Adult Enterprise: curriculum innovation
Adult Enterprise: Curriculum Innovation

This document on Adult Enterprise highlights the important learning points about curriculum innovation and collaborative sharing which has resonance to a learning and skills sector that is facing continued financial challenges. It highlights that by thinking and doing things differently innovation can be a solution to significantly reducing costs whilst introducing high quality new provision to respond to market need. This document provides:

- An overview of the project,
- The key innovation learning points and future opportunities for the sector.
- A link to a more detailed Innovation Manual which is available on-line that provides an in-depth analysis of the Project and key learning points at www.aoc.co.uk/shared-services/shared-curriculum and www.adultenterprise.com

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Chief Executive  Senior Project Manager
Adult Enterprise  Association of Colleges

THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX
Adult Enterprise Project

For a small membership fee new partners in 2012/13 could access and deliver a whole new area of curriculum provision at a fraction of the cost and meet an important social and economic need to regenerate the economy.

In 2011-12 a diverse group of 9 partner organizations from the Further Education, Adult Learning, Voluntary and Private sector worked together to create an innovative new qualification framework and curriculum materials to help adults gain the skills to become entrepreneurs. This was underpinned by the creative use of learning technologies, a strong brand identity and a sustainable approach to continued sharing of the curriculum content across the sector.

The Project was entitled ‘Adult Enterprise’ and was funded through the AoC Collaboration and Shared Services Fund. When the Project funding ended in 2012 the original Project Steering Group set up a self-funded not-for-profit social enterprise to continue sharing the outcomes of Adult Enterprise with more adult and further education partners. The results of this shared curriculum project caught the imagination of the sector and within 6 months thirty four Institutions (7 Local Authority Adult Learning Services, 1 Voluntary Organization and 26 Further Education Colleges) from across England had understood the merits of sharing an entrepreneurship curriculum. They financially contributed to Adult Enterprise as member organizations to continue working together to deliver an innovative shared curriculum at significantly lower cost than ‘going it alone’.

Adult Enterprise Partners

Richmond Adult Community College
Tower Hamlets College
City of Bath College
Morley College
Community Links
WCL
Paypal (Europe)
HOLEX
Social Enterprise London
What Was The Project About?

The aim of the Project was to design a new unitised skills qualification framework for adults who want to be entrepreneurs and devise an innovative shared curriculum development and delivery strategy that would be more efficient and effective for the sector.

Research with adults over 18 from a variety of vocational areas, educational attainment levels and social and geographical backgrounds indicate that over 40% of the 30 million UK adults (age 18-65 ) express an interest in running their own business or being self-employed yet less than 10% actually do take the plunge. The lack of enterprise skills was cited as one of the greatest barriers to business start-up.

In partnership with an Awarding Organization (Open College Network London Region) the Project sought to meet this market need by creating a new national qualification framework in England that would provide technical skills at level 2 and 3 for adults who wish to be entrepreneurs. Adults who said that they want to be self-employed or run a business said they wanted short, focused training in the key enterprise skills to help them generate income to become self-sufficient. The problem with the existing Enterprise qualifications available on the National Qualification Framework were that these qualifications were either too large and cumbersome, old fashioned, at too low a level or were designed specifically for 16-18 year olds.

An important design criterion therefore was flexibility so that an individual learner could take whole awards or just units of learning. Starting and running a business in the 21st century also requires contemporary skills. The new framework featured a rich mix of short units (10-30 Guided Learning Hours) including running a street market, social media and developing an on-line store that recognised the realities of how individuals create, launch and grow their enterprise.
## New Qualification Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Award</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OCNLR Level 2 Certificate in First Steps to Enterprise</td>
<td>• Generating and Assessing a Business Idea&lt;br&gt;• Assessing Your Capacity to Start and Run a Business&lt;br&gt;• Financial Considerations for a New Business&lt;br&gt;• Understanding the Benefits and Tax Credit System for a New Business&lt;br&gt;• Understanding the uses of Social Media for Business&lt;br&gt;• Street Market Trading as a Business Option&lt;br&gt;• Considering the potential to Run a Business from Home&lt;br&gt;• Legal Aspects of Trading&lt;br&gt;• Understanding Social Enterprise&lt;br&gt;• Understanding how to Sell a Product or Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCNLR Level 3 Award in Creating a Business – Concept and Planning*</td>
<td>• Deciding on a Business Model for a Product or Service&lt;br&gt;• Producing a Business Plan&lt;br&gt;• Finances for a New Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCNLR Level 3 Award in Creating a Business – Product and Sales*</td>
<td>• Making a Product of Saleable Quality&lt;br&gt;• Establishing a Service of Saleable Quality&lt;br&gt;• Showcasing a Product or Service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCNLR Level 3 Award in Launching a Business – Product and Sales*</td>
<td>• Selling and Branding a Product or Service&lt;br&gt;• Working with Suppliers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCNLR Level 3 Award in Launching a Business – Technologies *</td>
<td>• Website fundamentals for a Business&lt;br&gt;• Launching an online Business&lt;br&gt;• Managing an Online Store</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCNLR Level 3 Award in Sustaining and Growing a Business – Business Survival Skills*</td>
<td>• Keeping up to date with Current Business Legislation&lt;br&gt;• Assessing Health and Safety Risks in a Business&lt;br&gt;• Self-Development for Business Sustainability and Growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCNLR Level 3 Award in Sustaining and Growing a Business – Planning for Growth*</td>
<td>• Sub-Contracting Work&lt;br&gt;• Recruiting Employees&lt;br&gt;• Giving a Business Presentation&lt;br&gt;• Project Management for a Business&lt;br&gt;• Tendering for Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCNLR Level 3 Award in Sustaining and Growing a Business – Business in an International Context*</td>
<td>• Trading in Overseas Markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCNLR Level 3 Award in Creating, Launching and Growing a Social Enterprise*</td>
<td>• Creating a Social Enterprise&lt;br&gt;• Social Enterprise for Voluntary Organisations and Charities&lt;br&gt;• Developing Social Enterprise for Public Sector Services</td>
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</tbody>
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NB*From April 2013 all the Level 3 Awards will be recombined and OFQUAL approved into Level 3 Certificates and Diplomas to meet the new requirements to attract Adult Loans from 2013/14
Blended Learning

The Project also sought to develop curriculum materials that could be shared with the rest of the learning and skills sector to enable national roll-out. The aim was to develop a prototype curriculum development and delivery model for a new curriculum area (Entrepreneurship Studies) and achieve increased innovation and efficiency gains by sharing across diverse partners and ‘designing in’ flexibility and cost savings in how it could be delivered. This involved using technology to provide an online experience for learners and classroom materials for teachers.

The pedagogic approach adopted has been termed ‘flipping the classroom’ whereby knowledge acquisition is by on-line content but understanding, meaning and skills is developed afterwards in the classroom.

This means that learners are provided with high quality streamed content but teachers retain the power to shape a local experience for their students. Currently teachers use their classroom time for giving knowledge but they would be more effective in generating learning if they spent more time developing understanding and skills in the classroom rather than lecturing content.
Blended Learning

The teaching and learning strategy that Adult Enterprise used is known as ‘a blended learning solution’ on a learning platform hosted centrally to enable more efficient and effective implementation across the education sector. The blended learning content was developed by different partners and independent curriculum writers with 50% of the curriculum materials to be used in the classroom and 50% to be available on an e-learning platform to be used directly by learners.

The curriculum content was ‘elearnified’ (transformed into elearning content) by a team of ILT designers from Worcester College of Technology. The e-learning content was placed on a customised Moodle 2 platform with embedded Articulate software, videos, teaching materials and interactive learning activities. The platform was designed to facilitate easy management and tracking of delivery of over 80 standardised, separate L2 and L3 units to students across a large number of partner learning providers as well as delivering e-learning products with high user interface and user experience. It was customised to commercial standards with a web front-end www.adultenterprise.com that was the learner portal for accessing the content.

The manufacturing process for developing the shared blended learning curriculum for Adult Enterprise was significantly different from traditional models of curriculum development where the teacher develops the courses and applies to an awarding body for accreditation, the teacher designs the curriculum content for the course and delivers and assesses the curriculum. In the model adopted by Adult Enterprise the manufacturing was disconnected from the teacher with the creation of a new qualification framework by partners in partnership with an Awarding Body (AO), procurement of curriculum writers to write content and elearning designers to transform the online materials into usable elearning content.
Stages In The Manufacturing Process

**Stage 1:** Market Map Need - The learning points from developing Adult Enterprise was that it is beneficial to develop a new innovative qualification framework and share its curriculum where the subject area is ‘ubiquitous’ and can be repurposed for a variety of markets by different institutions. This makes sharing more attractive for more users.

**Stage 2:** Development of a Qualification Framework - This needs the involvement of an Awarding Body that is skilled in designing qualifications, has a good understanding of the assessment and also how a new qualification fits alongside existing qualifications.

**Stage 3a):** Content Creation - curriculum content needs to be designed and written by subject experts who work within a pedagogic framework that provides both on-line and off-line content. The copyright needs to be owned by the Sharing Entity rather than individual writers.

**Stage 3b):** Editing - This needs to be edited to ensure that separate content writers’ approach is consistent and coherent. This involves designing a pedagogic model for a scheme of work that reflects the blended learning approach to curriculum development. The scheme of work and the content selected needs to be clearly laid out so that the desired learning process can be clearly articulated.

**Stage 4:** E-learnification - the content needs to be put on to a learning platform and ‘elearnified’ which means that particular software needs to be used to enable the content to enable learning to take place online and offline. This requires technical software skills but also the ability to understand the learning process as set down by the content writers and editor.

**Stage 5:** Creation and hosting on a Learning platform - there is a multiplicity of platforms available but Moodle represents the best value for education as it is written using open source software. However it requires a degree of programming and design customisation to make it attractive and accessible for teachers and learners. The content and learning platform needs to be written in such a way so that it can be streamed on to a variety of devices.
Shared Marketing

In addition to a shared curriculum a shared marketing model was developed where Adult Enterprise could be branded alongside an individual College/Institution’s brand. A set of shared marketing materials were developed with a shared website. All the art work has been designed centrally which could then be repurposed locally. The marketing pack included a Prospectus, Promotional leaflets, Display stands, poster designs, conference packs, learner badges, standardised handouts and power points. The designs chimed with the user look and feel on the learning platform and offered providers a fully integrated professional proposition for local markets at a fraction of the cost of designing it in-house.

“A key maxim was designed and hosted centrally but delivered locally”

Feedback on Adult Enterprise

“Excellent Professional materials”
“Meets a large market demand from different adult target markets”
“Professional high quality appearance”
“Excellent Range of Units and attractive qualification framework”
“Blended Learning Approach”
“Cohesive Marketing and Branding materials”
“Flexibility for Delivery”
“Flexibility for Learners”
“Relevant content to suit the needs of adult target markets”
“Openness to ideas from sector colleges”
“Support for refreshing and updating materials”
“Quality of on-line platform”
“Collaborative approach”
“Pre-Prepared for teachers”
“Opportunity to deliver bite size elements”
“Reduction of Delivery costs”
Sustainable Sharing

Although the Project was funded ‘by the sector for the sector’ the reality was that it had to be self-financing if it was to continue in 2012/13 as the AoC project funding ceased in its entirety by 31st October 2012. The overall conclusion from the Evaluation Forms from the Dissemination Events was that there was a clear consensus that there would be value in the Adult Enterprise initiative continuing in a sustainable form.

By January 2013 34 Colleges/Providers (this includes 4 Founder Provider members) joined as partners and have paid £5,000 membership fees to continue the work of Adult Enterprise and to continue to share the curriculum and marketing materials. In return they have got unlimited use of the materials, reduced OCNLR fees, shared marketing materials, train the trainer events, central website, shared learning platform, helpdesk and centrally provided learner MIS on destinations and success. There is a good geographic spread across England with good representation in the North, Midlands and London and the South East.

Co-creating Innovation

This document highlights that co-creating innovation through partnership is an energising way to solve a business problem. Pavlovich and Doyle (2006) argue that this type of co-creation should be termed co-entrepreneurship whereby partners contribute to value creation through their ability to transcend differences and ‘negotiate space’ in order to ‘learn how to learn’ for knowledge creation. Diverse partners provide different perspectives that enrich the creativity of the whole group.

The diversity of partners, from charities in East London dealing with disadvantaged adults to global multinationals, provided a rich range of perspectives in viewing the framework required for adult learners wanting to become entrepreneurs. The challenge is to keep diverse partners working together for a common cause as tensions can emerge because of different world views. A central theme is that diversity enriches but diverse partners need to all have a shared vision and values. This is the bedrock of co-creation through partnership.
It requires a new style of leadership which is not just about individuals working hierarchically “but it is about ‘leadership constellations’ which consist of a team, a partnership group or other stakeholders who can work in a whole systems way.” Hartley and Bennington (2009) ²

Pavlovich and Doyle (2006) identify that the partnership needs to take cognisance of the structural, cognitive and relational dimensions to generate new innovative social capital.

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<tr>
<th>LEADERSHIP THEMES</th>
<th>BENEFITS</th>
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<tr>
<td>STRUCTURE</td>
<td>A clear partnership structure helps initiate partnerships, gain access to important markets and build capabilities within the partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COGNITIVE</td>
<td>The cognitive dimension involves partners unfreezing the sense-making frames of their existing organization and co-constructing a new interpretive framework, specific to the partnership.</td>
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<tr>
<td>RELATIONAL</td>
<td>The aspects of trust through professional competency, open communication and personal integrity are critical for close relationships to be formed in order that ideas could be integrated and developed</td>
</tr>
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</table>

All of the partners shared a common vision and were committed to solving the business problem and developed a strong trust framework for action. The Steering Group and Curriculum Groups met regularly and worked together to co-create the new qualification framework, the curriculum materials, the shared delivery strategy and new social enterprise. This generated on-going team development and a shared purpose. Each of the partners was very engaged and proud of their involvement and keen to encourage other providers to join in the Project as part of a national movement.
Learning points for future curriculum innovation through co-creation with partners

1. Develop a high level understanding of the curriculum innovation problem that you are trying to solve e.g. the desire to be an entrepreneur cuts across vocational areas, cuts across different localities, different sectors and adults from different backgrounds - Can one institution innovate alone in a complex situation?

2. Work with Enablers such as Skills Funding Agency and agree the use of an Innovation code and get their buy in to the Project

3. Identify partners who can help from different sectors, different localities, different vocational areas and serving different adults and will work effectively on co-creation

4. Find resources to invest in co-creation as it takes time to generate effective solutions e.g. The Shared Services and Collaboration bid to resource the project through AoC/Skills Funding Agency provided valuable resources to move the project forward but with clear milestones and effective evaluation

5. Identify the importance of diversity in the partnership and how it can be led and managed

6. Develop a shared vision and an absolute shared commitment to project goals. Build trust and the inclusive sharing of information. Shared goals are more important than individual goals

7. Get the structure right this involves ensuring that there are clear roles and responsibilities at three levels Strategic-Project Director and Steering Group Leaders, Operational and Task Management- Project Manager and Curriculum Developers/Practitioners and staying in touch with Learners

8. Ensure Steering Group cohesion and try and involve leaders in their sector so that they can be ambassadors to other Providers whilst staying in touch with Curriculum Developers working on Project Task and Engaging with Learners

9. Find committed suppliers who want to join in and add to co-creation effort

10. Celebrate and disseminate to different sectors to ensure sustainability
Success factors for shared services projects to be sustainable

The Adult Enterprise Project has captured the imagination of the sector and it is now self-funded and supported by 34 institutions across the country by Year 2. The key learning points from this project is that if shared curriculum is to become sustainable you need to consider the following points:

1. Offer a white label product or service Have a product and service that is not owned by one institution. The Adult Enterprise is a white label brand that can be used by each College of Adult Learning Institution as ‘their own’. There is no territoriality as it is owned by everyone with the brand and content looked after by a sector led not-for-profit social enterprise.

2. Saves money It saves each institution a significant amount of time and money in curriculum development and delivery and provides a cost-effective solution for providing adult learning.

3. High quality Adult Enterprise is high quality with time and resources invested in seeking the best method for developing and hosting blended learning.

4. Strong sector profile and reputation The role of the 4 Principals and the HOLEX Chief Executive on the Steering Group gave the Project credibility in the sector. This was reinforced by AoC who valued the Project and promoted it within their conferences and events. This gave confidence with Principals who were interested in developing their entrepreneurship curriculum.

5. Topical and current The area of Entrepreneurship was topical and current given the economic recession. In addition the development of curriculum materials for adults complemented rather than competed with existing work in the sector such as the Gazelle Group of Colleges.

6. Solved a development problem the Adult Enterprise area was a new qualification and therefore there were no teachers losing teaching hours as a result of a college adopting the Adult Enterprise model. It was therefore welcomed as an example of a successful strategy for blended learning that could be used to help change professional practice in college providers.

7. Low cost membership Because of economies of scale and pump-priming through the AoC Collaboration and Shared Services Fund, Adult Enterprise was able to share the benefits of the project for an affordable membership fee (£5k) that enabled the development to continue in Year 2. The cost of membership contrasts well with other schemes in the sector.

8. Train the trainer programme Once new Colleges and Adult Learning providers were signed up a programme of training was provided for College staff to use the materials and blended learning system. This provided connectivity to the creators and helped teachers feel part of a virtual team.

9. Non-competitive Users of Adult Enterprise are not competing institutions and therefore learning points are shared across institutions as the new members join the virtual team.

10. Innovative The methodology adopted for the delivery of learning is different and innovatively creates and shares content using new technologies. It also seeks to develop new models of teaching and learning and also explores the different roles of a traditional teacher.

For more information you can read our online Innovation Manual that provides 9 sections that sets out in more detail aspects of the Project that will be of interest to curriculum managers, project leaders and ILT staff in the sector.
## Section Topic Summary

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<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Summary</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Adult Enterprise Project Case Study</td>
<td>A contextual overview of the Project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>New Models of Leadership for Project Innovation using Co-creation through Partnership Model for Curriculum Development</td>
<td>This provides a conceptual framework and guide to enable sector leaders to effectively lead innovation and direct projects to successful implementation. It will identify the essential elements that are required to generate new ideas through co-creation and an overview of the key management principles to be followed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Using the Innovation Code to create New Qualifications</td>
<td>This covers the ‘how to’ of creating new qualifications to meet the needs of industry or new and emerging markets. It covers a methodology for qualification and assessment design with a toolkit to follow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Creating a Blended Learning Solution</td>
<td>This provides an analysis of the manufacturing process for creating blended learning materials within a pedagogic framework and a toolkit for subject writers for developing blended learning and e-learning products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>ELearnification</td>
<td>This section provides an overview and evaluation of software available for online education and training with pros and cons. It also provides guidelines on how to ‘elearnify’ subject writers curriculum content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Developing a Shared Learning Platform</td>
<td>This section provides guidance on how to adapt moodle and integrate education and training software to create a strong user interface and user experience (UIUX) for online learning with a guide to managing learners, providing online helpdesk support and collecting data for benchmarking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Managing a Virtual Team</td>
<td>This covers the methods and processes for managing a virtual team of curriculum writers, curriculum editors, assessment specialists, awarding body staff and elearning designers to create a shared team</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Brand Development in a Shared Environment</td>
<td>This section explores the marketing principles to create a white label design and marketing proposition that can be shared.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Models for Network Generation for Sharing and Sustainability</td>
<td>A toolkit for selling shared services and creating a sustainable vehicle for sharing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Read the Online Innovation Manual at www.adultenterprise.com or www.aoc.co.uk/shared-services/shared-curriculum
References

2. “Whole systems go. Improving leadership across the whole public service,” The National School for Government August, Hartley and Bennington 2009

Appendix

Adult Enterprise Centres 2012/13

North
Accrington and Rossendale College
Doncaster College
The Sheffield College
Newcastle Adult Learning Service
Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education
Furness College

London
London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham
Redbridge Institute
Westminster Adult Education Service
Stanmore College
Uxbridge College
Community Links
Morley College
Tower Hamlets College
The Adult College of Barking and Dagenham

Midlands
Burton and South Derbyshire College
Warwickshire College
New College Nottingham
Solihull College
Oxford and Cherwell Valley College
(including Reading College)
Birmingham Adult Learning Service
Worcester College of Technology

South & South West
Kent Adult Education and KEY Training
Highbury College
City of Bath College
North Hertfordshire College
West Suffolk College
Southend Adult Community College
West Herts College
Colchester Institute
Sparsholt College
South Essex College
Totton College
Central Bedfordshire College
Change your life and make the right choice for you.