

## THE TRAINING OF ADULT EDUCATION TUTORS

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The provision of training for adult education tutors has made increasing, but uneven, progress within England since the Second World War. This article attempts to use the more major established developments as a framework to suggest what should be provided regarding professionalisation. Beginning with such fundamental questions as "What is a tutor of adults?" and "What needs should such a tutor be serving?" the essay moves onto a discussion of the fields of induction courses, the training of experienced teachers, the special problems related to those who organise and administer adult education programmes, and those who formulate educational policy. Amongst specific problem areas of training reviewed, special note is made of those dealing with the early school leaver who comes to the adult class, and tutors interested in promoting an adjustment to a rapidly changing society.

### WHAT IS A TUTOR?

Perhaps the greatest problem in the creation of training programmes for the adult education tutor is that of quantification. We constantly make the assumption that we can bring to situations where human beings are concerned the precision of assessment available within many of the sciences. The sophistication of our civilisation has far to go before we are able to quantify human affairs in the way we can physics or chemistry. Although we must move towards greater precision in the setting and attainment of objectives within the field of teacher training it must be appreciated that ours is a very primitive science. Much of this essay illustrates this point, it is an exercise in qualitative, not quantitative, statements.

The question "What is a tutor?" demonstrates some aspects of the qualitative nature of assessment in British adult education. The range of response may well be related to the particular institution approached, and the answer may vary from person to person within the same. Regarding this last point an area of disagreement relates to whether a tutor has as a responsibility to use part of his time for research or whether he should concentrate solely on teaching. Although this may appear a minor dispute it has serious implications in the training of a tutor. The programme of tuition for a tutor who is to include in his skills a competency in research methods will be different from that for the teacher of adults who does not require such skills.

Yet another area of disagreement is whether a tutor should be serving well-established educational needs in the adult student, or trying to discover latent needs, or creating quite new educational tastes, or a combination of all, or some, of these objectives. Again, the skills to be acquired in tutor training might vary according to which of these roles was favoured. The number of such differences in tutor outlook is legion and can range from fundamental disputes as to objectives to modest variations in emphasis. In many ways it is easier to accommodate the fundamental differences because they are usually clear-cut.

As is inevitable in such a situation when we deal with the question 'What is a tutor?' at present we generalise from the majority, and try and allow for the minority training needs within such a framework. Every training situation will send away some of its participants feeling less than completely satisfied because of this. The majority, which in itself is far from the well-defined group that title suggests, may resent the 'distraction' of making some accommodation for minority needs. The minority may consider they have too little in common with the majority for much of the training course to have relevance for them.

Because adult education in the United Kingdom is far less well developed than pre-18 year old education any training course can bring together a diverse group of professional adult educators, in our university area it would be possible to have a large group of secondary school teachers who specialized in the teaching of French to 16-18 year olds, but the limited number of full-time adult education posts does not permit such specialist groups. During the past academic year our Certificate in Adult Education programme recruited non-vocational adult educators, technical college teachers, police instructors, Royal Army Educational Corps officers, university lecturers, and college of education tutors. Our Diploma in the Advanced Study of Adult Education included tutors from the medical profession, the Townswomen's Guild, and market research. Our Seminar for Adult Educators, which meets for eight One-Day Schools each year, recruits participants ranging from prison tutor-organisers to tutors from residential colleges and the YMCA. Ideological unity is hard to come by in such diffuse gatherings.

And yet when it becomes possible to create separate groups with a more closely shared outlook in adult education one of the advantages of the present situation will have been lost. The diversely recruited groups we now bring together for training create a breadth of outlook which will disappear when the 'specialist' groups become possible. Most participants in our training programmes would agree that a major gain from such courses is that of being exposed to, and discussing, views other than those

found with n the field from which they come The bringing together of a police inspector discussing his vocationally-oriented student problems with a University Extra-Mural tutor responsible for non-vocational courses in philosophy can trigger off a series of enlightening sessions for both

However, there are, as in all human affairs, disadvantages Progress towards a declared course objective can be slow Insecurities among the participants can arise leading to sterile self-criticism or aggressive and fruitless argument It is impossible to cater for all the needs of those participating, whilst a more uniformly recruited clientele would probably leave at the conclusion of the programme less frustrated in their course ambitions

'What is a tutor?' Is one thinking of a teacher, or a tutor-organizer? Are we dealing with a part-time tutor and his training needs, or a professional teacher or administrator? Are the training needs for an induction into the field or for an experienced adult educator? Obviously these different groups have differing training needs Add to this complex picture such other fundamental characteristics of the tutor as the institution from which he is recruited, his age (i.e. the trainer's approach for a group of 50-year olds might well need to be different from that for a class of 25-year olds) and his personal philosophy and one is left with a training situation which seems near-impossible There are occasions when we feel our most valid role in training is just to get the tutor away from his work situation so that he has the opportunity to think about his job in a congenial and less committed environment

#### BRITISH TUTOR TRAINING PROGRAMMES

##### *Induction Courses*

Induction courses for whom? For the part-time tutor or the professional? For the school teacher carrying out a part-time tutorship, but who has had no training in the teaching of adults, or for the part-time tutor who has received no training in education at all? For those who teach, or for those who are expected to both teach and organize? How long should such courses last? What organizations should provide them? This latter point was brought home to our institution when we put on a course for part-time local education authority evening institute teachers and found that we were recruiting a quite different clientele because the former did not associate such courses with a university, and were unwilling to go to an awe-inspiring university when they heard of the courses Should there be orientation courses for those entering the field of adult education before there is any practical training in the teaching skills? What about follow-up courses?

Having created a comprehensive programme of tutor training induction courses how does one persuade teachers to go on such courses? Will difficult-to-recruit subject specialists be lost to adult education if they find they have to attend courses of teacher training before they arrive at the stage of earning money as a tutor?

Despite these problems, and many more unlisted, there is an increasing provision of adult education induction courses in the United Kingdom. Within our university area both the Liverpool and the Lancashire Education Authorities have pioneered impressive training programmes serving the needs of their non-vocational adult centre and evening institutes. Liverpool's Local Education Authority, has a two year part-time teacher training programme for would-be tutors of women's craft subjects in evening institutes (e.g. dressmaking, softfurnishing, cookery, etc.) which was established in the late 1940s. Lancashire holds shorter induction courses throughout the local education authority which serve the whole range of non-vocational adult education interests. The aim of such courses is to give would-be tutors teaching skills and some knowledge of the field of adult education. Lancashire has two follow-up courses available for those who complete the induction programme.

Although four Colleges of Education (Bolton, Garnett, Huddersfield and Wolverhampton) now offer teacher-training courses for those employed by technical colleges and colleges of further education this only highlights the failure of teacher-training colleges in the area of adult education. If the Colleges of Education could be persuaded to provide courses in adult education as part of their teacher-training programmes not only would a pool of trained manpower become available, but adult education would acquire the sort of pressure group for progress now found amongst primary and secondary education teachers.

Despite the increasing number of full-time posts in adult education (whether vocational or non-vocational) being created, the universities have yet to establish a one-year postgraduate Certificate in Adult Education along the lines available to new graduates who intend to enter school-teaching (i.e. the Certificate in Education). Liverpool University has put proposals for such a Certificate to the Universities Council for the Education of Teachers, and to the Department of Education and Science, and Manchester University's Department of Adult Education, the largest in the country, is known to be interested in this area of development.

In the field of induction courses a fresh approach was demonstrated by Nottingham University's Department of Adult Education, in partnership with the Leicestershire Local Education Authority. The resultant Certificate demonstrates the strengths to be derived by the coming together of two

institutions with an ability to supplement each other in various areas of expertise. It illustrates the importance of exploring further partnerships instead of following the British tradition of leaving certain jobs, such as tutor training, to single organizations. Influenced by the excellence achieved by Nottingham University, the Liverpool Education Authority has been co-operating closely with Liverpool University and Liverpool Polytechnic in its part-time Craft Teachers' Certificate which it has recently reorganised.

Many induction courses for adult education tutors are more modest in scope than these Certificate programmes. The Workers' Educational Association (West Lancashire and Cheshire District) co-operates periodically with Liverpool University's Institute of Extension Studies to put on a one-day school aimed at the training of part-time teachers employed by the Workers' Educational Association and the University. The Liverpool Education Authority holds occasional week-end courses at Burton Manor Residential College. The Blackpool Education Authority has held similar induction courses for its evening institute teachers. Such initiatives take place in most university extra-mural regions.

Those who organize and run induction courses wish to produce a tutor who will move competently into the role he has to fill at the end of the course. The trainer may well be limited in his effectiveness by a number of factors ranging from a lack of resources to a lack of time. Regarding the latter point most part-time tutors are unwilling to attend long courses (i.e. those which run for more than a few days) and whilst adult education remains such a modestly paid field this attitude is unlikely to change. Induction courses for those who are to be professionally committed to adult education are a different matter, the would-be teacher will not suffer from his job loyalty being elsewhere, and usually sees more clearly that a comprehensive induction course serves his vested interest.

The major problem of all British induction courses in the field of adult education, whether they be the City and Guilds' programmes or such Department of Education and Science recognized courses as those for further education teachers at the (Technical) Colleges of Education, is to persuade tutors to attend. It is virtually unknown to have posts in British adult or further education where being 'teacher trained' is obligatory. Within the foreseeable future such training may be made mandatory in many professional appointments, but it is impossible to envisage a time when all part-time adult education teachers have undergone induction courses. The Lancashire Education Authority, a most enlightened body in this field, has about a third of its part-time adult education teaching staff with experience of induction courses.

*Training Courses for Experienced Teachers*

British provision for the training of experienced adult educators is rather more highly developed than that for induction courses, the major reason being the interest of the universities. The best known qualification in this area is the Diploma in Adult Education pioneered by Manchester and Nottingham Universities, and now also offered by Edinburgh, Glasgow, Hull and Liverpool Universities. The core of the student body on these is composed of professional adult educators seconded by their employing authority on full salary to study for an academic year at the university, but nearly all the universities concerned also offer a day-release or part-time version of the Diploma to serve those who are unable to get a year's secondment. The University of Hull's Diploma in the Teaching of Adults is offered only in the part-time form.

Although such programmes have proved very successful they are not the complete answer to the question of the training of the experienced adult educator. The teacher needs to be exposed to the sort of situation which will make him accept change as something which is normal, and, a prerequisite of this, force him to continuously re-examine what he is doing. Although one would not expect it, educationists and teachers can be among the most conservative of people. Innovation in education is always slow in being accepted, but it is most inhibited where teachers are not taken out of their job situation periodically and exposed to new ideas and fresh discussion. Ideally any professional adult educator should be brought into such an institution as the university for a one-day school at least half a dozen times in each year. The one-day school must be something of an intellectual high point or it may degenerate into the tea-and-gossip sessions so beloved of any gathering of professionals. During the summer vacation each professional adult educator should be persuaded to go on a longer course, perhaps along the lines of the Department of Education and Science's eight-day programme held at Salisbury each year. The American idea of tying salary increases to attendance at such courses is worth examining as a mode of persuading the professional adult educator to attend such programmes.

The experienced part-time teacher provides greater training problems. There may be an even more pressing need for such tutors to receive the sort of stimulus a course will provide. The full-time professional adult educator at least has the stimulus that adult education is his livelihood and he devotes most of his working time to it, but for a majority of part-time teachers it is just a way of earning a little extra money and is, therefore, of only limited importance in their lives.

In Britain there is a need to establish a tradition of experienced part-

time adult education teachers attending regular training sessions. This might well be no more than two week-end schools per annum, but it would be enough to ensure an adequate briefing on new developments.

Besides the more obvious advantages of training programmes for experienced adult educators, such as those keeping abreast of innovation, discussion amongst teachers of their problems and experiences, there seems to be much to be gained in the way of enhanced morale amongst those who have participated. The reasons for this are manifold, ranging from a feeling of being in a more 'professional' group to the gaining of greater confidence on the part of the individual.

#### *Organizers and Administrators*

Almost all organizers and administrators in British adult education are recruited from the ranks of teachers in the field. Ignoring the problems raised by the organizer who also teaches, or the teacher who also organizes, we are left with administrators and organizers who have been trained as teachers, and such training becomes increasingly irrelevant to their daily tasks as organizers. British adult education has often suffered more from a lack of administrators than from a shortage of competent teachers. Administrators and organizers usually have a much dated knowledge of the teaching situation and no training as administrators. Some authorities have made modest attempts to deal with this problem by means of the occasional week-end conference, but it has been an area where the amateur stands supreme.

The training of administrators and organizers contrasts with the more numerous efforts to cope with the needs of teachers in adult education. The most enlightened of institutions may offer only a printed pamphlet of instructions. British adult education has been aware of the need for the 'professionalisation' of teachers, but quite happy to ignore the other training requirements in the field.

At Liverpool we have begun to explore co-operation with the University's School of Business Studies in the area of the Master of Business Administration degree, but an initial enquiry amongst adult educators in our region suggests that we are beginning at too ambitious a level, and some more modest programmes would suit administrators and organizers better. It is a valid commentary on the points previously made that our teachers of adults are eager to gain access to Master's degree and Doctoral degree programmes in adult education, but that our administrators and organizers feel that the MBA course is at too sophisticated a level. Perhaps in twenty years' time the MBA qualification will be a necessary entry qualification to adult education administration, but at present we are making our first

tentative moves towards training courses in this area. We are at the stage of bringing together administrators and organizers to try to define their areas of professional weakness with a view to beginning the task of planning training programmes. Until such time that we have as comprehensive a programme of induction and further training courses for administrators and organizers as we have for teachers we must expect the teaching side of British adult education to be more effective than the administration which backs it up. One of the immediate problems which has arisen is that it is often easier to take out a teacher from his work situation than it is to send an administrator on a course.

#### *Higher Degrees*

There has been an explosion in the demand amongst adult education teachers for higher degrees. There are far more applicants for places on Master of Education and Master of Arts programmes than there are places which has led to a creaming-off of the best students from the Diploma in Adult Education courses. Increasingly those who do the Master's degrees hope to go on to read for a Doctor of Philosophy degree. The PhD degree and many of the master's degrees are gained solely by the writing of a thesis on some research project. Although any development which leads to extensive further study is to be encouraged the thesis-based higher degree does not seem particularly suited to the needs of adult educators. The research done rarely makes any substantial contribution to the advancement of the knowledge of the field, although there have been some notable exceptions (cf 2). British Universities appear to be mainly geared to producing potential university dons (particularly in the area of higher degrees), and this can work to the disadvantage of adult education. What is needed at the master's and doctoral level is a much greater emphasis on seminar and course work, and a more modest dissertation requirement. The format for the American doctorate (course work and dissertation) would seem preferable to that for the British one (thesis alone).

#### *New Courses*

Although there are many problems related to the aims and effectiveness of the established training programmes, even more complex demands are being made upon the organizations concerned as the complexity of adult education provision grows. Two obvious factors are of paramount importance in the attempts to train tutors for new teaching and administrative roles. In Britain, a majority of the population abandons educational pursuits, whether non-vocational or vocational, at the end of their initial compulsory schooling. Secondly, we have yet to adjust to a society

which demands constant change, we still think in terms of a man trained for a life-long career instead of his having perhaps four or more careers during his working life. Although the tutor trainers will already be in a situation where there are continually acquiring new skills and concepts, they neither train their tutors to be missionaries of change nor to expect to have to change radically within their present careers (or perhaps to switch careers).

With regard to the recruitment of more 'working class' students the sort of tutor needed for this task may prove to be rather different from those already involved in adult and further education. Work being done in the Liverpool area has moved towards the establishment of experimental tutor training programmes to be launched this year. The experience upon which planning will be based is that of the Worker's Educational Association's tutor-organizer attached to the Liverpool Educational Priority Area (3, 4, 5), plus the considerable expertise of the Social Studies Division within the University's Institute of Extension Studies, particularly in the field of community development. Beginning with one-day schools and a twenty-meeting course, it is hoped that the Institute of Extension Studies Adult Education Division will be able to provide a one-year tutor training programme within the next two or three years. This goal should be greatly aided by a considerable research grant awarded the Social Studies Division to study community development, including the adult education aspects of it.

Although the Liverpool area is among the most advanced centres in the field of research into working-class adult education needs, other regions have exciting projects, notably the Department of Adult Education at the University of Keele in North Staffordshire. The extensive experience of a number of universities in workers' industrial day-release courses, such as Nottingham, Manchester and Sheffield, provides further expertise (cf. 1) regarding the sort of tutors who need to be trained to recruit and teach working-class students.

From these early experiments in the training of tutors for those within society who do not participate, at present, in education doubtlessly we shall find that we need to develop a number of tutor specialisms. Already such specialization is becoming apparent. The training of a tutor to educate a community in handling its needs in social welfare and public administration terms is likely to differ from the training of a tutor to educate the illiterate and semiliterate. Similarly, the tutor who deals with the retraining of workers in job skills may well need a different emphasis in his teacher training than the tutor who offers leisure time tuition in popular subjects like motor maintenance and woodwork. There will be a core of material

needed by all these tutor training courses, particularly in the field of sociology or adult learning, but from this programme foundation there may well need to be a greater emphasis on specialist skills.

American statistics show that over 40 per cent of each 18-20 year old age group in the United States now enters institutions of higher education, which suggests that Britain can expect to reach a stage when almost half the population will continue their education immediately beyond 18 years, but this is a still distant prospect. We must anticipate that the present situation where the bulk of the population have left full-time schooling well before the age of 18 years will continue for sometime. Under such circumstances no healthy democracy can ignore the inequalities of the use of taxpayers' money in state education provision. Efforts must increasingly be made to achieve a fairer distribution of educational resources, and this will mean the training of tutors in a way which makes them less alien than the present programmes which are well suited to middle class tastes, but have a uncomfortable quality for the working-classes. Whether it is assisting working class groups to help themselves or teaching specific skills like literacy and numeracy, a new generation of tutors has to be created who are acceptable to the potential clientele.

In many ways the question of training tutors who are to be catalysts for change raises a number of issues also related to working class adult education. Besides the obvious point of the bulk of the population being working class, (and, therefore, when we speak of change numerically we are talking mainly of the working class), there is also the fact that the acceptance of change as a norm of life in education needs a modification of both the tutors we train and the institutions to which they are sent. Just as our present tutor training programmes produce teachers best suited to deal with middle-class students, so such courses are aimed at an educational system and society where change is comparatively slow.

How does an institution create training courses which produce tutors who are educating the population in the ways of change? Like so many other areas of adult education this question demonstrates the paucity of our research. Of the modest amount of research carried out to date in Britain most of it is related to the workers accepting change in their jobs. Such teams as the Industrial Research Unit at London University have produced research findings which are generally applicable to the whole range of adult education activities, although their aim was to answer questions specifically raised in the context of change and industrial training (6).

Besides a need to build into any tutor training courses an element which will produce teachers who accept, and expect their students to accept, rapid change as a normal part of life, we may find that this aspect of the

programme will need to be reinforced by specially trained tutors. These would be equipped to handle the educational needs of crises which change brings about or which are needed to bring change about. Rapid change in all aspects of western life is already a fundamental factor in our existence, and it will become the most important facet within the foreseeable future. Besides the more obvious fields in which people will require education to accept change (such as in jobs), change is already taking place in other areas where people had previously assumed stability, such as in the structure of the family. Like manual dexterity, the mental skill of accepting change in practically all things should prove to be one which can be developed to a level acceptable to society in terms of the needs of the near future.

Such tutors would be amateurs of change, but their training would raise new problems because our present research leaves us with many questions, and few answers. We are much closer to creating effective training programmes for would-be working class adult education tutors than in making even a modest beginning on the complex issue of the tutor-for-change training.

#### *Institutions*

Along with an often disproved belief that our tutor training courses should merely provide more of the same and our adult teacher crisis would be solved, goes a tradition of striving for an ideal in our tutor training which clashes with the institution to which that student is sent. This is a problem in all areas of teacher training, and not just adult education. Frequent protests are made by headmasters about how ill-suited are the new teachers coming from colleges of education and universities in relation to the needs of their schools. Quite frequently the opposite is the case and the newly trained teacher is better suited to the needs of his student or pupil than is the institution in which he is expected to teach.

Institutions tend to be conservative in their methods and outlook. Not all change is desirable, and there is a need to preserve the more admirable methods and traditions of the past, but institutions need to modify continuously to keep pace with a society which itself is always changing. Too often British adult education training programmes are persuaded to compromise their ideal of what the tutors they are producing should be like to accommodate the more conservative requirements of the institutions to which they are being sent. Those who run training programmes should be more aware of the need to alter attitudes within the groups which control and influence the character of British adult education institutions. The answer to this problem is seemingly easy in that it is usually possible to persuade adult centre principals or Workers' Educational Association

district secretaries to attend regular adult education seminars, but this often proves to be only the periphery of the problem of producing new attitudes

In Britain the true policy-makers in adult education are always too busy to attend such seminars, let alone a more comprehensive programme. Education is supposed to teach a new generation to adjust and accept change, but no local education authority director, or Department of Science and Education decision-maker, is ever seconded for a year's study to refresh his ideas and gain new knowledge and techniques, only university professors are considered as candidates for such sabbaticals. Until we acknowledge that any man can be spared for a year, and that such refresher-years will prove economically fruitful because of more efficient leadership, then we are going to continue to be faced with adult education institutions which are a pace behind the needs of society. Although we can continue to train tutors who are better adjusted to the needs of their students than the institutions in which they work, this will lead to their inevitable frustration, and the devotion of much of their time to trying to make the institution adjust to new realities. In the last resort, probably most tutors will compromise more with the character of the institution than with the needs of the students.

In future we are going to have to prepare training and refresher programmes for all those who are influential in the running of our institutions. Not only will this include key figures such as directors of education in local education authorities, but also such groups as student committee members, and maintenance staff. In the Liverpool University region, the most frequent problem on the staffing side reported to us by adult centre principals is that of a lack of co-operation on the part of school janitors. When we talk of the training of teachers in adult education we do so at our peril if we do not also discuss allied training courses for those who make possible the smooth running of the institution in which classes or similar activities are held. This is all the more true if the services are backing up the sort of adult education exercises which take place outside of a building as is the case with much of the action-research in working class areas.

#### CONCLUSION

Is there an ideal tutor? If there is then the matter of training programmes for teachers of adults would be comparatively simple. Human beings are so complex, and their educational needs so diverse, that the nearest we can hope to get to an ideal tutor is to train the teacher to find an effective compromise between the demands of society in such areas as vocational

skills and social expertise, and the personal requirements of the student

The knowledge explosion is gathering ever-increasing momentum which means that the educational emphasis in our society must, for a large minority in Britain, begin to come in the post-18 year old period. Adult education, whether vocational or non-vocational, will demand increasing specialisation from a majority of its tutors, but will also require people with a good grasp of much more extensive areas of the field who can co-ordinate the specialist tutors' activities. We are going to need to develop numerous training programmes aimed at a number of differently styled 'ideal' tutors. At present we provide courses for a 'jack-of-all-trades' adult educator, in future such programmes may be modified to suit the generalist who co-ordinates specialist tutors, but the latter will need training, and frequent retraining, in special areas of adult education.

We are at the very beginning of a tradition of teacher training. This is almost as true of pre-18 year old tutor training as of adult education. Much of what we do at present in the field of adult education teacher training is guided by little more than intuition, and is modest in extent. Most tutors in adult education in Britain are untrained. The trained tutor elite who received further training is so small that their impact on the field is swamped.

This amateurism is changing. All adult tutor training institutions are expanding. Unfortunately our available knowledge and expertise remains less than adequate, and the resources\* that are needed to counter this are nowhere available. Teacher training programmes in the United Kingdom are probably the most developed in Western Europe's adult education, but we feel that we have hardly begun the first bar of the overture, let alone got into the main body of the opera.

\*The Universities Council for Adult Education has made a plea for more money (equivalent to 15% of current teaching costs) to allow increased provision of training for part-time tutors and increased research into the theory and practice of adult education (7, p 66)

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