Adult Education and Lifelong Learning

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Credit Rating:  20 credits, SCQF 11

Aims
1. To develop a critical understanding of major historical, theoretical and ideological perspectives relevant to the study of adult education and lifelong learning.
2. To explore the social, cultural and political contexts of current policy, research and practice.
3. To review key debates in the field of adult learning.
4. To examine the relationship between adult education, lifelong learning and social change.
5. To consider the meanings of adult literacy and their implications for policy and practice.
6. To scrutinise the contemporary policy agenda for active citizenship, lifelong learning and social inclusion.

Teaching
10 x 2.5 hours = 25 hours
The course combines lectures with group discussion and student presentations. Teaching and discussion are informed by key readings.

Assessment
One essay of 4000 words.
The focus of assessed work is individually negotiated, providing students with the opportunity to develop particular interests in some depth.

Content
Note: It should be emphasised that this course primarily reflects developments in the UK, but students are encouraged to see the wider international dimensions of these as and when appropriate.

Introduction
Focus on interests and experience of student group

Adult education and lifelong learning: connections and contradictions
Adult education and lifelong learning in the era of globalisation; competing interests; human capital and social capital; structure and agency in educational work.

Whose knowledge counts? 'Useful' and 'really useful' knowledge; feminist critiques
Liberal, vocational and radical traditions of adult education; knowledge and power; feminist critiques and counter-practice; issues of identity and difference.

Psychological and sociological perspectives on adult learning
'Pedagogy' and 'andragogy'; problems and possibilities of learning from experience; individual learning and social context; constructions of the learner.

Adult education and social change
Issues of knowledge, power and social purpose; the problem of individualisation; the relevance of the ideas of Antonio Gramsci and Paulo Freire.

**Adult literacies: policies and practices**
The hidden agenda of literacy policy; instrumentalism and creativity; literacy and literacies.

**Privileged literacies**
Measuring literacy; challenging the dominant discourse of literacy policy and research; vernacular literacies and the 'New Literacy Studies'.

**Popular education, social movements and the state**
Latin American roots of popular education; radical adult education as a resource for popular struggles; challenging the hegemony of lifelong learning.

**Adult education, lifelong learning and citizenship**
The current policy agenda for active citizenship, lifelong learning and social inclusion; adult education and the politics of citizenship; stretching the policy discourse.

**Selected Reading**


Welton M (2005) Designing the Just Learning Society. Leicester: NIACE