

IMPACT REPORT 2022-2023

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INTRODUCTION

Times are tough for many. A cost-of-living crisis coming after a decade of low growth in productivity and the economy has hit those on low incomes the hardest and left many public services struggling. Overall, employment rates remain relatively high, but the UK is the only G7 country to see economic inactivity higher now than pre-pandemic and too many people are in low paid or insecure work.

Our work has highlighted these issues and generated ideas for change. Our Better Work Network showed the impact of expected hikes in energy prices on low-income Londoners and made the case for Government support which came through the Energy Price Guarantee.

We argued the UK should aim for the highest employment rate in the G7, an extra 1.2 million people in work. Our analysis highlighted that there are one million workers missing from the workforce compared to pre-pandemic trends, with gender and class differences in the main causes of this. That helped to inform the Government's response to rising economic inactivity.

We showed the UK continues to underinvest in skills. In England, government investment will be £1 billion lower in the 2025 than in 2010. We showed that employers are investing 28% less in training per employee than in 2005. We argued for increased public investment in learning to boost growth and opportunity, and a new skills tax credit and reforms to the apprenticeship levy to encourage employers to invest.

Yet we know adults remain interested in learning. Our Adult Participation in Learning Survey showed a continued

recovery in the proportion of adults taking part in learning, driven by self-directed and online learning but with stark inequalities between groups and areas. Our Inspire! awards in Wales and Festival of Learning in England celebrated the achievements of adult learners. And we were delighted to give a special recognition award to adult educators in Ukraine, who continue to support people and their country.

We cover a wide range of policy areas and there are so many ways in which learning and work can make a difference – to individual opportunity, business success, economic growth, health, wellbeing and inclusion and more. But funding for this work is ever tighter.

That makes us even prouder of our work and the difference it continues to make. We are grateful for the hard work and dedication of our excellent team, who have faced the same cost of living pressures as everyone else, and for the expertise and commitment of our trustees.

In the year ahead we will redouble our efforts to make the case for learning and work, build the evidence base, shape policy, and test new ways of working.

**Jeremy Moore, Chair of the Board, and
Stephen Evans, Chief Executive**

OUR MISSION

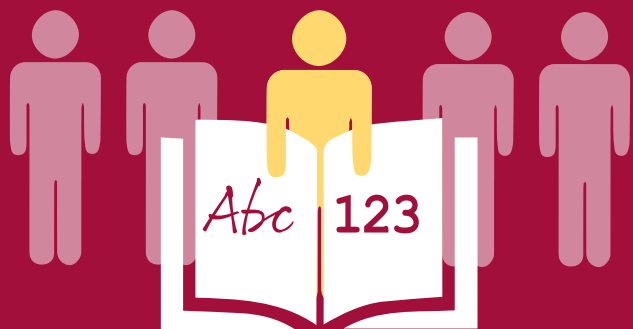
Our vision is for a prosperous and fair society in which learning and work provide opportunities for everyone to realise their potential and ambitions throughout life.

As we recover from the pandemic, we face new, urgent challenges to our society and economy. But there are opportunities to build a stronger future. We should aim for the UK not only to catch up with other comparable countries, but to be world-leading in terms of learning and work. Now is the time to work together to create a skills-led, growing economy, with a healthy workforce, good jobs and learning and opportunities throughout life.

We want to make a difference by: researching what works and making the case for investment; celebrating the best in learning; helping to improve policy through evidence; and testing new approaches to delivering support.



KEY STATISTICS



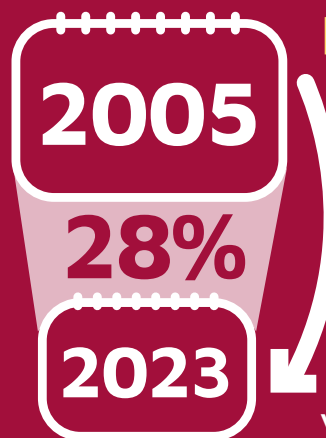
1 in 5 adults
say they are currently learning.

A further 1 in 5 have done some learning within the last 3 years. 3 in 10 adults have not taken part in learning since leaving full-time education.



3 in 5
employers say they need green skills now or in the future.

Most young people say it's important to work for an organisation committed to tackling climate change.



Employer investment in training has dropped 28% since 2005, with graduates 3x more likely to get training at work than non-graduates.

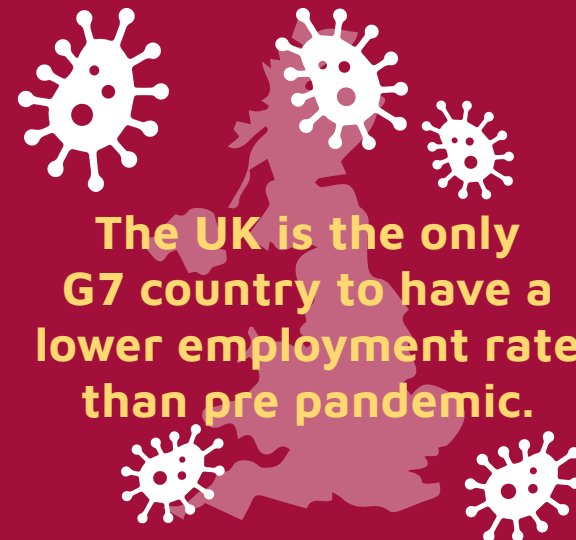


3,000,000
people out of work say they want a job, but support isn't widely available: only 1 in 10 out-of-work disabled and older people get help to find work.



Social Grade is a key predictor of participation in learning.

The top Social Grade (AB) are significantly more likely to say they are current or recent learners compared to other social grades.



There are stark class and gender divides in the economically inactive group.

Better-paid and male-dominated roles account for around 1 in 3 people who took early retirement. By contrast, people from lower-paid, traditionally female-dominated roles, were more likely to give up work for health reasons.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Our work is focused on six themes:



Lifelong learning can help with work, careers – and career change – active citizenship, community connections, and health and wellbeing. We focus on making the case for learning throughout life, and the policy and practice change needed to achieve this.



Employment and social security should ensure that everyone who can work has the chance, and people get support when needed. We focus on exploring the changing nature of work and using evidence to improve opportunities for those often excluded from or disadvantaged in the labour market.



Essential and life skills such as literacy, numeracy, digital and citizenship are gateways to life, work and social inclusion. We focus on developing new ways to engage people and deliver learning that meets the needs of people and communities.



Good work and progression help people achieve a decent income and scope for development, and are important for health and wellbeing. We focus on what works to create better work and supporting progression.



Apprenticeships and technical education can help people improve their career prospects and employers to meet their skills needs. We focus on ensuring they are high quality and accessible, and help to address existing inequalities.



Social justice and inclusion because everyone should have the chance to go as far as their talent and efforts can take them. We focus on better support for those that too often miss out.

SHAPING POLICY


In 2022-23, we have been deepening understanding of what's needed for **social and economic renewal and recovery** following the pandemic. Highlights of our achievements include:

- Influencing thinking on how to increase labour market participation through cross-party working and contributing to the Government's review of economic inactivity.
- Helping to put economic inactivity on the local policy agenda and shaping discussions on skills and employment support through our strategic relationships and research.
- Supporting ten areas with essential skills modelling to inform local Multiply investment plans and two areas with calls for evidence on economic inactivity to inform UKSPF commissioning.
- Securing a commitment to a Charter for Lifelong Learning in Wales and a Citizens' Curriculum for Wales as part of the Minister for Education's programme for a 'second chance nation'.
- Giving evidence to Committees including the Senedd Economy, Trade and Rural Affairs Committee, and the House of Lords Education Committee

In addition, we responded to **inquiries and Government consultations**, and submitted evidence to, and presented at, All-Party Parliamentary Groups including on Youth Employment and on Adult Education.



OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

 **AROUND
900
PIECES OF MEDIA COVERAGE**

for our unique research and analysis, with our commentary of labour market statistics featuring monthly in national news. We received significant national media coverage for our policy research in The Telegraph, The Times, The Mirror, The Financial Times, The Economist, BBC News Channel and GB News.


THE  TIMES  The Economist


Our work has also been featured in sector press including FE Week, FE News, Education Journal, People Management and Local Government Chronicle. We received notable coverage for specific campaigns included our 'Missing workers' report on economic inactivity and our publication on employer investment in skills.

**AROUND
190,000**

page views of our websites in 12 months with spikes around report publications, including the Adult Participation in Learning Survey and events, including Maximising Multiply, Festival of Learning Awards ceremony and Housing, Learning and Work Conference.



 **18,400**
@LearnWorkUK followers
and 56,422 @LearnWorkCymru profile visits

 **14,700**
views with 84,000 minutes of footage watched.
L&W Wales had 190.5k views with 584,000 minutes of footage watched.

 **3,739** page views
Increased followers by 790 in 8 months.
3,739 page views and 1,554 unique visitors.

BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

In November, Andy Street, Mayor of the West Midlands, and Alison McGovern MP, Shadow Minister for Work and Pensions, headlined our Employment and Skills Convention, which was held in person for the first time since 2019 and welcomed 200 delegates. Our annual English, Maths and ESOL conference, delivered online to 300 participants, focussed on adult numeracy and Multiply delivery. We also held private roundtables and a webinar with 250 attendees to support local authorities to help develop their Multiply investment plans. In Wales we held an ESOL Development Day to reflect on the findings of our ESOL review for Welsh Government with over 70 attendees. Finally, our Housing, Learning and Work Conference, held jointly with Communities that Work, attracted around 200 delegates to explore inclusive economic growth, devolution of policy and funding and the transition to a net zero economy.

Between conferences, we held webinars and shorter events to mark the publications of reports and external events. Our senior team shared platforms at events hosted by other organisations.



INSPIRING ADULTS TO LEARN

The Festival of Learning in England and Adult Learners' Week in Wales have celebrated the best in adult learning and inspired people to learn for 30 years, inspiring similar celebrations around the world.

This was a year of firsts as we started to roll out support for regional adult learning awards. We worked with the team at City Hall to deliver the **Mayor of London's inaugural Adult Learning Awards**, with a celebration in October for adult learners and their supporters. In January, together with the West Midlands Combined Authority, we opened nominations for the **first-ever West Midlands Adult Learning Awards**.

In England, **Festival of Learning** was supported by Department for Education (DfE), NOCN, City Lit, the Education and Training Foundation, and Skills and Education Group. Award winner announcements took place in July and were selected from nearly 200 nominations. The **awards ceremony livestream has been viewed more than 1,500 times** and our **Twitter hashtag achieved 420,000 impressions**. Award winner stories received sector press coverage.

Lifelong Learning Week in November featured a range of activities including a **celebration of the arts and learning**, and an **'Employer Takeover Day'** led by **Business in the Community**.

Festival of Learning



Awards ceremony livestream views

1,500

X (Twitter) Impressions

420,000



100+

partners including;



Wales
TUC
Cymru



15,000

people engaged with the campaign



#InspireCymru2022

Inspire! Learning & Tutor awards

414,000

X (Twitter) Impressions

In Wales, **Adult Learners' Week** worked with over 100 partners to provide a mix of 500 online courses, events and community-based outreach and taster activity, and **over 15,000 people engaged with the campaign**. We worked with Welsh Government to promote the campaign and to signpost people to advice and guidance. Our **online platform** hosting course listings, special events, learner stories and links to further information, advice and support **had over 55,131 page views** and our **content generated over 8.5 million impressions on Twitter**.

We held the Inspire! Learning and Tutor awards in October and March respectively with contributions from the **Minister for Education Jeremy Miles** and **John Griffiths MS**. The awards were attended by **180 guests** and **led to 20 pieces of media coverage** with **414k impressions** on our Twitter hashtag #InspireCymru2022



DEVELOPING SOLUTIONS

Valuing lifelong learning

In its 26th year, our annual adult participation in learning survey showed that, after a decade of decline during the 2010s, participation in learning remains back at levels last seen in the early 2000s: around two in five adults (42%) say they have taken part in learning in the last three years. The survey also demonstrates a shift in the number of adults learning independently and informally, with interest sparked during the pandemic and helping to fill the gap as formal and publicly funded learning fell over the previous decade. In January, we launched a multi-year strategic partnership with Ufi VocTech Trust, aiming to use the power of VocTech (Vocational Technology) to increase adult participation in learning. Our wide-ranging work in partnership with Welsh Government has led to increased profile of and access to adult learning opportunities.





Improving literacy, numeracy and life skills

To support providers and local commissioners with Multiply delivery (the new adult numeracy programme), we launched the Multiply Effective Practice Network, attracting over 250 members. We mapped essential skills needs to local level across England, and published research commissioned by the Greater London Authority (GLA) on effective practice in English and maths for adults. Together with HOLEX, we convened the Skills for Life Alliance, to argue for a greater focus and action on adult essential skills in skills policy and practice. Working with the University of South Wales, we reviewed ESOL policy for the Welsh Government, leading to a clear set of recommendations and a development day to take these forward. We continued to grow our ESOL Network in Wales by coordinating professional learning, and helping practitioners to come together with policymakers to understand the challenges facing the sector.

High-quality, accessible apprenticeships and technical education

As a result of our work with JP Morgan on pre-apprenticeships, providers set up new programmes and adapted existing provision to meet the needs of young people who face barriers to work. We continued working with the Strategic Development Network (SDN) to deliver the Government's T-Level employer support programme. We presented our research undertaken on behalf of St Martin's Group to explore the experiences, outcomes and destinations of apprentices who complete their programmes compared to those who do not, at an industry-leaders' event. This has led to further partnership working. We informed the wider roll out of Local Skills Improvement Plans (LSIP) through our partnership with IFF to evaluate DFE's Skills Accelerator Development Fund pilot.





Improving skills and employment opportunities

Our research shows that only one in ten out-of-work 50–64-year-olds and disabled people who want to work get Government support to do so, and we fed this in to the Government's economic inactivity review. We worked with Barking and Dagenham Council to design a new supported employment programme, which is helping people with learning difficulties and mental health needs across the borough to gain vital skills for work. We also delivered employment and skills journey mapping and user needs analysis for the Central London Integration Hub, which will inform employment support for refugees and disabled people across a number of Boroughs. We have continued to work with social landlords who provide employment support, publishing our Building Opportunities report with Institute for Employment Studies and supported by Communities that Work, National Housing Federation and National Federation of ALMOs. We contributed to discussions on Net Zero and jobs for the future in a number of ways, including through our research for WorldSkills UK on young people and technical green skills. We presented the findings of the second wave of the evaluation of the Restart Scheme to DWP, which will inform the design of future employment support. More than 50 people started in jobs or industries that are new to them after receiving support from pilots as part of our flagship programme, New Futures, in Edinburgh, Belfast, Tees Valley and Wales.

Helping people on low pay to progress and build skills

Our Better Work Network – a policy- and practice-based initiative in London and across the UK – increased its membership to over 800. We published a report examining the impacts of the cost of living crisis on low paid workers and held a seminar with GLA. We partnered with Trades Union Congress (TUC) to host a webinar on worker voice and representation in the workplace, and collaborated with the GLA to convene a private roundtable at City Hall with businesses and other stakeholders to explore effective mechanisms for supporting employer investment in skills. We continued to work in partnership with Peabody Trust to produce the Peabody Index, tracking pay and employment for low-paid Londoners.





Improving outcomes for young people

As co-chairs of the Youth Employment Group, we continued to bring stakeholders together to improve support for young people. Building on our partnership with The Prince's Trust, we shone a light on economic inactivity among young people and the high cost of mental health difficulties in holding them back from opportunities. This research has been widely utilised by others, and referenced in Parliament. Our evaluations of the Future Workforce Fund, occupational traineeships and Welsh Government's supported employment pilot has led to more targeted and inclusive support to help young people bridge the gap to employment. We designed a framework for the DfE's Academic Progression Pathway pilot, which is now being trialled across England to support young people into academic learning.

International work

We play an active role in the European Association for the Education of Adults and the European Basic Skills Network (ESBN) and are members of the International Adult Education Association. We shared our work on essential skills screening with over 60 European stakeholders at the EBSN annual conference in Vienna. In the Regional Capacity for Adult Learning and Education (RegALE) project, we organised a two-day study visit at City Lit, focused on advocacy and campaigns, and a webinar on impact measurement and evaluation in adult learning. We acted as the Sector Organising Body for Adult Education for Taith, the Welsh Government's international exchange programme, to European partners, including dedicated sessions with international partners on how to link with organisation in Wales.

OUR FUNDERS

AONTAS

Barking & Dagenham College

Capita Business Services Ltd

Catch22

Central London Forward

Centre for Ageing Better

Colegau Cymru

Department for Education

Department for Work and Pensions

European Commission

Fusion21 Foundation Limited

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NESTA

Nuffield Foundation

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Phoenix Group

South East Strategic Partnership for
Migration

Shaw Trust Limited

The Prince's Trust

The St Martin's Group

Trades Union Congress

Trust for London

Ufi VocTech Trust

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enquiries@learningandwork.org.uk



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