

Development of Learner Outcome Measures for Adult Community Learning¹

Background

The [Delivering Community Learning for Wales policy statement](#) published by the Welsh Government (WG) in November 2010 stated that the Department for Education and Skills (DfES - formerly DCELLS) must “develop consistent performance measures and benchmarking data to help Adult Community Learning (ACL) providers to evaluate learner outcomes”.

To achieve this aim, WG statisticians have been working in collaboration with DfES officials and NIACE Dysgu Cymru in order to develop learner outcome measures for the ACL sector in Wales. This statistical article provides an update on this work and presents a set of preliminary benchmarks for the 2009/10 academic year. We welcome any feedback on the content and scope of this article.

Definition of ACL provision

ACL is defined in *Delivering Community Learning for Wales* as:

“Flexible learning opportunities for adults, delivered in community venues to meet local needs”

For the purposes of this development work, we have focussed on four distinct types of ACL provision:

- 1) learning directly delivered by local authorities (LAs);
- 2) learning delivered by LAs via a franchise arrangement with a further education (FE) institution;
- 3) all provision delivered in Wales by the YMCA Wales Community College and Workers Educational Association (South Wales), and;
- 4) learning delivered in the community by FE institutions.

Data on learners accessing these types of ACL provision across Wales is submitted electronically to DfES by learning providers via the Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR) (further information on the LLWR can be found towards the end of this article).

Date of Publication: 14 July 2011

Next update: Not a regular output

Author: Scott Clifford, Post-16 Education Statistics, Statistical Directorate

E-mail: Post16Ed.Stats@wales.gsi.gov.uk

Telephone: 029 2092 6025

Twitter: www.twitter.com/statisticswales | www.twitter.com/ystadegaucymru

¹ Notes on the use of statistical articles can be found at the end of this document.

Whilst provision types 1, 2 and 3 can be derived relatively easily from LLWR, provision type 4 has proved harder to capture. From 2010/11 onwards, a new value to specifically identify ACL provision has been introduced to LLWR field LP17 (Type of learning programme). However, for 2009/10 we have considered provision delivered away from main FE college sites as an approximation.

Note that provision types 2, 3 and 4 have historically been categorised as 'FE provision' and included in the FE learner outcomes data published annually within the [National Comparators for Further Education and Work-Based Learning Statistical First Release](#).

Measures of performance

Given the existing overlap with the FE section of the National Comparators SFR, the three main FE measures of learner outcomes were adopted as a starting point for the development of ACL benchmarks. These measures are:

- *Learning activity completion*: the proportion of learning activities commenced which are completed;
- *Learning activity attainment*: the proportion of completed learning activities which lead to the attainment of a qualification; and
- *Learning activity success*: the proportion of learning activities commenced which lead to the attainment of a qualification. This combines the measures of completion and attainment.

Consultation and data reconciliation

Representatives from the ACL sector in Wales were informally consulted by NIACE Dysgu Cymru to determine how these measures should be aggregated and presented. These discussions were informed by the results of preliminary analysis produced from the LLWR. The report summarising these discussions and providing further advice to DfES on the implementation of ACL performance measures will shortly be published on the [Quality & Effectiveness pages of the WG website](#).

Whilst these discussions progressed, a process of data-reconciliation was also undertaken. Monthly reconciliation reports detailing provisional learner outcomes figures were produced and issued to local authorities. Data quality issues were then followed up by DfES officials and resolved accordingly.

Preliminary ACL benchmarks for 2009/10

Tables 1 – 3 present completion, attainment and success rates for the ACL sector in 2009/10 split by level and sector subject area.

Table 1 details ACL provision directly delivered by local authorities.

Table 2 details ACL provision delivered by local authorities via a franchise arrangement with a further education institution.

Table 3 details ACL provision delivered in the community (ie. not on a main college campus) by further education institutions. This includes all provision delivered in Wales by the YMCA Wales Community College and Workers Education Association (South Wales).

Note that, given the developmental nature of these statistics, direct comparisons should not be made between the different types of ACL provision.

Issues requiring further investigation

Non assessable learning activities

Learning activities that are deemed to be non-assessable (i.e. do not lead to an associated award) are excluded from the denominators of attainment and success rate calculations. Directly delivered local authority provision has a notably high proportion of such activities (69 per cent of terminated learning activities in 2009/10) compared with local authority provision delivered via a franchise arrangement with an FE institution (11 per cent of terminated learning activities). Further liaison with providers will be undertaken to clarify that provision is being correctly recorded as non-assessable.

Level of learning activities

A significant number of local authority learning activities were recorded with a level of 'Not Known' or 'Not Applicable' on LLWR. In 2009/10, these learning activities have been categorised as 'Other Levels' (see table 1). Further work will be carried out with providers to ensure the consistent use of these codes.

Early drop out

As part of the derivation of FE performance measures, learning activities with an expected duration that ended before 1 November of the academic year in which they commenced without completing are classified as early drop-outs and excluded from calculations.

However, as ACL provision is predominantly comprised of short courses that are not necessarily delivered on an academic year basis, this method was deemed inappropriate for the ACL sector and a decision on the treatment of early drop-outs has been deferred pending further analysis of the underlying LLWR data.

Non-franchised ACL delivered by FE institutions

For the purposes of this article, this provision has been approximated by considering learning delivered away from main college campuses. However, additional analysis to refine this approximation will need to be undertaken. Further to this, preliminary analysis of LLWR field LP17 will need to be produced to ensure that robust data on this type of provision is available for 2010/11.

Next steps

Dissemination of detailed benchmarking data and individual Learner Outcome Reports (LORs) to local authorities	July – August 2011
Review of methodological/data issues impacting upon performance measures	July – August 2011
Dissemination of draft 2010/11 reports to local authorities	September 2011 - February 2012
Production of 2010/11 benchmarks	March 2012
Publication of Statistical First Release detailing ACL learner outcomes for 2010/11	April 2012

Table 1: Indicative completion, Attainment and Success Rates for ACL provision delivered by local authorities, 2009/10

Level	Sector Subject Area	Completion		Attainment		Success	
		Completed Learning Activities	%	Attained & Completed Learning Activities	%	Successful Learning Activities	%
Entry Level	Arts, Media and Publishing	235	97%	80	91%	80	83%
	Information and Communication Technology	325	90%	145	82%	145	70%
	Languages, Literature and Culture	95	91%	5	*	5	*
	Adult Basic Education	20	*	5	*	5	*
	English for Speakers of Other Languages	45	59%	5	*	5	*
	Other	520	90%	190	64%	190	57%
	All	1,240	89%	430	71%	430	63%
Level 1	Arts, Media and Publishing	1,075	90%	780	76%	780	68%
	Information and Communication Technology	1,275	82%	770	62%	770	53%
	Languages, Literature and Culture	315	59%	205	73%	205	41%
	Adult Basic Education	40	48%	30	*	30	*
	English for Speakers of Other Languages	5	*	0	*	0	*
	Other	755	87%	465	77%	465	65%
	All	3,465	82%	2,255	71%	2,255	58%
Level 2	Arts, Media and Publishing	385	92%	275	72%	275	66%
	Information and Communication Technology	520	86%	250	51%	250	45%
	Languages, Literature and Culture	160	67%	50	37%	50	24%
	Adult Basic Education	70	70%	50	89%	50	86%
	English for Speakers of Other Languages	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
	Other	295	84%	205	73%	205	61%
	All	1,435	83%	835	62%	835	53%
Other Levels	Arts, Media and Publishing	8,880	82%	1,945	92%	1,945	79%
	Information and Communication Technology	3,695	88%	700	81%	700	69%
	Languages, Literature and Culture	1,610	74%	235	94%	235	81%
	Adult Basic Education	570	74%	150	60%	150	46%
	English for Speakers of Other Languages	360	93%	185	59%	185	54%
	Other	5,635	83%	1,015	87%	1,015	75%
	All	20,750	83%	4,230	85%	4,230	73%
All Levels	Arts, Media and Publishing	10,570	84%	3,080	85%	3,080	74%
	Information and Communication Technology	5,820	87%	1,865	67%	1,865	58%
	Languages, Literature and Culture	2,175	72%	500	74%	500	49%
	Adult Basic Education	705	71%	240	68%	240	55%
	English for Speakers of Other Languages	410	87%	190	54%	190	50%
	Other	7,205	84%	1,880	80%	1,880	69%
	All	26,880	83%	7,750	76%	7,750	65%

Source: Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR)

Table 2: Completion, Attainment and Success Rates for ACL provision delivered by local authorities via a franchise arrangement with an FE institution, 2009/10

Level	Sector Subject Area	Completion		Attainment		Success	
		Completed Learning Activities	%	Attained & Completed Learning Activities	%	Successful Learning Activities	%
Entry Level	Arts, Media and Publishing	680	91%	355	93%	360	84%
	Information and Communication Technology	780	87%	610	89%	615	78%
	Languages, Literature and Culture	40	*	*	*	*	*
	Adult Basic Education	2,595	86%	1,645	73%	1,650	62%
	English for Speakers of Other Languages	2,185	75%	1,450	85%	1,465	60%
	Other	1,515	88%	880	92%	890	81%
	All	7,795	83%	4,945	83%	4,975	67%
Level 1	Arts, Media and Publishing	1,160	78%	1,060	91%	1,080	74%
	Information and Communication Technology	3,000	88%	2,395	85%	2,415	76%
	Languages, Literature and Culture	970	83%	880	93%	890	78%
	Adult Basic Education	1,450	81%	875	68%	875	56%
	English for Speakers of Other Languages	150	83%	135	89%	140	78%
	Other	2,500	89%	2,080	84%	2,090	76%
	All	9,230	85%	7,420	84%	7,490	73%
Level 2	Arts, Media and Publishing	855	87%	755	88%	760	80%
	Information and Communication Technology	830	89%	605	78%	605	69%
	Languages, Literature and Culture	565	81%	495	89%	500	73%
	Adult Basic Education	365	80%	255	79%	260	62%
	English for Speakers of Other Languages	40	*	35	*	35	*
	Other	1,705	86%	1,455	87%	1,465	75%
	All	4,360	85%	3,600	85%	3,625	74%
Other Levels	Arts, Media and Publishing	185	70%	110	58%	110	46%
	Information and Communication Technology	340	93%	135	75%	140	67%
	Languages, Literature and Culture	175	95%	165	94%	165	89%
	Adult Basic Education	65	94%	45	82%	45	77%
	English for Speakers of Other Languages	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a
	Other	455	83%	385	87%	385	72%
	All	1,220	85%	840	81%	840	69%
All Levels	Arts, Media and Publishing	2,880	83%	2,275	88%	2,310	75%
	Information and Communication Technology	4,955	88%	3,745	84%	3,775	75%
	Languages, Literature and Culture	1,750	83%	1,545	92%	1,555	77%
	Adult Basic Education	4,470	84%	2,820	72%	2,830	60%
	English for Speakers of Other Languages	2,370	75%	1,620	86%	1,640	62%
	Other	6,175	88%	4,800	87%	4,825	76%
	All	22,605	85%	16,810	84%	16,930	71%

Source: Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR)

Table 3: Completion, Attainment and Success Rates for non-franchised ACL provision delivered in the community by FE institutions, 2009/10

Level	Sector Subject Area	Completion		Attainment		Success	
		Completed Learning Activities	%	Attained & Completed Learning Activities	%	Successful Learning Activities	%
Entry Level	Arts, Media and Publishing	530	91%	450	92%	465	87%
	Information and Communication Technology	1,335	78%	740	91%	765	82%
	Languages, Literature and Culture	415	90%	285	78%	285	74%
	Adult Basic Education	1,985	76%	1,485	85%	1,525	76%
	English for Speakers of Other Languages	2,285	88%	1,975	87%	2,045	82%
	Other	1,990	93%	1,235	95%	1,250	90%
	All	8,535	85%	6,165	88%	6,335	82%
Level 1	Arts, Media and Publishing	3,140	91%	2,955	95%	2,995	88%
	Information and Communication Technology	6,920	90%	5,715	95%	5,790	88%
	Languages, Literature and Culture	925	70%	785	88%	870	78%
	Adult Basic Education	1,765	84%	1,455	87%	1,465	81%
	English for Speakers of Other Languages	480	93%	445	93%	450	90%
	Other	14,335	94%	12,755	95%	12,830	91%
	All	27,570	91%	24,105	94%	24,405	89%
Level 2	Arts, Media and Publishing	1,985	88%	1,775	90%	1,835	84%
	Information and Communication Technology	3,465	92%	2,450	92%	2,475	87%
	Languages, Literature and Culture	440	68%	365	89%	400	79%
	Adult Basic Education	580	82%	395	86%	395	83%
	English for Speakers of Other Languages	150	96%	145	99%	145	97%
	Other	13,770	94%	12,430	93%	12,490	88%
	All	20,390	92%	17,555	92%	17,740	87%
Other Levels	Arts, Media and Publishing	2,005	90%	1,040	94%	1,070	84%
	Information and Communication Technology	5,115	89%	840	86%	840	75%
	Languages, Literature and Culture	685	93%	330	92%	330	85%
	Adult Basic Education	1,215	95%	90	82%	90	77%
	English for Speakers of Other Languages	245	95%	5	*	5	*
	Other	11,805	91%	5,965	89%	6,000	83%
	All	21,075	90%	8,265	90%	8,330	83%
All Levels	Arts, Media and Publishing	7,660	90%	6,215	93%	6,365	86%
	Information and Communication Technology	16,835	89%	9,740	93%	9,875	86%
	Languages, Literature and Culture	2,465	78%	1,760	87%	1,885	79%
	Adult Basic Education	5,545	83%	3,425	86%	3,480	79%
	English for Speakers of Other Languages	3,165	90%	2,565	89%	2,645	84%
	Other	41,900	93%	32,380	93%	32,565	88%
	All	77,570	90%	56,090	92%	56,810	86%

Source: Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR)

Further Information

1 Data sources

Data on learners accessing ACL provision across Wales is submitted electronically to DfES by learning providers via the Lifelong Learning Wales Record (LLWR).

The LLWR comprises datasets based on learners, their learning programmes, their constituent learning activities and their ensuing awards. A learning activity, typically, is a specific qualification or course pursued by a learner. A learning programme is a group of related activities (and awards where applicable) such as a work-based learning apprenticeship.

Further information on LLWR including user support manuals can be found at:

[Welsh Assembly Government - Lifelong Learning Wales Record](#)

Our statement of administrative sources, which also refers to this data source, can be found at:

[Statement of Administrative Sources](#)

2 Definitions

2.1 Cohorts

The base cohorts underpinning tables 1, 2 and 3 comprise all learning activities that were either expected to complete during the respective academic year or actually ended during the academic year but were expected to complete prior to it.

2.2 Completion, Attainment and Success

The completion rates shown in tables 1 - 3 are calculated as the number of learning activities completed divided by the number of learning activities terminated (completed or withdrawn).

The attainment rates shown in tables 1 - 3 are calculated as the number of learning activities attained divided by the number of learning activities completed.

The success rates shown in tables 1 - 3 are calculated as the number of learning activities attained divided by the number of learning activities terminated.

Learning activities that are deemed to be non-assessable (i.e. do not lead to an associated award) are excluded from the denominators of the attainment and success rate calculations.

Learning activities recorded as either transferred or continuing are excluded from all calculations.

2.3 Level of learning aim

Level is derived from the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) level of the learning activity.

2.4 Sector subject area

The sector/subject areas are based on the 15 first-tier areas of learning in the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency's (QCDA) sector/subject framework and are grouped to reflect the most popular ACL subject areas.

3 Rounding and Suppression

All figures in this Statistical Article are rounded to the nearest 5 and therefore there may be apparent slight differences between the sum of the constituent rows/columns and the totals. A '**' represents numbers greater than 0 but less than 5.

In addition, percentage calculations where the denominator is less than 50 have been suppressed and the percentage replaced with a '**'.

4 Franchise arrangements

The following table summarises the franchise arrangements for the delivery of ACL provision that are currently in place between FE institutions and local authorities:

Franchising FE institution	Local authority delivering learning
Barry College	Cardiff Council Vale of Glamorgan Council
Bridgend College	Bridgend County Borough Council
Coleg Sir Gar	Carmarthenshire County Council
Coleg Ceredigion	Ceredigion County Council
Coleg Glan Hafren	Cardiff Council
Coleg Gwent	Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Caerphilly County Borough Council Monmouthshire County Council Newport City Council Torfaen County Borough Council
Coleg Morgannwg	Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council
Neath Port Talbot College	Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
Pembrokeshire College	Pembrokeshire County Council
Coleg Powys	Powys County Council
Ystrad Mynach College	Caerphilly County Borough Council

Notes on the use of statistical articles

Statistical articles generally relate to one-off analyses for which there are no updates planned, at least in the short-term, and serve to make such analyses available to a wider audience than might otherwise be the case. They are mainly used to publish analyses that are exploratory in some way, for example:

- Introducing a new experimental series of data;
- A partial analysis of an issue which provides a useful starting point for further research but that nevertheless is a useful analysis in its own right;
- Drawing attention to research undertaken by other organisations, either commissioned by the Welsh Government or otherwise, where it is useful to highlight the conclusions, or to build further upon the research;
- An analysis where the results may not be of as high quality as those in our routine statistical releases and bulletins, but where meaningful conclusions can still be drawn from the results.

Where quality is an issue, this may arise in one or more of the following ways:

- being unable to accurately specify the timeframe used (as can be the case when using an administrative source);
- the quality of the data source or data used; or
- other specified reasons.

However, the level of quality will be such that it does not significantly impact upon the conclusions. For example, the exact timeframe may not be central to the conclusions that can be drawn, or it is the order of magnitude of the results, rather than the exact results, that are of interest to the audience.

The analysis presented does not constitute a National Statistic, but may be based on National Statistics outputs and will nevertheless have been subject to careful consideration and detailed checking before publication. An assessment of the strengths and weaknesses in the analysis will be included in the article, for example comparisons with other sources, along with guidance on how the analysis might be used, and a description of the methodology applied.

Articles are subject to the release practices as defined by the release practices protocol, and so, for example, are published on a pre-announced date in the same way as other statistical outputs. Missing value symbols used in the article follow the standards used in other statistical outputs, as outlined below.

- .. The data item is not available
- . The data item is not applicable
- The data item is not exactly zero, but estimated as zero or less than half the final digit shown
- * The data item is disclosive or not sufficiently robust for publication