

# Adult Literacies in Scotland: Survey of progress and priorities 2010-2015

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# 1. Introduction

In 2010, the Scottish Government's paper 'Adult Literacies in Scotland 2020: Strategic Guidance' (ALIS 2020), set out the vision that:

*“By 2020 Scotland's society and economy will be stronger because more of its adults are able to read, write and use numbers effectively in order to handle information, communicate with others, express ideas and opinions, make decisions and solve problems, as family members, workers, citizens and lifelong learners.”*

In early 2015, Education Scotland launched a survey to identify what has changed in adult literacies provision in the five years since the introduction of this guidance. The survey was designed to capture progress, as well as establish priorities and identify challenges for the next five years.

The survey launched online on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2015, and closed to new responses on 12<sup>th</sup> May. A total of 228 responses were received and analysed<sup>1</sup>.

Following analysis of responses, key findings and recommendations were established as outlined in this report. Three overarching themes were also identified, these were; increased focus on employability, improved quality of learning and teaching and improved partnerships. Short case studies to illustrate these themes were sought from respondents and from the Adult Literacies Key Contacts group, made up of local authority and voluntary sector representatives across Scotland. Three examples were selected for inclusion within the final report.

## 2. Key findings

Analysis of responses has shown that the picture for adult literacies provision is varied across Scotland, however, it can be characterised by the following strengths and areas for development:

### Strengths

- Overall, adults engaged in literacies learning are achieving well and progressing towards their goals.
- An increased partnership approach in some areas is leading to improved outcomes and better use of shared resources.
- Although overall learner numbers in some areas are decreasing, there is an increased focus on employability and targeting of learners suffering from disadvantage.
- Widespread use of individual learning plans has become embedded in practice to monitor learner progress.
- Overall the quality of learning and teaching has improved or stayed the same where it was already of high quality.

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<sup>1</sup> The questionnaire received 425 responses in total, however, some responses were incomplete and were removed prior to analysis (see 'Profile of respondents').

- The primary focus for adult literacies services is *Improving employability* (74%) and *Improving literacy* (69%).
- Progression pathways for learners are effective in supporting learners to move on but more progression opportunities are needed.

#### Areas for development

- Limited resources/reduced funding is perceived as having a negative impact on the level and range of adult literacies provision.
- Almost half of respondents felt that progression opportunities for literacies tutors are limited.
- Support is needed to raise the profile of adult literacies learning and its impact.
- There is limited evidence of the long term impact of literacies provision.
- Learners are not sufficiently engaged in planning literacies provision and influencing the development and implementation of policy.
- Accessibility was viewed as a priority, to continue to remove barriers and improve access for all learners.
- Strong infrastructure arrangements (staffing and resources in particular) were viewed as key to improving literacies provision in the next five years.

## 3. Detailed findings

#### Profile of respondents

On initial viewing of the survey data it was established that a large number of respondents had not completed all of the questions. In particular, some had only completed the first and/or second question(s). It was agreed that, as they provided no additional answers, they should not be included in the survey analysis. These numbered 190 responses. In addition a number of duplicate submissions were received. These numbered seven. The survey findings are therefore based on 228 responses.

Of these 228 responses, 174 (76%) were received from individuals and 54 (24%) were received on behalf of a group or organisation.

#### Has access to literacies opportunities changed in the last five years? If so how?

When asked if access to literacies opportunities had changed in the last five years, a third (70) of respondents felt that there was '*Improved access for target groups*', although many (57) felt that there were '*Reduced numbers accessing services*' in general. Fewer respondents (45) felt there were '*Increased numbers accessing service.*' Only 29 respondents felt that access to literacy opportunities had '*stayed the same*'.

Twenty seven respondents provided 'other' responses. Over half (14) stated that 'access' had been effected by a reduction in opportunities or resources (funding, staff etc.). Eight respondents were unsure how access had changed, while some (3) felt that there was a change in focus towards English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). Two respondents felt that there was a lack of awareness of opportunities.

When asked why respondents felt that access to literacies opportunities had changed many (86) respondents indicated they felt that this was due to *decreased funding*, while 75 respondents felt it was due to *Improved partnership working*, while others felt it was due to

*Increasingly targeted work (70), Increased awareness (68), Improved referral pathways (64) or Decreased stigma (35).* A small number of respondents (13) felt that it was due to *Increased funding*.

Forty two respondents provided 'other' comments, which showed a variety of diverse responses. Some respondents felt that there was changes due to 'welfare reforms' (6), changes and or *reductions in literacy staffing (5), the effects of council reorganisation (5), the lessening of literacy provision as a priority (3)* , the *short term funding of projects (3), changes in partnership working (2), leadership issues (2) and poor referral pathways (2)*. In addition six respondents were unsure of the reasons.

Overall the responses suggest that although overall learner numbers in some areas are decreasing, there is an increased focus on employability and targeting of learners suffering from disadvantage. Limited resources/reduced funding is perceived as having a negative impact on the level of activity and range of adult literacies provision.

### What is the primary focus for adult literacies services in your area/organisation?

The primary focus for most respondents was *Improving employability (74%) and Improving literacy (69%)*. Over half of respondents have a priority for *Improving numeracy (54%) and Improving use of IT (51%)*.

'Other' priorities were received from 51 respondents. These included *ESOL (10), family learning (9), health and wellbeing (6)*, as well as *increasing confidence (5) and employability skills (3)*. Other respondents stated their priorities were *up-skilling staff (3), providing core skills qualifications (2), ICT (2) and financial inclusion skills (2)*. Three respondents stated that all four of the options stated were their priorities, while two respondents each were unsure or were not offering courses at present.

An illustrative example of an organisation focussing on improving employability through enhanced literacies capabilities is outlined in the following case study.

**Theme: Increased focus on employability  
Illustrative example supplied by  
The Workers Educational Association (WEA)**

**Tesco, Employability Skills in Grangemouth**

When Tesco announced their Grangemouth store was closing in 2014, the WEA offered to support staff to develop their employability skills.

Through discussion with Tesco employees and conducting a learning needs analysis, it was clear that staff were most concerned about lacking ICT and literacy skills related specifically to securing a new job such as completing job applications and developing their CV. Staff also discovered that literacy capabilities and computer skills were essential when liaising with Job Centre Plus.

15 staff attended a series of learning opportunities that helped to build their ICT skills and improve their confidence in literacies. This enabled them to produce a CV and covering letter to use when applying for jobs. In addition, some learners took the opportunity to practice and develop interview skills.

WEA achieved this by providing flexible workplace delivery at times that accommodated shifts and childcare responsibilities which in turn reduced barriers to learning and increased learner participation. A number of learners said that as a result they now had confidence to progress on to other learning opportunities as well as to seek employment.

At the end of this provision, learners were signposted to a range of opportunities offered by partners such as: Community Learning Development, local job clubs and library facilities, where further support could be accessed.

The impact on learners was clear. Learners stated:

*"I feel a lot more confident and the skills I have learned will hopefully help me get a job."*

*"I never knew that job applications were all done on a computer nowadays. This was a wakeup call. Should have done this years ago."*

*"The course being at work made it much easier."*

### How well are learners achieving their goals and progressing?

Respondents were very positive about how learners are achieving and progressing, with the majority of respondents stating that learners were doing *Quite Well* (44%), *Good* (20%) or *Very Well* (16%). Only 13 respondents (6%) felt their learners were doing *Not very well*, while 32 respondents (14%) said they *did not know*.

When asked to explain their answer, 110 respondents provided an additional comment. Respondents felt that learners were progressing well and this could be measured through the use of individual learning plans (17) and that learners were achieving accredited courses/qualifications (11). Only one respondent felt that there were fewer opportunities for accredited courses to be undertaken.

Some respondents (9) felt that progress for learners was affected by the reduction in resources and the reduction in staff numbers, while other learners were hampered by other barriers including learner work commitments/shift patterns, transportation and lack of child care. Eight respondents said that learners had moved onto positive destinations including work, further education and volunteering.

Six respondents felt that there was a mixed progress across their areas, and six felt that learners could achieve more if they received longer or more frequent classes. Respondents stated that they had received positive feedback on progress from learners, and that the motivation of learners was the reason for their achievement. Six respondents also felt that there was an increase in learners' employability skills.

Respondents felt that there was a lack of youth provision/ literacies provision (5), while others felt that learners had learned skills for life (4), confidence skills (4) and that many learners appreciated the support that they had received from staff (4).

Welfare reform had had an impact on learner attendance (3), while tutor awareness of dyslexia (3) had a positive impact on learner achievement. However the lack of progression opportunities (3), ability to reach some target groups (2) and awareness raising for both learners and practitioners were seen as issues (2).

Overall the responses suggest that adults engaged in literacies learning are achieving well and progressing in achieving their goals and that widespread use of individual learning plans has become embedded in practice to monitor learner's progress.

### Has the quality of learning and teaching changed in the last 5 years?

Almost half of respondents (48%) stated they felt that the quality of learning and teaching had *Improved* over the last five years, while 22% felt that it had *Stayed the same*, with only 9% stating that they felt that it had *Reduced in quality*. While 21% were unsure if the quality had changed.

When asked what had made this positive difference, a large number of respondents thought this was due to *CPD opportunities* (36%), *Improved access to qualifications* (33%) or the *Improved quality of learning resources* (32%) and *progression pathways* (23%)

There were additional comments from 85 respondents. A number focussing on the lack of improvement in quality. These comments were extremely varied, however the greatest number (13) felt that a reduction in staff numbers or sufficiently qualified and trained staff or reduced funding and resources (8) was the reason for this decline.

Nine respondents respectively felt that improved quality was due to specific and additional training and CPD or a more focused approach. While others (7) felt different approaches, working with others (4) or access to opportunities (4) had resulted improved quality.

Nine respondents felt there was no difference in quality, another eight were unsure, while a further eight respondents felt unable to answer or had no information. Three provided no comment.

Overall the responses suggest that the quality of learning and teaching has improved or stayed the same where it was already of high quality. Progression pathways, where they exist, for learners are effective in supporting learners to move on but more progression opportunities are needed.

The following illustrative example demonstrates how the quality of learning and teaching in adult literacies in one area has been improved.

**Theme: Improved Quality of Learning & Teaching- illustrative example supplied by East Dunbartonshire Council**

**Development of accredited learning opportunities**

East Dunbartonshire Council's Literacies Support Services improved the quality of learning through becoming an SQA Approved Centre in 2011. Since then, learners have had community based opportunities to gain SQA accredited learning in Core Skills Communications, Core Skills Numeracy and ESOL.

The Literacies Support Services continues to use a person centred approach to delivery. Individual Learning Plans are used to identify what learners wish to learn and enable learners to reflect on their learning at the end of every session. This reflection enables each learner to identify learning strategies and tutors to identify teaching approaches.

The benefits of offering accredited work have included:

- recognition and accreditation of the work already being done by learners
- learners' increased confidence and self-esteem
- a clear focus for learners' work and progression routes
- development of learning skills
- foundation for further learning and personal development
- recognition of SCQF and qualifications by employers and training providers which increases progression routes
- enabling learners to have an easier transition from community learning to Further or Higher Education (as learners have gained study skills through studying for a formal qualification in a non-formal community learning environment)
- improvement in the quality of learning and teaching as staff develop further skills, knowledge and confidence through gaining formal qualifications and the CPD necessary to deliver accredited work.

Through developing accredited opportunities, the quality of teaching has also been improved. This has been achieved through increased support to tutors such as tutor meetings, SQA meetings and Standardisation Meetings. Individual support meetings are also carried out with tutors which helps them identify areas for their own development.

The Literacies Support Services strives to exceed the required SQA standards to identify new and creative ways to enhance the quality of delivery to ensure learners receive the best possible learning opportunities. CPD opportunities and new learning materials are further being developed through partnership networks.

## How effective are the progression pathways for literacies' tutors?

There was a clear divergence around progression pathways for tutors. Almost equal numbers felt that the progression pathways for literacies' tutors were effective, with 50% stating *Quite effective* or *Very effective* (2%), while 40% stated it was *Not very effective* or *Not at all effective* (2%)

As 42% of respondents felt that progression opportunities for literacies tutors are limited it can be concluded that this is a priority area for future development.

## Has Education Scotland contributed to your professional learning?

51% of respondents stating that Education Scotland had contributed to their professional learning while 49% stated they had not. This may well be due to the significant number of people who responded as an individual as opposed to representing an organisation.

Those respondents who stated that Education Scotland had contributed to their personal learning were asked which support had been most useful. Over half felt that *online resources and materials had been beneficial*. Other responses included the following, *Self-evaluation* (48%), the *Inspection Process* (39%), *Events* (38%), *Bulletins* (30%), *i-develop* (30%), *Key Contact meetings* (23%) and *Connect* (23%) were viewed as the next most useful. With lesser numbers for *Direct Local input* (12%), *ILD conference* (11%) and *Glow* (9%).

Eight respondents answered 'Other' and provided varied responses. Most respondents stated support from ES staff and network meetings as helpful. Other respondents (2) cited sharing/promotion of resources through networks, as useful.

## Has the effectiveness of local strategic and delivery partnerships changed?

Most (62%) stated that the effectiveness of local strategic and delivery partnerships had changed while 38% felt that it had not. When asked how they had changed, marginally more respondents felt that *Partnerships are stronger* (36%), while a similar amount felt that *Partnerships have increased shared responsibility* (35%). Slightly fewer respondents felt that *Partnerships were less effective* (29%).

When asked to explain their answer, 78 respondents provided additional remarks.

Most respondents felt that partnerships had improved or were getting stronger (11) or that they were working more closely (8), were more aware of each other (3) or better organised. However two respondents felt they were weaker.

Respondents felt that there was greater sharing of resources (10) and that new partnerships were developing (7), however some partnerships were also dissolving (7).

Again the effect of the lack of specialised staff (3), role changes and losses were highlighted, as were funding cuts (4). Respondents also felt that there was less strategic focus (4).

Three respondents felt that there was a greater shared responsibility in this area while two felt there was a need for greater understanding of practice.

Overall, an increased partnership approach in some areas is leading to improved outcomes and better use of shared resources. The following case study illustrates the impact of increased partnership working in one area.

**Theme: Improved partnership working- illustrative example supplied by Glasgow's Learning Partnership**

**Partnership approach to the development of Dyslexia Awareness and Teaching**

**Background**

In 2012, staff from Education Services (Glasgow Dyslexia Support Services- GDSS) and Vocational Education (Glasgow City Council), identified that there was a need to improve support to learners through sharing good practice in areas of dyslexia awareness. A partnership approach was agreed and a modified 2 hour module of dyslexia awareness raising was produced by GDSS. This was designed to be user friendly for a range of audiences/partners in different roles including managers, supervisors, practitioners etc.

Over, 200 staff in the Council attended these sessions and discussions took place with Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector to widen access to these sessions across the literacies partnership in Glasgow. The three partners (GDSS, Glasgow City Council and GCVS) worked towards a rolling programme of "Working Memory" Sessions that could be rolled out to Literacies Practitioners across the whole partnership.

These sessions attracted in the region of 40 literacies Tutors/Development Workers. They outlined the impact that poor working memory has on literacies learners, but more importantly left participants with ideas and tools to address these issues in real life literacies teaching environments. Following attendance, some Tutors were "up skilled" to deliver the Working Memory Sessions in their sectors thereby building capacity for the future.

**Progress**

Glasgow City Council Literacies Staff continue to deliver Dyslexia Awareness session to staff and have recently made strong links with Human Resources staff to signpost individuals who may be dyslexic to access Council support programmes. This has resulted in staff being referred for professional support via organisations like Remploy Glasgow.

GCVS have continued to include the Working Memory Sessions in their yearly diary of events and are working on revising a "Dyslexia Friendly Practice" Session to be included and rolled out to Tutors and Development Workers partnership wide. GCVS are also promoting and developing ICT and Dyslexia Sessions and have plans to develop Phonological Awareness Sessions. GDSS staff are now in a position to promote the work of the ALN Partnership within Schools to hopefully attract parents to come forward for literacies support.

**Impact**

Although still at an early stage of development, it is clear from evaluation feedback that this work is of great value in influencing how tutors modify and acknowledge the impact dyslexia and working memory on literacies learning. Tutors who attended a brief Focus Group in 2014 highlighted strategies they have used from the these sessions and how this has now been incorporated into their practice. This piece of work continues to grow involving more partners from Local Authority, voluntary sector, Glasgow Life and Glasgow Colleges.

### Have approaches changed to maximise the use of resources within community planning areas, and within and across local authority areas?

Again similar numbers felt that approaches had changed to maximise the use of resources (55%), while others felt they had not (45%) .

Eighty three respondents explained what changes they thought had taken place to maximise the use of resources. Most felt that there was '*greater sharing*' of resources (15) and practice and experience (12). There is also greater partnership coordination (6), collaboration (3), effectiveness (3), meetings (3), understanding (3) and communication (2). There are also great community approaches (5), increased/combined CPD (4), targeting approaches (4), use of library facilities (3) and greater tracking (2)

However some respondents highlighted the loss of resources (5) and staff (4) and restructuring as having a negative impact .

### Has partnership work between businesses, trade unions and literacies learning providers improved?

When asked if they felt that partnership had improved, over half of respondents (57%) did not know, while 28% felt that they had not. Only 15% felt that they had improved.

When asked to explain their answer 81 respondents provided additional comments.

With regard to businesses, some respondents felt that they were difficult to engage (8), while others felt that partnerships had improved (5) and that ESOL in the workplace had developed (3). Two respondents had to end their work with businesses due to the end of funding for the project, while the same number felt that businesses were not aware of the services on offer, while one respondent stated that they had no links with business.

In relation to trade unions some respondents felt that links were good and improving (6), others felt that they had raised awareness of their service through conferences etc. (3), and that unions were committed to supporting work in this area. 3 respondents had no union links.

Respondents also felt that partnerships in general were either developing (3), getting stronger (2) or not improving (2). Five respondents had developed links with other sector (5) had other priorities (4) or had reduced capacity (2).

Fourteen respondents were unsure or were not aware.

### Are learners sufficiently involved in planning and improving local literacies services?

Of the 195 respondents, 62% felt that learners were not sufficiently involved in planning and improving local literacy service.

Again respondents were asked to explain their response and 119 provided additional remarks. Over half of respondents (62) felt that learners were involved in the planning fully (30), involved in their own learning (8), by having a limited input (8) or that learner involvement was a developing area (7). There were also nine other comments relating to specific local examples learner involvement.

A small number of learners are also involved via learner forums that are being developed (9) or are already established (8) – however some have lost this opportunity due to the forum being dissolved.

Ten respondents felt that learners were not involved, while others had barriers to involvement including resources (7), access (2) or due to learners moving on.

35 respondents did not know if learners were involved.<sup>2</sup>

From this lack of knowledge about learner involvement we can conclude that further work is required to enable learners to effectively influence strategy/policy at local levels.

### Where is the impact from literacies learning most apparent?

Respondents were provided with four options as to where literacies learning was having no impact, some impact, moderate impact or the greatest impact. Personal impact was highest closely followed by family and employability. Literacies learning was felt to have least impact on communities.

Answer Options	No or some impact	Moderate or Greatest Impact	Response Count
Personal	38	140	178
Family	53	124	177
Community	96	79	175
Employability	56	121	177
<i>answered question</i>			<b>180</b>

### How have approaches to capturing impact changed over the last 5 years?

Most of the 180 responses stated that there was now greater focus (27) specifically in the areas of learner voice (8), employability (6), skills for life (4), learner achievement (4), family learning (3) and the learner journey (2).

Improved recording and tracking (24) as well as the use of formal qualification (9) and the use of technology systems (8) were improving the capturing of impact data. While a greater awareness of evidence and impact (11), improved evaluation processes (8) and self-evaluation (7) had also developed.

Some respondents (7) were now using a variety of methods to capture impact, five were using case studies to show impact, while others felt for them it was still a work in progress (4).

Lack of resources was highlighted by four respondents as an issue, as was “too many forms” (3) and too great a focus on numbers only and not the wider change (3).

However 35 respondents did not know if approaches had changed, while 15 felt that it had not changed.

### Are these impacts contributing to long term change within communities?

<sup>2</sup> This may be down to the role that these respondents have in literacies provision. Operational delivery staff may be less aware of strategic learner involvement.

The majority (64%) of the 180 respondents were unsure when asked about whether these impacts were having a long term change on the community. 30% felt that there was a contribution to long term change in communities with only 6% feeling that this was not the case.

Responses were received from 82 respondents who explained their answer further. Most respondents (29) felt that impact could be seen on a personal and individual level (10), through increased confidence and raised self-esteem (5), increased volunteering (4), increased numbers access learning (3), increased positive destinations (2) with nine other respondent stating it was having a positive impact generally.

Six respondents felt that it was difficult to measure the impact, while the same number felt that any community impact would be more evident in the longer term.

Again, budget cuts were seen to have an impact on change by four respondents, while two respondents felt there was no change. Twenty respondents stated that they did not know, were unsure or had no information in this area.

From these responses it can be concluded that support is needed to raise the profile of adult literacies learning and its impact as there is limited evidence of the long term impact of literacies provision.

### Adult Learning statement of Ambition

2014 saw the launch of the Adult Learning Statement of Ambition – a national commitment to adult learning of all kinds including adult literacies. The strategic objectives are relevant to adult literacies learning. Respondents were asked to prioritise these objectives. The priorities for respondents were extremely mixed.

Answer Options	1	2	3	4	5	Response Count
Adults access, recognise and participate in learning opportunities throughout all stages, changes and circumstances in their lives.	65	40	30	25	9	169
Adults co-design their learning experiences.	21	40	44	54	10	169
Adults transform their lives and communities through learning choices in personal, work, family and community settings.	47	29	35	44	14	169
Adults effectively influence strategy and policy at local and national levels.	6	15	15	27	106	169
Adults are effectively supported in their learning journeys.	30	45	45	19	30	169
	<i>answered question</i>					<b>169</b>

“Adults access, recognise and participate in learning opportunities throughout all stages, changes and circumstances in their lives” was the highest priority for most respondents (65). Overwhelmingly the lowest priority for most respondents was “Adults effectively influence strategy and policy at local and national levels” Of the 50 ‘organisations’ that answered this question, 33 had this as the lowest priority. From this we can conclude that learners are not sufficiently engaged in planning literacies provision and influencing the development and implementation of policy. This work needs to be prioritised and supported.

## What changes would improve adult learning in Scotland?

Accessibility was felt by 79% of respondents to be the change that would most improve adult learning in Scotland. Infrastructure (59%), Quality (50%) and Impact (37%) would also improve adult learning. Only 1% felt that nothing would make an improvement.

A third of respondents (56) provided an alternative response with over half (35) stating that they required an increase in resourcing, including increased funding (17), resources both to assist in their role and to break down barriers to attendance (15) and increased staffing (3). Six respondents felt that improvements could be made if there was a greater sense of everyone working together and that everyone felt literacies was the responsibility of all. Other respondents (6) felt that greater opportunities to study, the promotion of the value of education/ learning (4) or progression opportunities (3) would create improvements.

Overall it would appear that strong infrastructure arrangements (staffing and resources in particular) were viewed as key to improving literacies provision in the next five years. Accessibility was also viewed as a priority, to continue to remove barriers and improve access for all learners.

## What are the priorities for literacies provision in your area?

Respondents were asked to state their priorities from a choice of 13 possible answers or provide an alternative priority area. The main priorities for 169 respondents were Literacy (84%), Employability (79%) and Numeracy (73%).

The priorities were followed by Digital inclusion (60%), ESOL (54%), Learner involvement / engagement (52%), Improved partnership working (46%), Family learning (44%), Raising Attainment (43%), Financial inclusion (40%), Youth Literacies (39%), Building community capacity (38%) and Health related priorities (31%).

Seventeen respondents provided additional priority areas. These included Social Justice (3), Parental Involvement (2) and two respondents stated that all of the possible answers were priorities. Eleven other respondents provided diverse comments including early years, use of technology, mentoring, increasing confidence, youth empowerment and work based learning.

## What support is needed to implement the changes required to improve adult literacies in Scotland?

When asked what support was needed to implement changes to improve adult literacies over half (79) of 147 respondents to this question said additional resources. Those 79 responses were split over funding (41), resources including improved ICT, facilities, childcare etc. (23) and additional staffing (15).

Respondents (27) would also like to see a greater awareness of adult learning, this included national media coverage similar to the Big Plus adverts (10), generally a greater awareness of what is available and the benefits (9), and a professional awareness (8) of the positive impact of learning by elected members, politicians etc.

Some respondents (13) felt that a greater focus on joint working, partnerships and networks would be beneficial, while others (10) would like to see an increase in training and CPD

provision for practitioners. Recognition of the professionalism and work of literacies staff (8) and reflecting learners needs and listening to the 'leaner voice' (8) would aid improvement.

Other respondents felt that a more strategic approach (7), national commitment and support (6), and easier access to learning (6), a stronger commitment by Education Scotland in this area (5), family learning (2) or new approaches (2) would also be beneficial.

### Further comments

Respondents were asked if there were any other comments they would like to make about any aspect of the survey or ALIS 2020?

Seventy eight respondents provided additional comments when asked if there was anything they would wish to make about ALIS 2020 or any aspect of the survey.

Nine respondents emphasised the impact that reduced funding and budget cuts were having on the service, while seven highlighted a shortage of specialist trained staff with appropriate skills in adult literacies. While six respondents stated that Adult Literacies needs to be a higher priority for Scottish Government and the profile of adult literacy and learning needs to be raised, as well as a greater public awareness of the benefit and requirement for literacy skills (4).

Two respondents each stated that there needs to be a greater range of qualifications or certification in this area for learners and more support for young adults. Two respondents stated they were supportive of the aims of ALIS 2020 and appreciated being ask to contribute to this survey.

Twelve respondents provided feedback on the structure and content of the survey which will be used to inform any further surveys or analysis in this area.

## 4. Recommendations for further consideration

Based on the key findings of this survey, the following areas are proposed for further consideration to help continue to develop adult literacies provision in Scotland.

- **Accessibility:** Further exploration is required to analyse how best to improve access for literacies learners in a time of reduced resources and weakened infrastructure.
- **Learner Voice:** Further consideration is required to ensure learner voice is strong throughout local and national policy and planning. The development of the Statement of Ambition for Adult Learning in Scotland will support this work.
- **Awareness Raising & Profile of Adult Literacies:** There is a clear need to increase the profile of literacies learning and promote the wider benefits through the development of

good quality evidence, demonstrating impact and the continued development of national awareness raising campaigns.

- Professional learning and progression for staff: Although the survey demonstrated that practitioners are, on the whole, well trained to deliver quality learning experiences, further consideration is required to investigate how progression opportunities can be further promoted and developed for adult literacies professionals. The development of the Statement of Ambition for Adult Learning in Scotland will support this work.

## 5. Next steps

These recommendations will be considered in light of the wider policy agenda for adult learning and Scottish Government priorities. They focus on investigating key areas identified within the survey to fully understand what action is required to drive improvement. This will be further explored through discussion with stakeholders and an action plan will be developed for progressing the recommendations that fits with the Adult Learning Statement of Ambition.

## Appendix 1

### Detailed responses to survey questions.

#### Question 3 - Has access to literacies opportunities changed in the last five years? If so how?

Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Stayed the same	12.7%	29
Improved access for target groups	30.7%	70
Increased numbers accessing services	19.7%	45
Reduced numbers accessing services	25.0%	57
Other (please specify)	11.8%	27
<b>answered question</b>		<b>228</b>

#### Question 4 - Why do you think this is this the case? Tick all that apply.

Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Increased funding	5.7%	13
Decreased funding	37.7%	86
Improved referral pathways	28.1%	64
Increasingly targeted work	30.7%	70
Decreased stigma	15.4%	35
Increased awareness	29.8%	68
Improved Partnership working	32.9%	75
Other (please specify)	18.4%	42
<b>answered question</b>		<b>228</b>

#### Question 5 - What is the primary focus for adult literacies services in your area/organisation? Tick all that apply

Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Improving literacy	69%	157
Improving numeracy	54%	122
Improving employability	74%	169
Improving use of IT	51%	117
Other (please specify)	22%	51
<b>answered question</b>		<b>228</b>

#### Question 6 - How well are learners achieving their goals and progressing?

Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Very well	16%	36
Quite well	44%	102
Good	20%	45
Not very well	6%	13
Not at all well	0.0%	0
Don't Know	14%	32
Please explain your answer		110
<b>answered question</b>		<b>228</b>

**Question 7 - Has the quality of learning and teaching changed in the last 5 years?**

Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Improved	48%	103
Stayed the same	22%	46
Reduced in quality	9%	19
Unsure	21%	45
<b>answered question</b>		<b>213</b>

**Question 8 - What has made this difference in your opinion? Please tick all that apply**

Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Improved access to qualifications	33%	71
Better progression pathways	23%	49
CPD opportunities	36%	77
Improved quality of learning resources	32%	68
Other (please specify)	40%	85
<b>answered question</b>		<b>213</b>

**Question 9 - How effective are the progression pathways for literacies' tutors?**

Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Very effective	2%	4
Quite effective	50%	106
Not very effective	40%	85
Not at all effective	8%	18
<b>answered question</b>		<b>213</b>

**Question 10 - Has Education Scotland contributed to your professional learning?**

Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Yes	49%	105
No	51%	108
<b>answered question</b>		<b>213</b>

**Question 11 - Which of these forms of support provided by Education Scotland do you feel have been useful. Tick all that apply.**

Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Inspection Process	39%	41
Self-evaluation	48%	50
Website	51%	53
i-develop	30%	31
Connect	23%	24
Adult Literacies Online	59%	62
Glow	9%	9
Key Contact meetings	23%	24
Events	38%	40
ILD conference	11%	11
Bulletins	30%	31
Direct Local input	12%	13
Other (please specify)	8%	8
<b>answered question</b>		<b>105</b>

**Question 12 - Has the effectiveness of local strategic and delivery partnerships changed?**

Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Yes	62%	131
No	38%	79
<b>answered question</b>		<b>210</b>

**Question 13 - How have partnerships changed?**

Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Partnerships are stronger	36%	46
Partnerships are less effective	29%	38
Partnerships have increased shared responsibility	35%	45
Please explain your answer		79
<b>answered question</b>		<b>129</b>

**Question 14 - Have approaches changed to maximise the use of resources within community planning areas, and within and across local authority areas?**

Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Yes	55%	113
No	44%	94
<b>answered question</b>		<b>207</b>

**Question 16 - Has partnership work between businesses, trade unions and literacies learning providers improved?**

Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Yes	15%	28
No	28%	55
Don't Know	57%	111
Please explain your answer		81
<b>answered question</b>		<b>194</b>

**Question 17 - Are learners sufficiently involved in planning and improving local literacies services?**

Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Yes	38%	74
No	62%	121
Please explain your answer		119
<b>answered question</b>		<b>195</b>

**Question 18 - Where is the impact from literacies learning most apparent?**

Answer Options	No impact	Some Impact	Moderate Impact	Greatest Impact	Response Count
Personal	6	32	21	119	178
Family	9	44	81	43	177
Community	8	88	64	15	175
Employability	5	51	62	59	177
<b>answered question</b>					<b>180</b>

**Question 20 - Are these impacts contributing to long term change within communities?**

Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Yes	30%	54
No	6%	10
Unsure	64%	116
Please explain your answer		82
<b>answered question</b>		<b>180</b>

**Question 21 - 2014 saw the launch of the Adult Learning Statement of Ambition – a national commitment to adult learning of all kinds including adult literacies. Please prioritise these objectives from 1 to 5, where 1 is the highest priority.**

Answer Options	1	2	3	4	5	Response Count
Adults access, recognise and participate in learning opportunities throughout all stages, changes and circumstances in their lives.	65	40	30	25	9	169
Adults co-design their learning experiences.	21	40	44	54	10	169
Adults transform their lives and communities through learning choices in personal, work, family and community settings.	47	29	35	44	14	169
Adults effectively influence strategy and policy at local and national levels.	6	15	15	27	106	169
Adults are effectively supported in their learning journeys.	30	45	45	19	30	169
<b>answered question</b>						<b>169</b>

**Question 22 - What changes would improve adult learning in Scotland? Tick all that apply**

Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Access	79%	133
Quality	50%	85
Infrastructure	59%	100
Impact	37%	63
Nothing	1%	1
Other (please specify)	33%	56
<b>answered question</b>		<b>169</b>

**Question 23 - What are the priorities in your area? Tick all that apply.**

<b>Answer Options</b>	<b>Response Percentage</b>	<b>Response Count</b>
Literacy	84%	142
Numeracy	73%	124
ESOL	54%	92
Digital inclusion	60%	101
Employability	79%	134
Financial inclusion	40%	67
Learner involvement/engagement	52%	88
Family learning	44%	74
Youth Literacies	39%	66
Building community capacity	38%	65
Health related	31%	52
Improve partnership working	46%	77
Raising Attainment	43%	73
Other (please specify)	10%	17
<b><i>answered question</i></b>		<b>169</b>

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