

WEA Impact Survey

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Context

Why we have an Impact Survey

- First Impact Survey published in 2013, annually since
- Entirely voluntary – not part of our formal reporting and students self select whether to take part
- It links to our wider interest in multiple benefits for students – not restricted to “educational” outcomes
- Contributes towards broader case and evidence base for adult learning

Methodology

What do we collect?

- Quantitative online survey sent to all WEA students with email addresses.
- 4023 complete responses in Spring 2017
- Students mostly completed short courses in the previous Autumn
- Data weighted to be representative of the entire WEA student population (within 1.3% margin of error)
- Comments from the survey were also analysed to provide a qualitative angle

Learning & Skills Impact

“Learning to Learn” and Looking for Work

- 63% improved communication skills
- 62% critical thinking skills
- 43% problem solving skills
- 65% improved confidence helping children with reading, writing or maths

- 57% who were unemployed and looking for work became employed soon after
- 66% looking for work felt more confident about finding employment
- 62% gained new skills or knowledge that could be used in a job

Wider Impact

Health and Community Engagement

- 50% of students with pre-existing health issues handle stress better
- 82% with mental health issues reported improvements in their condition
- 72% of students reported an increase in confidence
- 45% encouraged their children to live a healthier lifestyle

- 48% reported being more understanding of other cultures
- 33% became more interested in improving their local area
- 16% more likely to vote

Advantages of the Survey

The Impact of Measuring Impact

- Makes case for delivering wide range of courses as it shows impact is not necessarily linked to subject
- Emphasis on style of learning as much as subject matter
- Adds to evidence base to support wider range of funding bids and partnerships
- Contributes to broader evidence base of power of adult learning
- Starting point for delving deeper into individual stories and wider trends
- Regional comparisons

Limitations

Still more we'd like to do.....

- Only captures students who are able and willing to respond
- Doesn't reach those who haven't provided an email address
- Haven't yet collected data over sufficient time to determine trends
- Self reported rather than verified by third party
- Relatively short term effects – doesn't look at impacts further down the line
- Should it have a role in more formal reporting?
- How comparable with impact surveys elsewhere?

Next steps (and discussion)

Building on the evidence

- Latest version is underway
- Survey data is currently being analysed
- Looking to write up later in the year and publish early 2019
- Very likely to continue so....
 -What should inform the 2019 survey?