

Universities and Lifelong Learning

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Lifelong learning and the role of qualifications systems in its promotion

Bernard Hugonnier
OECD Deputy Director for Education

Outline

1. What do we mean by lifelong learning?
2. Why is LLL essential?
3. Actual policy responses to LLL challenges
4. How to promote LLL?
5. Conclusion: the role of national qualifications system in promoting Lifelong learning?

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What do we mean by lifelong learning?

- ❑ The concept of lifelong learning as an educational strategy emerged some three decades ago, through the efforts of the OECD, UNESCO and the Council of Europe.
- ❑ It was a response to the anomaly that:
 - while individuals learn throughout life,
 - the provision of education opportunities was limited largely to the early phase of life, dominated by formal education.
- ❑ There was hence a perceived need to:
 - Provide a "second chance" to those who did not benefit from sufficient initial educational
 - Help the others to upgrade and change their competences
- ❑ In current OECD usage, lifelong learning
 - no longer refers simply to recurrent or adult education
 - but encompasses all learning endeavors over the lifespan.
- ❑ In choosing the goal of "lifelong learning for all" in 1996, OECD Education Ministers signaled a major departure by adopting a more comprehensive view that:
 - Covers all purposeful learning activities, from the cradle to the grave,
 - Aims to improve knowledge and competencies for all individuals *who wish to participate in learning activities.*

What are the distinguishing features of the lifelong learning concept?

A systemic view

- The lifelong learning framework views the demand for, and the supply of, learning opportunities, as part of a connected system covering the whole lifecycle and comprising all forms of formal and informal learning.
- **Centrality of the learner**
 - This requires a shift of attention from a supply side focus, for example on formal institutional arrangements for learning, to the demand side of meeting learner needs.
- **Motivation to learn**
 - Motivation is an essential foundation for learning that continues throughout life. It requires attention to developing the capacity for “learning to learn” through self-paced and self-directed learning.
- **Multiple objectives of education policy**
 - The multiple goals of education must be recognised: –such as personal development, knowledge development, economic, social and cultural objectives

What are the distinguishing features of the lifelong learning concept?

- ❑ LLL emphasises that learning occurs during the whole course of a person's life (from cradle to grave).
- ❑ It is substantially broader than adult education and training.
- ❑ It does not refer only to economic outcomes, but also to social and cultural ones as well as to personal development
- ❑ It places the learner in the centre of the strategy (shift from the supply to the demand side of learning)
- ❑ It emphasises the motivation to learn and self-directed learning
- ❑ It comprises all forms of learning, formal, non formal and informal

Main consequences of the LLL approach

- To be successful, reforms have to address the need for competences in:
 - Society
 - The workplace
 - At the level of the individual
- Curricula, pedagogical practices and the organisation of learning all need to be re-examined
- Appropriate linkages and pathways should be developed to enable individuals to make transition and progress through various learning stages
- Education and training resources must be re-allocated
- Many ministries have to be involved as no single one has a monopoly of interest in LLL.

LLL skills, what are they?

- ❑ Skills for life
- ❑ Skills for the knowledge economy
- ❑ Skills for sustainable development
- ❑ Skills for social capital

Skills for life and for the knowledge society

- Skills for life
- LLL implies the need to learn continuously, consistently and coherently
- Skills for life
 - Capacity to learn independently
 - Motivation to learn and re-learn
 - Ability to develop networking
 - Digital literacy
 - Flexibility and adaptability
 - Mobility
 - Creative and critical thinking
- Skills for the knowledge society
- In the knowledge economy, employers give increasingly attention to workplace competencies as compared with technical skills
- Workplace competencies
 - Inter-personal skills
 - Team work
 - Ability to collaborate in pursuit of a common objective
 - Leadership capabilities
 - Effective communications
 - Intra-personal skills
 - Motivation
 - Ability to learn
 - Problem solving
 - Entrepreneurship
 - Analytical skills
 - ICT skills

Skills for sustainable development and for social capital

- ❑ Skills for sustainable development
- ❑ Sustainable development : an economic development based on:
 - The protection of the environment
 - The preservation of natural resources
 - The preservation and valorisation of cultural assets (Cultures, Arts, Landscapes, Historic heritage)
 - Social cohesion
- ❑ Required skills:
 - Taking initiative
 - Capacity to discern the relevant dimensions of a situation
 - Independence
 - Commitment
 - Readiness to accept responsibility
- ❑ Skills for social capital
- ❑ Social capital : enhancing social relationships
 - Within communities (bonding)
 - Among communities (bridging)
 - Between communities and institutions (linking)
- ❑ Required skills:
 - Trust and confidence
 - Tolerance
 - Solidarity
 - Cooperative spirit
 - Civic participation
 - Social responsibility

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Why is LLL essential?

- A number of important socio-economic forces are pushing for more LLL
 - Increased pace of globalisation
 - Rapid technological change leading to the development of the knowledge society
 - Changing nature of work the necessity of a continuing upgrade of skills
 - Changing nature of jobs with the necessity of a regular change of skills
 - Greater mobility and flexibility of the job market
 - Shorter job tenure as a result of more volatile product markets and shorter product cycles
 - Increasing polarisation between the knowledge workers and the knowledge have-nots

Why is LLL essential?

- A number of important socio-economic forces are pushing for more LLL
 - Ageing population
 - Immigration flows
 - Opportunities for training depend more than before on qualifications:
 - Continuing education mostly benefit individuals with high initial education
 - Much less learning opportunities for the unemployed and the low skilled
 - Increased needs for individual social responsibility
 - Environment protection
 - Climate change
 - Social cohesion
 - Civic participation

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What do we mean by qualifications?

- More than just a piece a paper
- Qualifications = set of knowledge, skills and techniques
 - Necessary to fully perform a job on a daily basis
 - Acquired through formal education and training or informal and no formal learning
- Qualifications are indispensable to:
 - Make progress in a job position
 - Change job
 - Undertake training
- Hence, qualifications = anything that confers an official recognition of value in the labour market and in further education and training

Present policy Responses

A. Action on training systems

1. Increase flexibility and responsiveness
2. Link education and work
3. Review funding and increase efficiency
4. Motivate young people to learn

C. Actions on qualifications systems

5. Facilitate open access to qualification
6. Diversify assessment processes
7. Make qualifications progressive
8. Make the qualifications system transparent
9. Better manage the qualifications systems

Where do countries stand?

- ❑ The Nordic countries stand out with good performances (the champion being Norway)
- ❑ A second group of countries (Canada, the Czech Republic, Germany, Japan, Korea, the Netherlands and New Zealand) also do well but have certain gaps or weaknesses
- ❑ A third tier, including Australia, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States, is characterized by comparatively weak and uneven performances
- ❑ Finally, a fourth group of countries -Ireland, Hungary, Portugal and Poland- do poorly in comparison to other countries on most measures.
- ❑ But even in Norway the institutional arrangements and policies fall short of a systemic approach to lifelong learning. The most obvious shortcomings concern adults where there are daunting issues regarding the governance and finance of adult learning. Leadership is a vexed issue insofar as successful implementation depends on concerted action by several ministries as well as the social partners. Choice, equity and quality are in many cases conflicting objectives and difficult trade-offs have to be resolved.

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20 possible actions

1. Communicating returns to learning for qualification
2. Recognising skills for employability
3. Establishing qualifications frameworks
4. Increasing learner choice in qualifications
5. Clarifying learning pathways
6. Providing credit transfer
7. Increasing flexibility in learning programmes leading to qualifications
8. Creating new routes to qualifications
9. Lowering cost of qualification
10. Recognising non-formal and informal learning
11. Monitoring the qualifications system
12. Optimising stakeholder involvement in the QS
13. Improving needs analysis methods so that qualifications are up to date
14. Improving qualification use in recruitment
15. Ensuring qualifications are portable
16. Investing in pedagogical innovation
17. Expressing qualifications as learning outcomes
18. Improving co-ordination in the qualifications system
19. Optimising quality assurance
20. Improving information and guidance about QS

Actions by Governments

1. Communicating returns to learning for qualification
2. Recognising skills for employability
3. **Establishing qualifications frameworks**
4. Increasing learner choice in qualifications
5. Clarifying learning pathways
6. Providing credit transfer
7. Increasing flexibility in learning programmes leading to qualifications
8. Creating new routes to qualifications
9. Lowering cost of qualification
10. **Recognising non-formal and informal learning**
11. **Monitoring the qualifications system**
12. **Optimising stakeholders involvement in the QS**
13. Improving needs analysis methods so that qualifications are up to date
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Actions by qualifications system institutions

1. Communicating returns to learning for qualification
2. Recognising skills for employability
3. Establishing qualifications frameworks
4. **Increasing learner choice in qualifications**
5. Clarifying learning pathways
6. Providing credit transfer
7. Increasing flexibility in learning programmes leading to qualifications
8. **Creating new routes to qualifications**
9. **Lowering cost of qualification**
10. Recognising non-formal and informal learning
11. Monitoring the qualifications system
12. Optimising stakeholder involvement in the QS
13. Improving needs analysis methods so that qualifications are up to date
14. Improving qualification use in recruitment
15. **Ensuring qualifications are portable**
16. Investing in pedagogical innovation
17. **Expressing qualifications as learning outcomes**
18. **Improving co-ordination in the qualifications system**
19. **Optimising quality assurance**
20. **Improving information and guidance about QS**

Actions by Training institutions

1. Communicating returns to learning for qualification
2. Recognising skills for employability
3. Establishing qualifications frameworks
4. Increasing learner choice in qualifications
5. Clarifying learning pathways
6. Providing credit transfer
7. **Increasing flexibility in learning programmes leading to qualifications**
8. Creating new routes to qualifications
9. Lowering cost of qualification
10. Recognising non-formal and informal learning
11. Monitoring the qualifications system
12. Optimising stakeholder involvement in the QS
13. Improving needs analysis methods so that qualifications are up to date
14. Improving qualification use in recruitment
15. Ensuring qualifications are portable
16. **Investing in pedagogical innovation**
17. Expressing qualifications as learning outcomes
18. Improving co-ordination in the qualifications system
19. Optimising quality assurance
20. Improving information and guidance about QS

Actions by employers

1. **Communicating returns to learning for qualification**
2. **Recognising skills for employability**
3. *Establishing qualifications frameworks*
4. *Increasing learner choice in qualifications*
5. *Clarifying learning pathways*
6. **Providing credit transfer**
7. *Increasing flexibility in learning programmes leading to qualifications*
8. *Creating new routes to qualifications*
9. *Lowering cost of qualification*
10. *Recognising non-formal and informal learning*
11. *Monitoring the qualifications system*
12. *Optimising stakeholder involvement in the QS*
13. **Improving needs analysis methods so that qualifications are up to date**
14. **Improving qualification use in recruitment**
15. *Ensuring qualifications are portable*
16. *Investing in pedagogical innovation*
17. *Expressing qualifications as learning outcomes*
18. *Improving co-ordination in the qualifications system*
19. *Optimising quality assurance*
20. *Improving information and guidance about QS*

Ranking the 20 actions

Mechanism	Number of preferences with strong role	Number of preferences with supporting role	Rank
1.Communicating returns to learning for qualifications	1	2	19
2.Recognise skills for employability	2	0	16=
3.Establishing qualifications frameworks	4	4	4
4.Increasing learner choice in qualifications	2	0	16=
5.Clarifying learning pathways	4	1	8
6.Providing credit transfer	7	1	1
7.Increasing flexibility in learning programmes leading to qualifications	3	3	10=
8.Creating new routes to qualifications	4	3	5
9.Lowering cost of qualifications	3	1	12=
10.Recognising non-formal and informal learning	5	1	3
11.Monitoring the qualifications system	2	6	14
12.Optimising stakeholder involvement in the qualifications system	5	3	2
13.Improving needs analysis methods so that qual. are up to date	3	1	12=
14.Improving qualification use in recruitment	1	1	20
15.Ensuring qualifications are portable	3	3	10=
16 Investing in pedagogical innovation	1	4	18
17.Expressing qualifications as learning outcomes	3	4	9
18.Maximising co-ordination in the qualifications system	4	2	6=
19.Optimising quality assurance	4	2	6=
20.Improving information and guidance about qualifications system	2	4	15

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4.Increasing learner choice in qualifications	2	0	16=
5.Clarifying learning pathways	4	1	8
6.Providing credit transfer	7	1	1
7.Increasing flexibility in learning programmes leading to qualifications	3	3	10=
8.Creating new routes to qualifications	4	3	5
9.Lowering cost of qualifications	3	1	12=
10.Recognising non-formal and informal learning	5	1	3
11.Monitoring the qualifications system	2	6	14
12.Optimising stakeholder involvement in the qualifications system	5	3	2
13.Improving needs analysis methods so that qual. are up to date	3	1	12=
14.Improving qualification use in recruitment	1	1	20
15.Ensuring qualifications are portable	3	3	10=
16.Investing in pedagogical innovation	1	4	18
17.Expressing qualifications as learning outcomes	3	4	9
18.Maximising co-ordination in the qualifications system	4	2	6=
19.Optimising quality assurance	4	2	6=
20.Improving information and guidance about qualifications system	2	4	15

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Qualifications systems: an essential tool to promote LLL

❑ Five highly ranked strong mechanisms

6. Providing credit transfer

12. Optimising stakeholder involvement in qualifications system

10. Recognising non-formal and informal learning

3. Establishing a qualifications framework

8. Creating new routes to qualifications

The role of national qualifications system in promoting Lifelong learning

- There is indeed a strong link between qualifications systems and LLL
- Q.S. provide quality recognition of all form of learning
- Hence qualifications affect LLL by:
 - Improving the quality and quantity of learning opportunities by allowing a better match between qualifications and labour market needs
 - Ensuring equity of access to learning by providing learning opportunities to all in view of their initial qualifications
 - Improving the efficiency of the LLL process, e.g. recognition of the partial acquisition of some skills avoid completing a whole training session

THANK YOU

□ More information:

- www.oecd.org
- Bernard.hugonnier@oecd.org