

## Module 1 Topic 2 - So what is a Learning City and so what?

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### Topic Description

Some philosopher once said that to define it is to destroy it. But this topic tries to come to some conclusion about what a learning city, town or region is, and how it is different from what has gone before. It also identifies the way in which the 20<sup>th</sup> century pre-occupation with education and training in the city is changing into a very different 21<sup>st</sup> century lifelong learning approach, and begins the process of defining a strategy for changing the city, town or region into a learning community. At some point you may wish to bring in outside speaker to support lessons eg from the education department to explain current policy.

### Topic Objectives

- a) To define the 21st Century Learning City, Town or Region in terms which emphasise both the differences from the current situation and an understanding of the importance of change
- b) To understand the major characteristics of a Learning Town, City or Region and its extensions
- c) To highlight the preliminary actions to be taken in order to create a Learning City. Town or R

### Lesson 1.2.1 – Definitions (1 hour)

#### Objectives:

- a) To come to one or more definitions of a Learning City, Town or Region
- b) To demonstrate the shift of power from provider to receiver in a lifelong learning world

#### Suggestions for Course Leaders:

- a) Whole Class exercise. Ask the class to suggest words that they think would be used to describe a place where learning is seen to be important for its citizens. Write them up on the board for all to see. Prompt from time to time.

#### Ensure they produce words like:

Empower, human potential, development, enjoyment, understanding, support, prosperity, social stability, inclusion, learning, fulfilment, mobilisation, active, citizenship, creativity, sensitivity, adaptability, flexibility, resources, vibrant, participative, contribute, cultural, enlightened,

- b) Small group exercise. Divide the group into groups of 3. Give them poster paper. Ask them to take those words and produce a sentence which describes a learning city, town or

region. Get them to put it up on the wall. Also put up the two definitions from 'Learning Cities, Learning Regions, Learning Communities' shown in item one of the toolkit.

c) Now everyone looks at the definitions and marks them out of ten. Add up the marks and declare a winner – reward that team if you can.

d) Sum up the lesson. A Learning City differs from others because the emphasis is on satisfying the learning needs of all citizens of all ages rather than providing courses and inviting citizens to take part – ie the power has shifted from the provider to the receiver. Show them the definitions in the Toolbox item 1. This will lead into lesson 2.

### **Lesson 1.2.2 Characteristics of a Learning City. (1 hour)**

Objective: To demonstrate the holistic nature of a learning city, town or region

Suggestions for Course Leaders

a) Hand out the diagram in item 2 of the toolkit. Ask the class in groups of 2 to perform the exercise below the diagram. Then discuss the results. Afterwards Ask the class individually to make a classification of the points made under three headings. Point out that these are not exclusive – several departments may be responsible for one item.

i) Actions to be taken by the education department

ii) Actions to be taken by the City Development Department

iii) Actions to be taken by the Finance Department

iv) Actions to be taken by the Law and Order Department

v) Actions to be taken by the Social Services Department

vi) Actions to be taken by the Health Department

vii) Actions to be taken by Business and Industry in the city

viii) Actions to be taken by individual learning providers

ix) Actions to be taken by others.

b) Divide into groups of 2 or 3 to compare answers.

c) Plenary session to bring together the results.

d) Discuss what this tells us about lifelong learning in local government

i) it is the responsibility of many different departments, not just education

- ii) it is holistic – there are links between different departments
- iii) it changes the way in which local government will have to work in the future – much more joined up and together – fewer empires with defined boundaries.
- iv) And other insights obtained through a creative interpretation of the diagram.

### **Lesson 1.2.3 - A Learning Society (1-16 hours)**

This Lesson reinforces many of the topics learned in lesson 3 and puts them into the context of the concept of a Learning Society. It explores the current situation in one large city, what might be meant by the term 'Learning Society' and how it might be implemented in communities

#### **Lesson Objectives:**

- a) To understand current attitudes to learning in a large city.
- b) To define the characteristics of a learning society

#### **Suggestions for Learning Leaders**

1. Hand out the questions for an attitudinal study made in Glasgow and shown in item 3 of the toolkit. Allow time for completion. Consolidate the results in plenary.
2. Hand out the results for Glasgow (toolbox item 4). Divide into small groups to discuss and ask each to produce 3 main observations. In plenary compare the observations.
3. Brainstorm why these results and what needs to be done in a city like Glasgow. Emphasise the need for a change of approach if the large numbers of people are to be switched back into learning. Would this be another rationale for the development of a learning city?
4. Hand out the characteristics of a learning society (toolbox item 5) – divide the class into groups and ask each group to agree a mark from 1 to 5 on their opinion a) whether it would make a difference to the figures and b) How present day education matches these ideals. In each case 1= not at all and 5 = full match. They may wish to add another from their own experience at the bottom.
5. Discuss the results of this exercise with the class either in plenary
6. Ask the class to make 3 suggestions on how to achieve a learning society

### **Lesson 1.2.4 Extensions to the Learning City – Describing your Learning City**

#### **Lesson Objectives**

The major objective for this lesson is to demonstrate how the learning city, as a holistic entity, can be extended to include many other desirable attributes of cities.

#### **Suggestions for Learning Leaders**

a) What would the average citizen look for in his/her city? Put a few suggestions on the board. Divide the class into groups of two where one acts as a questioner and the other as a responder picked up in the street. One asks the other to give some adjectives describing the sort of city they want to see in the future – eg a safe city, a vibrant city, a responding city etc. They can prompt by mentioning current problems that concern people.

b) Reverse the roles. At the end of this exercise each group should have a long list of adjectives describing the sort of city they think a learning city should lead to. Discuss these in plenary and put up a list of the adjectives on the board.

c) bring together their finished results and discuss, pointing out the essential holism of a learning city as much more than education and training – use examples eg why low-crime in a secure city? In answer point out the well-established link between learning poverty and crime. Why is this important? To keep each person in prison costs more than £50,000 pounds per year each. Can giving more support earlier help to reduce that cost? Look for other bottom-line examples in the other boxes. Finally hand out toolbox item 9 as reinforcement and summary

## Toolbox for Lessons 1.2.1 to 1.2.3

### 1. Two definitions

#### 'A Learning City, Town or Region '

recognises and understands

the key role of learning in the development of

basic prosperity, social stability and personal fulfilment,

and mobilises

all its human, physical and financial resources

creatively and sensitively

to develop the full human potential of all its citizens

#### **A Learning Community**

is a **city, town or region** which

Goes beyond its statutory duty to provide education and training for those who require it

#### **And instead**

Creates a vibrant, participative, culturally aware and economically buoyant human environment

through the provision, justification **and active promotion** of learning opportunities to enhance the potential of **all** its citizens

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Toolkit item 2 - characteristics

**LEARNING CITIES - CHARACTERISTICS**

L	Leadership	Links its strategy to the development of leadership and Learning counselling courses and skills in and for the whole city
E	<b>Employment and Employability</b>	<b>Effects plans to define and develop skills and Competencies which make all its citizens employable</b>
A	Aspirations	Activates the creative potential of its citizens through a strategy for encouraging the use of personal learning plans, mentors and guides in citizens of all ages
R	<b>Resources</b>	<b>Releases the full potential of community resources, including human resources, by enabling mutually beneficial partnerships between public and private sectors</b>
N	Networks	Nourishes tolerance and outward-looking mindsets through projects to link citizens of all races, ages and creeds locally, nationally and internationally
I	<b>Information</b>	<b>Increases participation in learning by devising innovative strategies to provide information where people gather, and pro-active publicity campaigns to promote learning</b>
N	Needs and Requirements	Nurtures a culture of learning by proactively auditing the learning requirements of all its citizens and providing the Opportunities to satisfy them
G	<b>Growth</b>	<b>Generates wealth through a defined strategy of developing its human talent and innovative projects with other learning cities</b>
C	Change Management	Cultivates programmes which allow citizens to cope positively and without fear in a world of rapid change
I	<b>Investment</b>	<b>Influences the future by linking learning strategies to cross-departmental financial strategies</b>
T	Technology	Transforms the city into a modern centre of learning by the effective use of the new learning technologies
I	<b>Involvement</b>	<b>Inspires citizens to contribute to city life and culture by building a database of their skills, knowledge and talents and encouraging them to make them available to others</b>
E	Environment	Energises programmes which enable all citizens to take positive action to care for the environment
S	<b>Sustainability</b>	<b>Sets up monitoring procedures which ensure that all programmes are sustainable, long-lasting and effective</b>

Put a mark out of on the right hand side of each item in column 3 which , in your opinion, reflects the progress of your city, town or region.

1= not at all, 2= a little bit, 3= tries but doesn't succeed, 4= has a plan but not fully implemented 5= Has a strategy which it is implementing with visible results.

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**Toolkit item 3 – Attitudinal Survey**

1. Have you been involved in any of the following in the past year?

	yes	no
Taught courses designed to help you develop skills that you might use in a job		
Taught courses that were meant to lead to qualifications		
Any kind of taught learning not for qualifications?		
Learning which involved working on your own from a package of materials provided by an employer, or learning provider		
Evening classes		

2. Have you been in involved in non-taught courses as follows in the past year?

	yes	no
Keeping up to date with developments in your own field		
Teach yourself a skill from a book, video or manual?		
On-the-job training		
Studying for qualifications by yourself?		

3. How much do you want to take a formal course in any subject next year.?

Very much ... A fair amount... Not very much...Not at all...Don't know.....

4. How likely are you to do this?

Very likely...Fairly likely...Not very likely...Not at all likely...Don't know...

5. Do you enjoy learning new things?

Yes/No

6. How important is learning to you personally?

Very...Fairly... So-so...Unimportant...no interest...

7. Do you think that learning will become more important in this century?

Yes/No

8. Choose the 3 most important things (in order 1,2,3) that would most influence you in deciding to learn?

1	<b>Employer/work/improving career</b>	
2	<b>Friends</b>	
3	<b>Brochures from the local college</b>	
4	<b>Parents/relatives</b>	
5	<b>Your children</b>	
6	<b>Personal motivation</b>	
7	<b>Information from the media</b>	
8	<b>Other (please say.</b>	

9. Do you believe the following?

	Yes	No
<b>My School prepared me for a lifetime of learning</b>		
<b>The stress laid on gaining qualifications puts me off learning</b>		
<b>My employers would support me if I wanted to take up learning</b>		
<b>Computers will make learning easier</b>		

10. My preferred style of learning is (please tick)

<b>Through doing practical things</b>	
<b>On my own/self-study with books</b>	
<b>In a classroom with a teacher</b>	
<b>Practising on my own</b>	
<b>On my own with a computer</b>	
<b>Exchanging ideas with others</b>	
<b>One to one study with a tutor</b>	
<b>No preference</b>	
<b>None of these</b>	

## Toolkit item 4 – Glasgow results

1. Have you been involved in any of the following in the past year?

Taught courses designed to help you develop skills that you might use in a job	18%
Taught courses that were meant to lead to qualifications	12%
Any kind of taught learning not for qualifications?	9%
Learning which involved working on your own from a package of materials provided by an employer, or learning provider	10%
Evening classes	4%
None of these	67%

2. Have you been involved in non-taught courses as follows in the past year?

Keeping up to date with developments in your own field	19%
Teach yourself a new skill from a book, video or manual?	13%
On-the-job training	13%
Studying for qualifications by yourself?	3%
None of these	68%

3. How much do you want to take a formal course in any subject next year.?

Very much 16%	A fair amount 31%	Not very much 18%	Not at all 31%	Don't know 4%
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4. How likely are you to do this?

Very likely 18%	Fairly likely 18%	Not very likely 23%	Not all likely 36%	Don't know 4%
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5. Do you enjoy learning new things?

92% yes

Yes/No

6. How important is learning to you personally?

Very 52%	Fairly 30%	So-so 10%	Unimportant 5%	no interest 2%
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7. Do you think that learning will become more important in this century?

83% yes

8. Choose the 3 most important things (in order 1,2,3) that would most influence you in deciding to learn?

<b>Employer/work/improving career</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>Friends</b>	<b>38%</b>
<b>Brochures from the local college</b>	<b>13%</b>
<b>Parents/relatives</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>Your children</b>	<b>11%</b>
<b>Personal motivation</b>	<b>?</b>
<b>Information from the media</b>	<b>9%</b>

9. Do you believe the following?

	yes
<b>School prepared me for a lifetime of learning</b>	<b>49%</b>
<b>The stress laid on gaining qualifications puts me off learning</b>	<b>32%</b>
<b>My employers would support me if I wanted to take up learning</b>	<b>31%</b>
<b>Computers will make learning easier</b>	<b>79%</b>

10. My preferred style of learning is

<b>Through doing practical things</b>	<b>43%</b>
<b>On my own/self-study with books</b>	<b>34%</b>
<b>In a classroom with a teacher</b>	<b>29%</b>
<b>On my own with a computer</b>	<b>29%</b>
<b>Practising on my own</b>	<b>29%</b>
<b>Exchanging ideas with others</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>One to one study with a tutor</b>	<b>17%</b>
<b>No preference</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>None of these</b>	<b>4%</b>

Toolkit item 5 Characteristics of a Learning Society

a) 10 Characteristics of a Learning Society ( European Round Table of Industrialists – A Learning Society)

	<b>A Learning Society would be one in which.....</b>		
<b><u>1</u></b>	<b>Learning is accepted as a continuing activity throughout life</b>		
<b><u>2</u></b>	<b>Learners take responsibility for their own progress</b>		
<b><u>3</u></b>	<b>Assessment confirms progress rather than brands failure</b>		
<b><u>4</u></b>	<b>Capability, personal and shared values, team-working are recognised equally with the pursuit of knowledge</b>		
<b><u>5</u></b>	<b>Learning is a partnership between students, parents, teachers, employers and the community, who all work together to improve performance</b>		
<b><u>6</u></b>	<b>Everyone accepts some responsibility for the learning of others</b>		
<b><u>7</u></b>	<b>Men, women, the disabled and minority groups have equal access to learning opportunities</b>		
<b><u>8</u></b>	<b>Learning is seen as creative, rewarding and enjoyable</b>		
<b><u>9</u></b>	<b>Learning is outward-looking, mind-opening and promotes tolerance, respect and understanding of other cultures, creeds, races and traditions</b>		

**10**

**Learning is frequently celebrated individually, in families, in the community and in the wider world.**

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