



Developing a Framework to Evidence the Outcomes of Learning Funded Through the Adult Education Budget in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority

Report of Phase 1

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1 Introduction and context

1.1 Background to the project

Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) aims to develop a framework to evidence the wider outcomes of learning funded through the Adult Education Budget (AEB). The proposed framework will introduce a consistent approach for education and training providers to collect and report evidence on the wider outcomes of learning. The resulting data will provide insights into the impact of AEB-funded learning, and thereby strengthen understanding across CPCA of the ways in which the AEB supports delivery of its wider strategic priorities.

It is intended that the framework will be developed in a way that involves all key stakeholders, is open and transparent, and allows time for critical reflection and review.

In September 2023, CPCA commissioned us to undertake phase one of the project. This aimed to:

- identify scope and strategic context
- reviewing existing approaches and models
- understand stakeholder perspectives and priorities
- identify implications for the development, testing and initial implementation of a framework in phase two.

It is intended that the framework will be ready for use by AEB-funded providers in September 2024.

1.2 Methodology and terminology

Our approach consisted of:

- a rapid review of published and grey literature and regional data;
- development of a briefing for interviewees;
- semi-structured interviews with AEB-funded providers and regional and national stakeholders;
- analysis and reporting.

Our analysis identified three themes that are explored in sections 2-4 of this report:

- Purposes and priorities for outcomes measurement
- Current approaches to outcomes measurement
- Developing systems for outcomes measurement

It should be noted that the focus of this report is on the wider outcomes of learning (i.e. not those that relate solely to learning outcomes from specific course).

1.3 Adult education in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

Our review of strategic and analytical documents published by CPCA shows the authority is well-positioned to take forward the proposed work. In defining its strategic objectives in relation to skills and learning, CPCA has sought to link priorities, intended outcomes, and approaches to measurement and to articulate the purpose of AEB-funded learning.

The *Combined Authority Business Plan 2022-23*¹ envisages an integrated education and skills system, within which AEB will act as a 'skills escalator' to enable people to upskill and reskill across the lifecourse. Prioritisation of funding is based on skills levels and/or spatial disadvantage. The AEB is identified as contributing to a number of wider outcomes, including improving health and reducing inequalities. Measures for success under the health and skills theme are the percentage of the working population with a level three qualification; and the number of adults obtaining new qualifications funded by the AEB. As such, they are proxy measures for the wider outcomes of learning.

The *Economic Growth Strategy*² identifies overlaps between various key regional strategies. Improved skills are linked to the CPCA Employment and Skills Strategy; the CPCA Work and Health Strategy; and Anglia Ruskin University and University of Cambridge strategies. Lifelong and lifewide strategic thinking is also evident in the *Employment and Skills Strategy 2022*³. Under the theme 'Lifewide learning and training', short-term priorities include 'ensuring inclusion in continued and community learning and support for disadvantaged people.' Longer term 'outcomes' are:

- *People are drivers of their own learning and work journey, making informed decisions about training, development and experience.*
- *People are equipped with the soft and technical skills to respond to opportunities and plan clear pathways. People can access and navigate an agile and responsive skills system to upskill and reskill throughout their careers.*

(Employment and Skills Strategy 2022)

The strategy states that 'providers are outcomes driven, progressing learners into and between jobs with the skills that employers need.' Interestingly, the document references the 'six capitals' approach (as referenced in the Levelling Up White Paper)⁴ to economic development as one being adopted across CPCA.

CPCA's annual devolved AEB is currently around £12 million. AEB is split between Adult Skills, Community Learning and Adult Learner Support (ALS). The overall budget increased by over 40 per cent in the three years from 2019/20 to 2021/22. Over the same period:

- Adult Skills funding increased from £6.36 to £8.6 million, with learner numbers increasing from 6,954 to 8,269.
- Community Learning funding increased from £977,000 to £1.9 million, with an increase in learner numbers from 1,763 to 2,059.

The current mix of funding and provision reflects CPCA's intention since devolution to rebalance how AEB is used and align it with regional skills needs as articulated by employers. Prior to the devolution of AEB (2018/19), 43 per cent of learning aims were for Community Learning, with most being for personal interest learning and perceived as having little relevance to developing skills for

¹ <https://cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/documents/key-documents/business-plan/current-business-plan/7.1-Appendix-1-Business-Plan-2022-23-revised.pdf>

² <https://cambridgeshirepeterboroughcagov.cmis.uk.com>

³ https://cambridgeshirepeterborough-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/documents/Strategies/skills-strategy/EMPLOYMENT-SKILLS-STRATEGY_final.pdf

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-the-united-kingdom/levelling-up-the-united-kingdom-executive-summary>

work.⁵ Rebalancing aims to achieve an 80/20 split between Adult Skills and Community Learning, recognising that:

*There is certainly value in Community Learning, particularly in supporting health, wellbeing and community connection and a role for public funding for Community Learning in the overall mix of provision.*⁶

Under devolution, all AEB-funded providers are required to collect learners' self-reported destinations and work has been initiated to develop a consistent destination tracking system for the sub-region.⁷ In addition, the Skills Advisory Panel (SAP) states that:

*We will expect all providers to capture the wider outcomes of learning, such as mental health and wellbeing, in-work progression, confidence and self-esteem and community connection.*⁸

1.4 The wider strategic context and scope

Understanding and measuring the wider outcomes of adult learning has attracted considerable interest and effort on the part of policy-makers, providers and researchers over the past quarter-century⁹, both in the UK and internationally. Underpinning this attention has been concern to demonstrate the value to the public purse of funding adult learning, with the central thesis being that adult learning acts as a kind of enabler which helps to secure a host of wider social outcomes for the individual learner, and benefits for wider society, which go far beyond the subject-specific skills, knowledge and understanding gained from taking part in learning.

In England, increasingly constrained public funding and more recently the devolution of the AEB to some local areas have acted as powerful drivers for a focus on the wider outcomes of adult learning. Across the board there has been a strong sense of the sector's needing to 'make its case', accompanied by concern that funding decisions are often being made by those who have little background knowledge and understanding of adult learning in practice. Over the past decade, calls have repeatedly been made for a national outcomes framework for adult learning,¹⁰ although this has yet to be realised. More emphasis is being placed on measuring outcomes at local level and working with providers to develop and implement approaches to data collection which facilitate this. At the same time, for devolved areas, capturing and demonstrating the difference that participation in adult learning makes for individuals also contributes to the more general imperative to show the effectiveness of place-based solutions in securing prosperity for residents and local economies. AEB represents a substantial proportion of devolved funding, and consequently demonstrating its value is integral to showing the benefits of devolution per se.

⁵ CPCA Business Board (2022) Adult Education Budget – Delivery Outcomes and Impact.

⁶ CPCA Business Board (2022) Adult Education Budget – Delivery Outcomes and Impact.

⁷ CPCA Business Board (2022) Adult Education Budget – Delivery Outcomes and Impact.

⁸ CPCA Skills Advisory Panel (2022) *Local Skills Report 2022*

⁹ Centre for Research into the Wider Benefits of Learning established 1999. NIACE (2012) [Valuing the Impact of Adult Learning](#); BIS (2012) [Review and Update of Research into the Wider Benefits of Adult Learning](#); IER (2017) [Adult Education: important for health and wellbeing](#); L&W (2017) [Healthy, Wealthy and Wise: the impact of adult learning across the UK](#). Government Office for Science (2017) *What are the Wider Benefits of Learning Across the Life Course?*.

¹⁰ See e.g. NIACE (2013) [Wider Outcomes Planning and Capture Tool](#); L&W (2019) *Development of an Outcome Measures Framework for AEB*; L&W (2019) [Social Metrics: measuring the outcomes of non-accredited learning](#).

At the institutional level, impetus has been given to capturing the wider outcomes of learning by the wider policy and funding context. Practical support for adult learning providers has come via development work undertaken by NIACE / Learning & Work Institute and sector representative bodies.¹¹ Service providers, particularly in the third sector, are increasingly interested in analysing the wider outcomes of their work against institutional objectives and mission. There are common approaches (such as logic chain / theory of change models) and measurement techniques (such as sampling and routine data analysis).¹²

In adult learning, work on measuring the outcomes has overwhelmingly focused on provision that does not lead to a qualification.¹³ In this sense, it is narrower in scope than many of the impact studies which look at the wider benefits to society, and which generally encompass vocational and other qualification-bearing types of learning. The focus on non-accredited learning (also known as community learning, non-regulated learning, non-formal learning, and now set to be rebranded again in England as 'tailored learning'¹⁴) reflects its specific perceived vulnerability in the absence of a simple, objective 'measure' to show that it has generated a meaningful and socially valuable outcome.

The relative importance of the purpose of the activity was explored further in the stakeholder interviews. However, the main point to take away from our analysis of scope and strategic context is that *outcomes measurement is a shared endeavour crucial to the success of commissioners, providers and the communities they both serve.*

2 Purposes and priorities

2.1 Seven purposes of Community Learning

As noted above, the scope of outcomes measurement has focused largely on non-accredited learning. Accredited learning's outputs (its accreditation) have been treated as a meaningful proxy for the outcomes that learning leads to. This has been a reasonable assumption, particularly at a societal level, where correlations have been made between formal educational attainment and outcomes like health, likelihood to vote, or earn higher wages.¹⁵

However, as commissioners (and learners, where they contribute fees) fund non-accredited learning, some form of measurement beyond learner satisfaction is regarded as useful. For two decades, learning outcomes for non-accredited learning have been measured by an approach called RARPA (Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement¹⁶). RARPA is a 'staged

¹¹ NIACE (2013) [Wider Outcomes Planning and Capture Tool](#); L&W (2019) [Development of an Outcome Measures Framework for AEB](#); L&W (2019) [Social Metrics: measuring the outcomes of non-accredited learning](#); G. Jones (2019) An outcomes framework for adult education (slide deck).

¹² We analysed twenty impact frameworks developed by organisations across the fields of education, health, and arts/cultural sectors.

¹³ BeLL (2011) [Benefits of Lifelong Learning: BeLL survey results](#); NIACE (2013) [Wider Outcomes Planning and Capture Tool](#); BIS (2014) [Community Learning Learner Survey: Wave 2 Report](#); L&W (2016) [Measuring the Outcomes of Non-Regulated Learning](#); L&W (2019) [Social Metrics: measuring the outcomes of non-accredited learning](#).

¹⁴ DfE (2023) [Skills for jobs: implementing a new further education funding and accountability system. Government consultation response](#)

¹⁵ See (for example) UNESCO, UIL (2016), *Third Global Report on Adult Learning and Education*.

¹⁶ Although adopted by the government's funding agency in 2004, RARPA has been a requirement since 2009 via the ILR. The approach was updated in 2017 by L&W in consultation with providers. See <https://learningandwork.org.uk/resources/research-and-reports/rarpa/>

process' that stresses the importance of learners *recognising* their own progress as an end in itself. The process of *recording* allows learners to quantify distance travelled on course (attainment) or at the end of the course (achievement). As RARPA operates at the course level, achievements can be both specific (the ability to read a text in French) and generic (the ability to work in a team).

In order to better identify these commonalities, from academic year (AY) 2023/24¹⁷, national funders have identified seven 'purposes of learning'.¹⁸ Here, the concept of 'purpose' is closely aligned to two interrelated aspects: *motivation* (why a learner is doing a course) and *intended outcome* (what a learner hopes to gain from a course). For some learners, these might be the same thing. But it is also worth noting that the motivation for being involved in learning might be process-based. If a learner joins an activity called 'Build A Community Garden', the motivation might be to be involved in the activity, or meet new people, learn horticultural skills, or indeed all three.

Here the collective purpose of a learning activity includes as number of individual purposes:

- *I want to make new friends.*
- *I want to get involved in a community project.*
- *I want to gain new skills.*

In some MCA areas, where the focus has been on activity for economically inactive adults, such provision has been designed to develop other skills such as 'resilience'. Few individuals (outside a therapeutic setting) will say 'I want to be more resilient', and are therefore unlikely to sign up for a 'resilience course'. And yet such courses are on offer with a direct link between the institutional (and commissioned) purpose of the learning and the course title. The advantage of this approach means if someone completes a resilience course they are 'more resilient'; in other words, the course and its learning outcomes become a proxy for the wider outcome (greater resilience).

Seven Purposes of Learning	
1.	Engaging and/or building confidence
2.	Preparation for further learning
3.	Preparation for employment
4.	Improving essential skills including English, ESOL, Maths and Digital
5.	Equipping parents/carers to support children's learning
6.	Health and well-being
7.	Developing stronger communities

DfE / ESFA 2023/24

¹⁷ Academic Year (AY) 2023/24 runs from 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024.

¹⁸ Derived from ESFA's national statement of Community Learning objectives.

In AY 2023/24 providers can assign a purpose at course level. From AY 2024/25, providers will be expected to do this at the level of individual learners, reflecting the learner’s intentions in taking the course.

These purposes can also be thought of as the intended outcomes of learning. Therefore also from AY 24/25, it is planned that a new field will be added to the ILR which enable providers to record at the end of a course the primary outcome reported by the learner. For example, under Health and Wellbeing (purpose #6), there could be mental health and physical health options. The outcome categories are currently being finalised and ILR specification will be released in early 2024.

(Central Government interviewee)

Some work has been done on linking the ‘seven purposes’ with the wider outcomes of learning though the ‘archway model,’ (see Figure 1 below) as developed extensively by Gerald Jones, for HOLEX, a national network of adult education providers:

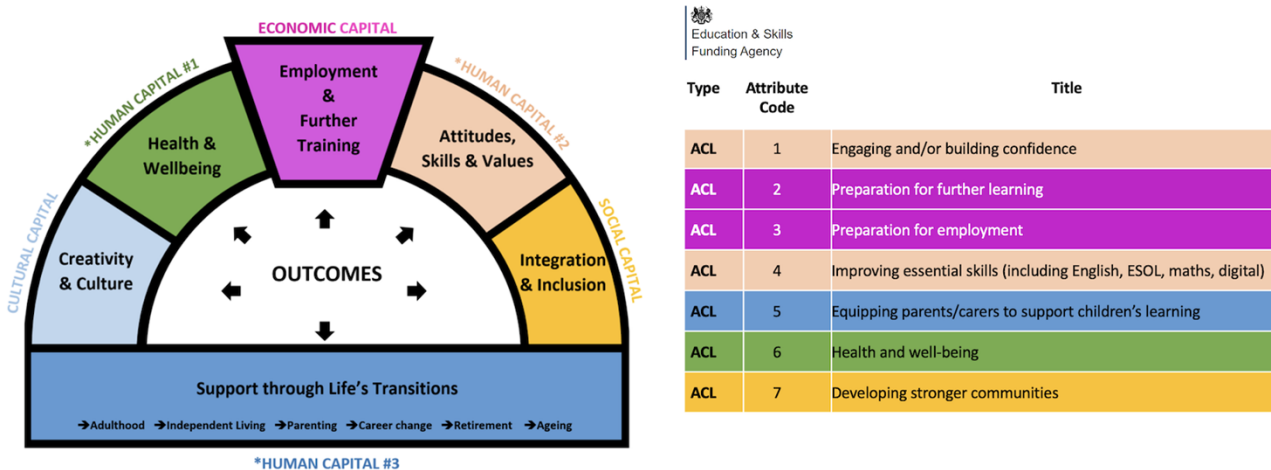


Figure 1: ‘Archway’ model linking the wider outcomes and seven purposes of adult learning (Gerald Jones, Presentation to HOLEX, 2023)

2.2 National and sub-national priorities

The development of outcomes measurement is linked closely to how funding is prioritised, which differs at national and sub-national levels.

Although the DfE’s approach to developing the seven purposes and their measurement has involved representation from MCAs, single local authorities and sector representative bodies (such as HOLEX), it provides a baseline rather than a comprehensive system. The aim has been to ensure some alignment between national and sub-national approaches, acknowledging the common use of the ILR as a tool for recording purposes, and other datasets. (It also provides some opportunity for national benchmarking, although that should perhaps be treated with caution.). However, the work has also acknowledged that MCAs may develop different approaches.

The ILR changes will coincide with the introduction of the Adult Skills Fund and the new category ‘Tailored Learning’ to replace Community Learning as non-regulated, non-formula funded provision. Under Tailored Learning, ESFA-funded providers will be expected to prioritise funding for learning that leads to an employment or further learning

outcome and will not be able to fund any learning that is undertaken purely for personal enjoyment. Devo areas don't have to follow this requirement.

(Central Government interviewee)

Despite their staff being involved in national development work, interviewees acknowledged that sub-national, regional and local priorities are often divergent. This is unsurprising given that a central principle of localism is addressing local needs more effectively:

What you want for your residents?

(Local Authority interviewee)

One local authority interviewee told us when their service is developing its curriculum, every course has to link to one of the [council's] strategic ambitions.

We want colleges and community education providers to work with a focus on people as a whole. This means building individuals' cultural capital and social capital.

(MCA interviewee)

One aspect of this, discussed by MCA interviewees, has been the move towards 'single pot' funding in AY 25/26.

Collecting good evidence on the wider outcomes of adult learning has the potential to give commissioners confidence that AEB is helping to deliver on some of their policy priorities. The focus should be on collecting data at a high level, to show the benefits of a broad and inclusive learning offer.

(National stakeholder interviewee)

In preparation for 'single pot' funding, one MCA told us it was rewriting its strategy, 'based on the outcomes, [and] the impact that we want to have'.

The [MCA's] outcome framework will be aligned with the strategy. The implementation period will start between September 2024 and July 2025 through accountability agreements and accountability statements, with full implementation from when single pot starts [September 2025].

(MCA interviewee)

Whether it's at national, sub-national or provider level, when priorities change so will intended outcomes and their measurement.

2.3 Design Principles

Recent work (2019) on developing an outcomes framework for the Adult Education Budget has paid attention to practical considerations around implementation.¹⁹ The research drew attention to the need to balance the collection of robust data with the capacity of providers and learners to engage with the process. In this instance, provider capacity was described as having (or lacking) both the

¹⁹ L&W (2019) *Development of an Outcome Measures Framework for AEB: interim report*; Jones (2019) An outcomes framework for adult education, presentation to the England Impact Forum.

skills and resources to implement data collection. Meanwhile for learners, the risk of disengagement in the face of onerous demands for data was stated to be a real concern, particularly where learners have not been involved in defining the outcomes to be measured, so view them as neither meaningful nor relevant. In addition, it is recognised that data collection methods may serve to exclude or disadvantage some learners (for example those for whom English is a second language).

In response to these concerns, some key principles were proposed for outcomes and measures used within a framework to ensure 'relevance, robustness and feasibility':

- **Aligned** with AEB priorities and with wider regional strategies, as well with as employers' needs and learners' motivations.
- **Simplified**, whilst reflecting a range of outcomes beyond employment.
- **Realistic**, and achievable for learners and providers.
- **Validated** in order to deliver robust, accurate results.
- **Timed** according to when outcomes are expected, this may require the introduction of lags between completion and measurement.
- **Comparable**. For many outcomes, it is essential to have a baseline figure in order to track learners' outcomes in relation to their starting points, and more widely, to inform judgements about the performance of AEB provision over time.²⁰

More recently, L&W's work for Greater London Authority on social metrics suggested that it is feasible for providers to capture evidence to measure wider outcomes. However, there are a number of challenges that it is important to acknowledge in principle.

There isn't a neat, linear progression from participation in a certain type of learning to securing certain outcomes. The picture is more multi-faceted and non-linear.

(National stakeholder interviewee)

The principle here—one we shall return to later in this report—is that **providers need support** in the implementation of area-based outcomes measurement. This was borne out in interviews with AEB providers in the CPCA area. Providers supported the principle of the CPCA supporting providers to strengthen outcomes measurement and develop a consistent model. One aspect of consistency was across regions as some providers access funding across MCA boundaries.

If there is work going on across combined authorities to develop an approach, the aim should be to implement something that is sufficiently flexible to be applicable in different regions... [and] the question set should be generic enough that it can be applied without changing it over time, so that comparable data is collected and trends can be analysed.

(CPCA provider interviewee)

²⁰L&W (2019) *Development of an Outcome Measures Framework for AEB*

The principle of having **comparable data** was also raised by interviewees working in or with MCAs. For example, one MCA is looking at using regional benchmarks linked to Office for National Statistics (ONS) data.

[We] have developed 'heat map' and [are] currently conducting a piece of research around digital inclusion penetration [skills and access to devices] for voluntary community sector organisations. This will be linked to the outcomes framework, in terms of the building stronger communities that are more inclusive. These are tangible benefits that don't necessarily need a [national] benchmark other than our own participation in contrast with the rate of exclusion in the city.

(MCA interviewee)

Another principle raised in the stakeholder interviews was that outcomes measurement has to link to the planning process.

There has been a noticeable shift to a more closely scrutinising approach around how AEB is used under the MCA ... with detailed delivery plans being signed off, whereas ESFA was fairly light touch.

(CPCA provider interviewee)

2.4 Outcomes, skills and causality

As with the 'archway' model presented in section 2.2 above, the evidence review provided examples of how outcomes are described visually. This is not solely a case of presentation; it raises some important issues as to how outcomes have relationship with each other.

The work of UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning helped to develop understanding of the ways in which the outcomes of learning overlap, intersect and reinforce one another, with outcomes experienced in one domain contributing to and strengthening those in another. So, for example, a learner may experience a positive outcome in terms of improved mental health which in turn facilitates progression into employment. In its *Third Global Report of Adult Learning and Education*, UIL (2016) presented three 'overlapping' outcome domains:

- Health and wellbeing
- Employment and Labour Market
- Civic and community

Consistent with academic research in his area, outcomes were described as 'benefits', a value-laden term that suggests that all outcomes in education are positive for all concerned:

Education can act as a kind of ballast or insurance, offering people a better chance of security in a changing world or rescuing them from difficulties; but it also can dispel certainties and accentuate feelings of insecurity.

(Tom Schuller, 'Studying Benefits'.)²¹

²¹ Schuller, T. et al. (2004). *The Benefits of Learning: the impact of education on health, family life and social capital*. Routledge, London.

The research also stresses that benefits accrue for both individuals and communities although possibly in different ways. Commissioners need to consider where their intervention will have maximum positive benefits. In doing so, the evidence firmly states that benefits interconnect (for example health and economic benefits accrue simultaneously), something that is interesting to forms of governance that do not operate in traditional funding silos.

Both the range of frameworks reviewed and the research into outcomes indicate that it is helpful, and indeed necessary, to distinguish between the following types of outcomes:

- **Wider outcomes** which are specific, measurable changes experienced by an individual in an area of life (improved mental wellbeing; progression into work; increased civic participation.)
- **'Enablers'** or **'mediators'** which are personal attributes that may contribute towards the achievement of wider outcomes (increased self-efficacy; increased personal confidence; increased motivation.)
- **Learning outcomes** which are specific outcomes related to a course or curriculum area and indicate knowledge or competence in that area.

Clearly, treating generalised enablers as wider outcomes, as some outcomes frameworks do, is unhelpful and essentially unmeasurable in any meaningful way. As the NIACE *Catching Confidence Tool* emphasises, attributes such as confidence are highly context specific for every individual (someone may be very confident in one area of life or even to perform a specific action, but not confident in some other respects). Therefore, if enablers are to be used within an outcomes framework, they must be tethered to a context, (e.g. increased motivation to look for work or increased confidence to support children's learning). Including these kinds of outcomes can be helpful, as it reflects the reality that learners are all on different journeys with different starting points and makes it possible to capture a range of outcomes along a chain, such as:

more confident to look for work > progressed into work > progressed to a better job

A frequency analysis of Local Skills Improvement Plans showed a common focus on 'transferable skills'. Other work has looked at 'transversal' (European Union)²² or 'fusion' skills, but the debate goes beyond semantics. Some policy-makers are said to dislike 'transferable' as it suggests vocational skills can be transferred between industrial sectors. However, most employers use 'transferable' to refer to what could also be referred to 'underpinning' skills (such as communication, team working) which indeed might have specific vocational applications.

*I still hold that fusion skills is critical for Community Learning to local economies.
Transferable skills is the area we are pushing forward [on].*

(Local Authority interviewee)

If transferable skills are a common priority for employers (alongside specific vocational competences), it begs the question what type of provision develops these skills most effectively and

²² TRANS-VAL, EU. (2021) *Validation of Transversal Skills across Europe*. See http://www.transvalproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/D2.1_State-of-the-Art-Report_EN_public.pdf

efficiently. If adults already in the workplace (in sustainable jobs) are deemed to already have these skills, the priority (for employers) is attracting new employees to fill skills shortages.

Many employers for so-called foundation economy jobs (for example in food retail) do not require applicants to state qualifications (as a proxy for any skills accrued through education); the focus is the skills demonstrated in interview (online or face-to-face) in terms of communication and attitudes (as tested by contextual statements such as ‘what would you do [in this situation]?’). The setting in which those demonstrable skills were gained is not relevant in such instances. Thus outcomes are decoupled from the educational process.

The literature also explores the concept of ‘causality’, stressing that large national and international studies often work on the basis of making correlations between education and wider outcomes. Interviewees also pointed out issues of attribution in their approaches (explored in section 3 below). The ‘multi-dimensional’ nature of understanding the benefits of learning requires building a ‘conceptual framework’ to help establish clearer links between the learning that is commissioned and the outcome achieved²³.

3 Current approaches

3.1 Using individual learner data

There seems to be a consensus that there needs to be some kind of national approach for at least some data gathering. The key element for DfE is the Individual Learner Record (ILR). The ILR depends on providers collecting data to populate an ‘outcomes field’. Providers do this through conversations with learners that take place as part of existing processes such as RARPA or individual learning plans (ILP).

Although the ILR data won’t produce a particularly rich picture, it will cover all learners and provide a national picture. It can be used for benchmarking [assuming data accuracy]. If data collection is coupled with funding, [it] incentivises certain responses and not externally verified or moderated].

(Central Government interviewee)

Initially providers will only be able to select one purpose. (Although this may be extended in the future.) DfE’s focus currently is on implementing a method which establishes a clear link between funding and impact. It is thought ‘data would be less clear if [providers] could select multiple purposes.’

While the national focus has been increasingly on developing new standardised tools, the literature also stresses that wider outcomes measurement should not rely on these alone. It is noted that providers are already likely to be collecting some relevant data, and enhanced collection of progression and destination data in particular can be combined with new approaches to help produce a rounded picture.²⁴

²³ Schuller et al (2004) *ibid*.

²⁴ L&W (2019) *Development of an Outcome Measures Framework for AEB*; G. Jones (2019) *An outcomes framework for adult education* (slide deck).

The evidence also suggests that much of the work to measure / evidence the wider outcomes of learning at provider level currently takes place through Individual Learning Plans (ILPs).²⁵ ILPs are specific to individual providers and are created in-house, often with the involvement of learners and tutors, and support learners to reflect on their learning throughout their course and record the difference that it makes for them. When used effectively, ILPs not only provide a record of learning, but also actively support the learning process by encouraging reflection and building motivation. Research suggests that providers have developed and expanded their ILPs in recent years to include direct questions about the wider outcomes of learning that they have experienced.

This was borne out in the interviews with providers, who described how ILPs are used along case studies to inform the quality cycle and provide a source of intelligence to inform curriculum planning and development. Likewise recent changes to the ILR to capture intentions and outcomes against the seven purposes of learning will provide another source of intelligence.

[The service] has taken the decision to assign the intended purposes at learner level rather than course level for this year, so conversations with learners using that methodology are already being implemented.

(Local Authority interviewee)

Some provider interviewees stressed that such an approach required data management to adapt management information systems (MIS) accept learner-level data. More broadly, the effective use of provider-level MIS is seen as critical to reliable data gathering. Some interviewees talked about the increased burden of data gathering and analysis to undertake new approaches. Several stressed the need for additional resource and support to undertake the work, even at course level.

The journey starts when the course lands into the MIS, and the teacher starts the course and the teacher has recorded the intent. That intent is then 'translated' as the main outcome or main goal of that of that course. The learner marks where they are at the beginning of the course the learner then marks where they are at the end of the course. And then that ends up being an outcome achieved or not achieved that is then recorded into the ILR.

... it has to be a simple system

(Local Authority interviewee)

Alongside the 'numbers' provided by data collection, some interviewees stressed the importance of collecting learner 'stories'.

Case studies and individual learner stories – e.g. regional Festival of Learning awards – [help] capture the more complex picture around multiple and unintended outcomes and the life-changing difference that learning can make. This may be particularly valuable for local government who want to be able to show powerful stories to elected members and others.

(National stakeholder interviewee)

Even an MCA that is developing an authority-wide outcomes framework is utilising this data as part of its planned approach.

²⁵ L&W (2016) *Measuring the Outcomes of Non-regulated learning*.

Implementation will be based, in part at least, on destinations data in the ILR. We have specific fields that now include links to the outcomes framework, for example, health and wellbeing is going to be measured against the four measurements of wellbeing of the Office for National Statistics (sense of accomplishment, a sense of happiness etc.) to map local measurements from ONS. In turn, the outcomes framework has been mapped against the seven purposes of tailored learning. Purpose is defined as the 'intent' of the course.

(MCA interviewee)

In the above example, it was stressed that this approach was 'fully consulted upon' with providers.

3.2 Using learner destinations data

Interviewees stressed the importance of progression and destinations data, to provide a robust picture around progression to accredited learning and employment. One MCA has been looking at developing the ILR to capture sector of employment to see whether there was a link to priority business sectors.

Destinations capture is recognised as being a significant burden for providers and very few organisations have nailed it without putting in substantial resource. Putting some resource in to support and develop destinations capture via the survey could be a key area for action by commissioners, and combined authorities are very well placed to do this in an efficient way. Feels like everyone would accept the robustness of data from this kind of activity.

(National stakeholder interviewee)

For all providers interviewed, destinations tracking has been a key focus of their work to collect outcomes, particularly of accredited programmes. Some keep the work in-house, other have out-sourced to an independent organisation using tools like WhatsApp, followed by telephone calls. One provider used its student portal to keep in touch with students—access is available for a year after course completion—and collect destinations data.

The findings are used to drill down into the value of each programme / course in supporting students to positive outcomes, and to inform curriculum planning cycle... On the whole, we find that doing the destinations tracking in house means we get much better data.

(CPCA provider interviewee)

Generally speaking, the collection of sustained destination data (more than six months after course completion) is more challenging and inefficient for providers. Consequently, it is recognised there is a risk that destinations data becomes short term, particularly for certain cohorts.

The [provider] only starts collecting destinations 6-9 months after the student has completed their course. This is because they want to try and ensure that they are getting data on genuine destinations, not intentions or stop-gap activities.

(CPCA provider interviewee)

3.3 Surveys

Another method for exploring learner destinations (among other outcomes) is a centrally-administered learner survey. Recently this approach is currently being employed by the Greater

London Authority.²⁶ Learner surveys collect valid individual perceptions of the difference that learning has made in their lives. The range of questions asked, and their commonalities, presents some opportunities for benchmarking. Some critics have said that surveys present a 'subjective' view of impact but others have refuted this, arguing individual views are important and easily attributable²⁷. However, such surveys have to be carefully designed and administered to reflect the principles outlined above, with attention paid to aspects such as staging ('before' and 'after') and the construction of questions.

Learner surveys such as the current London Learner Survey and the national Community Learning Learner Survey (carried out 2011-14) have used a market research model in which the survey is independently conducted and delivered by a commercial market research organisation. However, there is no assumption in the literature that this model should be adopted, and indeed provider-administered surveys have also been used.²⁸

The development work for the London Learner Survey (LLS) was undertaken by Learning and Work Institute based on their extensive work on wider outcomes measurement. It is interesting that the GLA adopted a survey approach rather than use social metrics. This could be a question of resource, as the approaches are not mutably incompatible.

While there has been some criticism of LLS methodology, it marks a significant step forward from what providers typically collect. It collects pre- and post-course data, and by repeating the exercise each year, it provides a baseline from which to build up a comparative picture over time. For example, after three years, [the LLS] could take average measures from the findings and use this as a benchmark against which providers could assess their own performance.

(National stakeholder interviewee)

Some providers use their own survey tools. These tend to be less reliable (in terms of sampling methods, construction of questions etc) than those administered by professional research organisations. However, they are often regarded as having greater validity in terms of the areas of inquiry and their relevance to the organisation's mission. One provider, in another MCA, has developed an Impact Framework where a survey of past and present learners is a key tool, alongside other methods. To enable some form of benchmarking, the survey is based on statements a range of statements in national and international survey databases. In order to reduce the burden on learners, nine statements were chosen by focus groups of past and present learners.

One CPCA provider interviewed uses an annual survey, which is carried out by market research company on their behalf. Questions in the survey are informed by looking at what has been used elsewhere (e.g. for the Community Learning Mental Health pilots.) The company contacts all learners from previous academic year to ask about outcomes of their course. The response rate is around 60 per cent, which provides a comprehensive picture.

Data from surveys helps with developing and structuring the curriculum - understanding what provision adds value for learners; what need is; where improvements are needed, etc. The real value of the approach is apparent after it's been done for a few years and [we]

²⁶ GLA (2023) [London Learner Survey 2021/22: Headline findings](#)

²⁷ Sen, A. (1999). *Commodities and Capabilities*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi.

²⁸ BeLL (2011) [Benefits of Lifelong Learning: BeLL survey results](#)

begin to collect comparable data. It is helpful in a local authority context [in] providing data to report to members about... how the work is contributing to wider strategic priorities.

(Local Authority interviewee)

At the commissioner level, surveys also provide the opportunity to collect data from individuals who have not participated in learning and look at commissioning some research which would start to develop a counterfactual (what would happen if we did not commission adult learning). This is particularly important in terms of the move towards 'single pot' funding. Some national surveys provide benchmarkable data on motivation to learn (or not) based on sampled participation surveys such as those commissioned by NIACE / Learning and Work Institute for over two decades. Other MCAs are also looking at the viability of using census and other population wide survey data.

Our role in the system setting the rules and using surveys. We are considering running a survey centrally, where we can ask [more detailed] questions. Some providers do this at their level and get rich data. In essence, this will be qualitative, but with scale it becomes quantitative too.

We need help developing the right questions. And the logistics of doing surveys sometime after the learner has left. Also [there are] concerns over staffing capacity, the cost for providers or the MCA.

(MCA interviewee)

3.4 Other approaches

The use of standardised evidence-based tools to measure the wider outcomes of adult learning has attracted some attention in recent years.²⁹ These tools are appealing because they have been designed and tested to ensure that they are valid (i.e. they measure what they claim to measure) and reliable (i.e. that they produce consistent results). Three such tools were used across the Community Learning Mental Health Pilots,³⁰ and a wider range have been tested by providers in other development work.³¹

Providers' experiences of using these tools suggest that it is possible to deploy them successfully to capture useful data, but careful consideration needs to be given to the relevance and inherent suitability of the content of the tools selected. Successful approaches balance provider capacity to implement the tool effectively and resource required to do so.³² It has been argued that social metrics should be introduced only where necessary.³³ As noted above, selected questions from some tools have been included in learner surveys.³⁴ However, it is important to note that using individual items from evidence-based tools diminishes somewhat the quality of the data collected.

²⁹ L&W (2016) Measuring the Outcomes of Non-Regulated Learning; L&W (2019) [Social Metrics: measuring the outcomes of non-accredited learning](#); Department for Education (2018) [Community Learning Mental Health Research Project: Phase 2 evaluation report](#).

³⁰ Department for Education (2018) [Community Learning Mental Health Research Project: Phase 2 evaluation report](#).

³¹ L&W (2019) [Social Metrics: measuring the outcomes of non-accredited learning](#)

³² L&W (2019) [Social Metrics: measuring the outcomes of non-accredited learning](#); Department for Education (2018) [Community Learning Mental Health Research Project: Phase 2 evaluation report](#).

³³ Gerald Jones (2019) An outcomes framework for adult education, presentation to the England Impact Forum.

³⁴ GLA (2023) [London Learner Survey 2021/22: Headline findings](#).

Community learning provider representative bodies (LEAFEA and HOLEX) have undertaken considerable theoretical work on outcomes measurement for the sector. The focus to date has been in bringing together evidence sources to enable consistent approaches using common headings. However some providers have successfully trialled the approach and how they link with national data collection sources such as the ILR. At national and regional levels, such outcomes-based approaches are at a developmental phase. These developments are explored further in section 4 of this report.

Another interesting approach—one that is being used within the CPCA area—is the use of digital badges. Microcredentials like a digital badges are sometimes thought of as merely another form of accreditation. However they also provide the opportunity for learners to reflect on and record the wider outcomes of their learning, such as health and wellbeing. Some large local employers such as Cambridge City Council have pledged to recognise digital badges.³⁵ This approach has a lot of credence nationally as part of the RSA's Cities of Learning initiative.³⁶

4 Developing systems

Both the evidence review and the stakeholder interviews provided a number of indicators of how systems are being developed to measure outcomes. We have collated these under three main headings:

- Impact frameworks
- Outcomes frameworks
- Stakeholder engagement

4.1 Impact frameworks

There has been an increasing interest in recent years—particularly within the third sector—of measuring their impact through an impact framework approach. Across all sectors, there is a growing interest in organisations looking at their impact in areas for which they are *not* funded, linked to their charitable purpose. Our analysis of twenty impact frameworks across a range of sectors (health, education, childcare, the arts) has shown most utilise a logic chain approach that looks at how outcomes lead to impact. Impact frameworks commonly bring together a range of approaches to measurement that includes the use of 'naturally occurring data' (that organisations collect anyway) and the interrogation of specific questions through user surveys and focus groups. Impact measurement needs to be long-term, comparative, robust, and user-friendly.

Research for one MCA provider which has developed its own impact framework states: 'outputs and outcomes are only part of the journey; they have to be situated within an impact framework.' Providers have to make a choice as to whether to develop their own framework or adapt an existing one for their own purpose.³⁷ Other work has focused on 'spheres of impact' which analyses the

³⁵ See <https://regionoflearning.co.uk/>

³⁶ <https://www.thersa.org/design-for-life-our-mission/hubs/cities-of-learning/our-cities-and-regions/cambridgeshire-and-peterborough>

³⁷ See: <https://blog.submittable.com/measure-social-impact/>

'reach' a learning intervention makes.³⁸ This is presented in terms of concentric circles that is also useful when thinking about respective roles in impact measurement.

Conceptualising 'spheres of impact' also raises an issue highlighted by some interviewees: attribution, or the extent to which a learning provider can claim an outcome. As we have seen, the issue of attribution is less contentious when looking at 'learning outcomes' directly linked to a programme of study. For wider outcomes—such as better wellbeing—a number of factors could be at play. Large population studies rely on a process of correlation that isolates the educational from other factors (such as poverty or environment). However such rigour is arguably harder to apply on smaller cohorts, where learners might report a negative wider 'outcome' (poor health or wellbeing) unrelated to the course.

Attribution is a key issue that needs to be considered. Even if you've got an appropriate tool and you are fairly confident you can measure the outcome, to what extent is achieving the outcome within providers' power? In reality, it's likely that learning will at best make a contribution. There is no point in holding providers to account for something that is completely outside their control.

(National stakeholder interviewee)

One useful aspect of the impact framework approach is the use of 'theory of change' logic models³⁹. This helps organisations think about the difference between outputs, outcomes and the impact they enable (over time). A range of tools can be used to analyse change that has occurred under each category; the framework is what brings it all together.

Impact frameworks are used more at the institutional level rather than by commissioners. One MCA provider has recently had their draft impact framework approved by its governing body. The framework, which is being designed to be a companion document to the strategic plan, is clear about the change it wants to achieve for its learners (and their communities). At its centre is the 'sustainable global citizen', who is enabled by positive impact in three domains: health and wellbeing; good work; community and civic engagement. The document also defines what it means by certain 'key terms':

'Impact,' according to the Oxford English Dictionary, is 'a marked effect or influence'.... Impact is achieved by our students with our support. ...

The impact data we collect aims to be:

- *meaningful to students, funders and the communities we serve.*
- *sustainable, having a lasting effect on people and places.*
- *achievable by students and communities themselves with our support.*

...'impact measurement' is:

³⁸ <https://www.teachingframework.com/framework/spheresofimpact/>

³⁹ See L&W (2015) *Measuring the Impact of Peer Volunteering*: <https://learningandwork.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Measuring-the-impact-of-peer-volunteering.pdf>

- *long-term: for sustainability, we shall continue to engage with students after leaving [the provider]*
- *comparative: to address the issue of attribution, we shall use a counterfactual model.*
- *robust: we shall use a variety of measurements to ensure scale and the ability to check findings.*
- *user-friendly: so our students and other stakeholders find it appropriate and proportionate.*

(MCA provider interviewee)

Other key issues in the design of provider-based impact frameworks ensuring that learners and staff are consulted when putting together processes and measurement tools. In this instance the provider ran focus groups of curriculum staff, past and present learners, and presented a session via video to the governing body. This allowed stakeholders to be involved in choice of the 'impact domains' and the 'outcome measures' within each one. As this provider is commissioned by an MCA, the framework includes how data is collected for external partners. In this it establishes clear roles and responsibilities for data collecting and reporting within the provider. This includes a 'menu' of twelve key data sources including a learner survey. Going forward, the provider is looking to working with its MCA as the commissioning body develops its own outcomes framework:

Providers need a menu of options and resource to cover development and ongoing sustainability. [There needs to be] space for providers to express their own aims. We all can't do all of it.

(MCA provider interviewee)

4.2 Outcomes frameworks

Outcomes frameworks which have been developed to date for use within adult learning vary considerably in their scope, structure and complexity. The extensive work undertaken by the sector to create common approaches makes a clear distinction between outcomes and impact:

Educational outcomes are the result of planned learning interventions... Providers have control over these and so have control over the outcomes but not the impact [which is] (...beyond the horizon)

(Jones, G. Presentation to LEAFA 2019)

The usual approach to framework development has been to identify a number of headline outcome domains or categories, and within each of these domains to define a range of specific outcomes that might be experienced and reported by individual learners.⁴⁰ Informing the construction of these frameworks is the wider body of research into both outcomes and impact, which sheds light on the areas of life where adult learning makes a difference.

Perhaps not surprisingly, this underpinning evidence base means that although the individual frameworks that have been developed differ, they cover remarkably similar themes. Moreover,

⁴⁰ UNESCO, UIL (2016) *ibid.*

thanks to several national and international studies and development initiatives,⁴¹ there is a general awareness that the outcomes of adult learning can be categorised within three overlapping domains (as noted in section 2.4 above):

- Health and wellbeing.
- Employment and the labour market.
- Civic and community.

The wording may differ slightly between frameworks—for instance, the LEAFEA work uses ‘inclusion and integration’ for the third domain above—but there is a consensus around this approach. Based on well-embedded work in Lewisham Council’s adult learning provision, the LEAFEA outcomes framework has been extended to six domains. The additional areas are:

- Creativity and culture
- Attitudes, aptitudes, and character
- Skills for life transitions.

Lewisham articulated specific outcomes within each domain that in turn led to a way of measuring each of these. A systematic approach to measurement allowed this provider to map appropriate measures against each domain. The argument for additional outcome domains is made compellingly. For example:

Creativity and cultural outcomes... are products and projects through which people represent their world view, express themselves, shape and create their culture, act as cultural producers as well as consumers.

(Jones, G. Presentation to LEAFEA 2019)

Interestingly, the other two domains could be regarded closer to the concept of ‘mediators’⁴² that enable the achievement of outcomes. Other national experts counsel MCAs to choose and define outcomes carefully.

Identify one or two key wider social outcomes with really good measurement tools available and measure those well, rather than attempting to capture everything. This was the conclusion that GLA came to. They selected health and volunteering which were identified as having good policy traction and also have robust measurement tools available. This has been incorporated into the London Learner Survey.

(National stakeholder interviewee)

Social integration is regarded as a workable outcome to measure. It is likely to be of interest to MCAs that want to look at place-making. In 2018 L&W did a randomised control trial which looked

⁴¹ *Healthy, Wealthy and Wise: impact of adult learning across the UK* (2017):

<https://learningandwork.org.uk/resources/research-and-reports/healthy-wealthy-and-wise-the-impact-of-adult-learning-across-the-uk/>

⁴² Hammond, C (2004). ‘The Impacts of Learning on well-being, mental health and effective coping’. in Schuller et al (2004) *ibid*.

at the outcomes of community-based language provision, including social integration. This study used a range of measures based on some well-established metrics.⁴³

Recent work undertaken by another MCA has led to the development of a draft Outcomes Framework that was shared with us. It is another example of a comprehensive and well-researched piece of policy development. At its heart is the concept that social outcomes underpin economic outcomes. Based on the well-established and respected 'capitals' model:

It is through the development of the cultural capital and social capital that transferable skills and technical skills flourish, thereby achieving social outcomes, giving people access to civic engagement, and also ultimately to economic engagement [with] the employment market, which leads to the economic outcomes. Therefore, it's important that social outcomes are recorded in in in any piece of learning.

(MCA provider interviewee)

The ambition is that all MCA adult learning programmes (formula funded, regulated qualifications, community learning etc) will have a social outcome recorded.

The whole thing needs to be connected. We cannot allow community learning or tailored learning to live in a separate world.

(MCA provider interviewee)

The approach of this MCA is based on a 'logic chain model' described as:

Intent... inputs... outputs... outcomes... impact

(MCA presentation to providers, 2023)

Each of these stages has several worked examples as a means of illustration. Intent is based on the 'areas of focus' identified in strategic documents. Although this document is not currently in the public domain it provides a good exemplar of clear strategic thinking and a means of sharing this with stakeholders.

4.3 Engaging stakeholders

Stakeholder engagement is a key element in the development in impact and outcomes frameworks. For example the International Institute for Environment and Development has developed a Learning Impact Framework (LIF) as a principal accountability mechanism with funders, as well as a key point of reference for partners, trustees and staff. To this end, the role of various stakeholders is presented diagrammatically as part of the logic chain approach.⁴⁴

⁴³ DHCLG (2018) *Evaluation of Community-Based Language Provision*, see:

<https://learningandwork.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Process-evaluation-of-CBEL.pdf>

⁴⁴ See <https://www.iied.org/our-theory-change> LIF includes recognition that social change comes from a combination of multiple / interrelated factors. Therefore the LIF requires a range of measurement approaches. One of these is 'Outcome Harvesting', which doesn't 'measure progress towards predetermined objectives or outcomes, but collects evidence of what has changed and, working backwards, determines whether and how an intervention contributed to these changes.' This seen as effective in areas where cause and effect are not easily prescribed and addresses unintended outcomes.

Provider engagement was a common theme in the stakeholder interviews. This is not just seen as 'consultative'. One argument is that it enables better measures and better *measuring*. One mentioned that a provider in CPCA is already doing a learner survey.

A risk to collecting good data is that providers are lukewarm, and this manifests in their not engaging tutors and learners with the process. Tutors have a key role to play in 'selling' engagement with the data collection process to their learners – giving them positive messages about it and encouraging them to take part when they are contacted by the researchers. If a survey is available to complete online, could allocate a suitable amount of time at the end of a class in which learners are encouraged to complete it. However, key is that tutors have an enabling rather than an administering role, to maintain neutrality of the data collection.

(National stakeholder interviewee)

CPCA will need to develop an approach to engaging providers on any outcomes measurement activities it decided to implement. This includes not only building providers' understanding of the value and benefits, but also practically working to ensure that providers have consistent approaches in place to promote participation in outcomes measurement activities to staff and learners. Provider engagement will need to include e.g. a clear explanation of why the work is taking place that is relevant to tutors / learners, expectations around data collection; and reassurances around confidentiality and anonymity. Providers interviewed expressed concern about the potential administrative burden of new data collection requirements. For some stakeholders, an outcomes framework could introduce efficiencies in clearly assigning roles and responsibilities for data collection and analysis.

Others stressed the importance of learner involvement, such as getting feedback from learners on the detail of potential approaches to be used (e.g. *How would you feel about being asked these questions? What would encourage you to answer?*) Some providers are regarded as over-protective of learners and are reluctant to ask questions that are perceived to be sensitive. The reason for asking the question should be clearly explained to learners, and there is an evident chain of connection between the course and the outcome that is being measured. This reinforces the importance of selecting a small number of key outcomes, which reduces the risk of questions being perceived as invasive. Some learners need support to take part in surveys and interviews, through English language support for example.

5 Conclusions and Implications for CPCA

Strategy and scope

CPCA is not alone in wishing to explore the wider outcomes of adult learning. It is an area that has been well-researched across the UK and internationally. While much interest and innovation has come from within the area of non-accredited learning, approaches are equally applicable to accredited learning. Indeed the distinction between outputs and outcomes—and between learning outcomes and wider outcomes—reminds us that using accreditation as a proxy for skills gain is not accurate enough to meet employer and community need.

It is clear that CPCA would become an outlier if it did not take forward this work. However, how it achieves it aims provides a number of options. One approach would be to adopt a similar framework that is being developed in other MCAs. Another would be to take a staged approach,

initially restricting the scope of the work to non-accredited learning while the framework is trialled in AY2024/25.

Purposes and principles

Thinking about intention is critical for the development of outcomes frameworks. The recent seven purposes of 'tailored learning' is indicative of commissioners attempting to define the change they wish to achieve. At least one other MCA has adopted a logic chain approach that starts with intent before looking at the inputs that lead to outputs and outcomes. One of the key principles here is the alignment with wider strategies.

The implication is that the outcomes selected should be flexible and broad enough to reflect changes to strategy. For this to be achieved there needs to be a clear distinction between learning and wider outcomes. Some definitions need to be tightened up so we are clear what we mean by 'transferable', 'transversal', and 'fusion' skills or 'mediators'. This is not merely a case of semantics; such definitions influence what we measure, how we measure it, and whether those measures are comparable.

Approaches and systems

There is much to build on in terms of local and national approaches. Most providers have sufficient systems for data management of intention, learning planning, destinations and surveying. It is clear MCAs are well-positioned to add value to this activity. Although providers should be and are doing much of this for their own quality improvement purposes, CPCA could add value by coordinating the approach at the supra-institutional level. This could mean coordinating a learner survey that removes this burden for providers. There were clear messages in the desk research and fieldwork that roles and responsibilities need to be defined.

A key learning point from work in another MCA is that an outcomes framework should be 'owned' by stakeholders, therefore it should be consulted upon. Consultation should help to define the process and as well as the precise measures and metrics that are used. The framework should consider the creation of a space for learners to reflect on the wider outcomes and their learning and their next steps.

All of the above has implications for workforce development for leaders, managers, management information staff, tutors and commissioners. An outcomes framework—similar to a strategy document—will require an accompanying workforce plan.

6 Recommendations

Based on the evidence collected and analysed for this scoping study, we make the following four recommendations. These are intended to inform CPCA's decisions on next steps in the development of a framework for measuring the outcomes of learning undertaken through devolved AEB.

Recommendation 1: A CPCA outcome framework should align with national work

One key element of current work on outcomes measurement in adult learning is the ILR. The use of the new 'purposes' for tailored learning and the recording of learning outcomes (for accredited and non-accredited provision) has the potential to provide useful benchmarks. Likewise there is much to

be learned from the work in development from other MCAs. To this end, CPCA should seek to establish an external reference group for phase 2 of the project.

Recommendation 2: Stakeholders should be engaged at an early stage of the process

Within CPCA there is already significant expertise in measuring the outcomes of adult learning. There is much to build on. An internal working group should be convened to oversee phase 2 of the project. Specific responsibilities would include: definition of outcomes and measures, possible metrics and responsibilities for data collection, analysis and reporting. Stakeholder engagement should include roundtables with providers and focus groups with learners (past, present and future).

Recommendation 3: A small number of outcome domains should be assigned

CPCA should adopt the three domains (health, work, and community) commonly used in the research literature to enable more precise measures and benchmarks. The working group should also monitor other developments, but it is more realistic to start from three domains and expand than otherwise.

Recommendation 4: A logic chain model should be used to develop the framework

A logic chain approach will establish a clear link between CPCA strategy, the work commissioned (inputs), its outputs, and outcomes. The measures will be based on the three outcomes domains outlined in Recommendation 3 above. The model should be extended to assign clear roles, responsibilities and timescales for data collection, analysis and reporting.

