgrounds
Integration between groups and communities	Make up of groups using learning centre People taking part in community groups activities or events Awareness of/using other facilities that are non-traditional for that learner Having friends from different backgrounds Giving support to others from a wider back-ground Number of sources of support from other backgrounds
Volunteer to support others	Volunteering or giving support to others

Appendix 2

Quality frameworks containing outcomes and indicators for measuring the impact of adult learning

<p>National Performance Framework²⁶ (Scottish Government, first published 2007, evolving)</p>	<p>The overarching quality framework for measuring the impact of public services in Scotland.</p> <p>Scotland's National Performance Framework is focused on the "Purpose" of creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all to flourish through increasing sustainable economic growth.</p> <p>Progress towards the Purpose is tracked measured against:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 Purpose Targets²⁷ • 16 National Outcomes²⁸, and • 50 National Indicators²⁹ <p>Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs) are the contracts between Scottish Government and local authorities. They are developed by Community Planning Partnerships and describe in detail how partners will work together to meet the Outcomes in the National Performance Framework</p> <p>The latest round of SOAs are available online³⁰.</p>	<p>National Performance Framework</p> <p>The original Explaining the Difference pilot project identified alignment between the programmes they were evaluating and the National Outcomes (at the time of the project there were only 15 National Outcomes).</p> <p>Participants recognised a particularly strong fit to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcome 2: <i>We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people.</i> • Outcome 3: <i>We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation.</i> • Outcome 7: <i>We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society.</i> • Outcome 11: <i>We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others.</i> <p>The webpage containing all the National Outcomes provides information that will help organisations to identify which are</p>
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²⁶ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Performance/scotPerforms>

²⁷ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Performance/scotPerforms/purpose>

²⁸ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Performance/scotPerforms/outcome>

²⁹ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Performance/scotPerforms/indicator>

³⁰ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/PublicServiceReform/CP/finalsoas>

	<p>The organisation <u>Generations Working Together</u>³¹ has worked with its partners to develop guidance for evidencing the impact of intergenerational practice in the context of national and regional policy. This guidance, <i><u>Guidelines: Bringing Together Local Authorities and Intergenerational Practice in a Scottish Policy Context</u></i>³², identifies possible outcomes for young people, older people and communities in the context of the strategic objectives of the National Performance Framework.</p>	<p>relevant to refer to in evaluations of programmes.</p> <p>SOAs</p> <p>SOAs tend to measure outputs rather than outcomes, for example referring to the number of courses on offer, or target numbers of learners.</p> <p>However, it can be useful to identify references in SOAs</p>
<p><u>PQASSO Quality Mark</u>³³ Charities Evaluation Service (since 1997)</p>	<p>A UK-wide organisational quality standard developed by the Charities Evaluation Services.</p> <p>PQASSO (Practical Quality Assurance System for Small Organisations) can be used by all types of third sector organisations, including charities, social enterprises, community interest companies and community groups. It is appropriate for organisations of all sizes, from those with a handful of employees to over 2,000 employees. It has been used by over 14,000 organisations.</p>	<p>PQASSO is built on 12 topics or quality areas. These are the building blocks an organisation needs in order to be able to operate to a high standard. They are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning 2. Governance 3. Leadership and management 4. User-centred service 5. Managing people 6. Learning and development 7. Managing money 8. Managing resources 9. Communications and promotion 10. Working with others 11. Monitoring and evaluation 12. Results

³¹ <http://generationsworkingtogether.org>

³² <http://generationsworkingtogether.org/resources/guidelines-bringing-together-local-authorities-and-intergenerational-practice-in-a-scottish-policy-context>

³³ <http://www.ces-vol.org.uk/PQASSO/index>

		<p>PQASSO breaks down each topic into three levels. This enables organisations to assess how well they are doing and plan a clear path for development in each area.</p> <p>PQASSO may be used in a variety of ways, including as an organisational healthcheck or to help guide organisational development and growth. Organisations implement PQASSO by assessing themselves against standards and indicators using evidence to support judgements made. PQASSO also offers an external accreditation: the PQASSO Quality Mark.</p>
<p><u>Investing in Volunteers Standard</u>³⁴ Investing in Volunteers</p>	<p>Investing in Volunteers (IiV) is the UK quality standard for all organisations which involve volunteers in their work.</p> <p>Over 750 organisations have achieved this quality accreditation throughout the UK, ranging from small community groups that are totally volunteer-led to large national multi branch charities that have thousands of volunteers.</p> <p>In Scotland the Standard is managed by <u>Volunteer Scotland</u>³⁵.</p>	<p>The standard consists of nine indicators that organisations must meet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is an expressed commitment to the involvement of volunteers, and recognition throughout the organisation that volunteering is a two-way process which benefits volunteers and the organisation 2. The organisation commits appropriate resources to working with all volunteers, such as money, management, staff time and materials 3. The organisation is open to involving volunteers who reflect the diversity of the local community and actively seeks to do this in accordance with its stated aims. 4. The organisation develops appropriate roles for volunteers in line with its aims and objectives, which are of value to the volunteers 5. The organisation is committed to ensuring that, as far as

³⁴ <http://iiv.investinginvolunteers.org.uk/inyourcountry/iiv-scotland>

³⁵ <http://www.vds.org.uk>

		<p>possible, volunteers are protected from physical, financial and emotional harm arising from volunteering</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">6. The organisation is committed to using fair, efficient and consistent recruitment procedures for all potential volunteers7. Clear procedures are put into action for introducing new volunteers to their role, the organisation, its work, policies, practices and relevant personnel8. The organisation takes account of the varying support and supervision needs of volunteers9. The whole organisation is aware of the need to give volunteers recognition
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