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Papers presented in the Workshop "Internal Impacts"

- Transforming the university into a lifelong learning institution: an examination of the training needs of staff to meet new challenges
  Rob Mark, Queen's University, Belfast, United Kingdom

- EU-US experience in application of EFQM model for LLL management
  Alfredo Soeiro, University of Porto, Portugal

- Returning students at University: motivations, obstacles and training impact
  Gil Vertongen, Frédéric Nils, Facultés Universitaires Saint-Louis and Université catholique de Louvain, Belgium

'CREATING LIFELONG LEARNING UNIVERSITIES THROUGH APPROPRIATE TRAINING AND SUPPORT FOR STAFF WORKING IN THEM.'

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Introduction

This article examines the training needs of staff working in the higher education sector, including their initial and ongoing training needs. In universities today, we are seeking to find new ways in which staff working in lifelong learning can best meets the needs of very diverse client groups. In order to become effective lifelong learning universities, staff need to be able to implement forward-looking policies and practices. Lifelong learning serves a wide variety of students, including those of different ages and community backgrounds. There is also a focus on widening participation to include new and under-represented groups. Courses are wide ranging in terms of subject matter and are designed to meet economic, social and cultural goals. Success in European universities will depend on the effective training of staff to equip them to meet the challenges on the newly emerging lifelong learning university. Staff development programmes should be designed to assist staff to become more effective in their work.

What are the skills needed for working in lifelong learning?

The appropriate management of staff and training and staff development activities is important for the success of lifelong learning strategies in universities. There are a number of reasons which make working in lifelong learning different to teaching or working with students on other programmes - lifelong learning serves a large and varied group of students of all ages and different educational levels; students are studying part-time, often with many other commitments and complex needs; often a large numbers of part-time staff and external experts are involved; specialist support staff are needed because of the administrative demands of large number of students enrolling on short courses and the demands of students studying using technology (e.g. 'E' , 'B' or 'M' learning); staff have often to work different hours (including evenings and weekends) and in different places where lifelong learning is delivered; lifelong learning is also often at the forefront of educational innovation and has to respond to changing external needs and factors; it involves working effectively with other people across the university, and with people in businesses and in many different kinds of organisations outside the university at local, regional and international level. Good leadership, effective teamwork and skills for teaching and learning which take account of the needs of older adults, are particularly important in lifelong learning.

Staff often need to be multi-skilled, combining a wide range of skills including academic, pedagogic, administrative, marketing, etc; Lifelong learning needs teachers who are not only experts in their subject and able to convey their knowledge and enthusiasm, but are also experts in teaching adults using a variety of teaching methods, which increasingly includes distance education and computer based learning. It also needs specialist support for staff, who are not expert in marketing, administration, information technology, financial management, etc; Staff working in lifelong learning need to be able to work collaboratively with people from across the university and from many businesses and organisations outside the university. They need to be customer-oriented, to develop skills in working with large numbers of adult students and external organisations. They need to be, motivated, independent and able to contribute to the provision of creative and innovative courses. They also need to be able to give leadership. Trends in lifelong learning influence management decisions on staff and staff development. The need for training will also reflect the university's organisational framework for lifelong learning. New developments in lifelong learning influence management decisions on staff and staff development The manager must arrange for the administrative, clerical, financial, marketing, technical, IT, design, cleaning, security and other support staff provide the back-up which is essential for a successful programme. Procedures are necessary for:

- identifying, quantifying and costing the need for a service as well as to decide if a staff appointment (full-time or part-time) or can be met from elsewhere in the university, or 'bought in' from a firm outside the university;
- recruitment and appointment of staff with appropriate skills for lifelong learning
- recruiting staff with expertise to support programmes

- Identifying and arranging suitable training to enable staff to acquire the precise skills needed. e.g. induction and training and ongoing staff development and support both within the university and outside.
- enabling specialised staff to keep up-to-date and to develop through participating in meetings, conferences and professional activities outside the university;
- monitoring the work of the support staff to ensure that the service provided is effective.

What makes a good teacher of adults?

Promoting effective teaching and learning calls for both subject expertise and knowledge of teaching skills appropriate for working with adults. Teachers should :

- Be knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the subject they teach and able to impart that to others;
- Be closely linked to their profession so that they can link their teaching to current issues and practice in whatever the discipline.;
- Have appropriate teaching skills and the ability to build on the experience of their students;
- Be able to be imaginative and creative in designing and delivering programmes, (including undertaking appropriate collaboration with other European countries
- Be able to apply different teaching methods as appropriate to the group(workshops, lectures, one-to –one , use of technology in teaching etc;
- Be able to develop and promote external engagement and include practical knowledge relevant to their subject;
- Be able to use technology to support courses including technologies which promote learning at a distance.

If staff have responsibilities for courses and teams, they also need management skills to plan, organise and run programmes, with a good grasp of the quality expected by the university and students, and of the financial requirements.

Meeting the needs of part-time staff

In many European universities a large number of staff who teach on programmes are employed part-time. This is often one of the features which distinguishes lifelong learning from other university teaching. The term 'part-time staff' may refer to someone who gives a lecture, gives a paper at a conference, or simply does a few hours teaching. It may also describe someone who teaches a number of courses but who has not been appointed to a post as a full-time member of staff. Part-time staff bring a far wider range of expertise than cannot be found among the permanent university staff. In addition, such contacts may lead to opportunities for university-enterprise collaboration - for research and scholarly activities. Part-time staff include people with qualifications in many subjects and often extensive experience gained at home and abroad. They may have retired from full-time employment but welcome the opportunities offered to share their knowledge and experience. Part-time staff also enable lifelong learning provision to respond quickly and flexibly to market needs. e.g. they enable universities to provide a large number of courses on a topical subject, or to provide courses at times and places when the university's full-time staff are not available. Staff development is very important for all staff engaged in lifelong learning. Staff development is the responsibility of the individual, as well as of university managers and heads of department. Support may comes from colleagues and other systems found in universities. In some cases support and advice from an external professional organization.

Staff teaching in lifelong learning need staff development and support in their academic discipline, e.g. by taking further qualifications , attending conferences, planning and undertaking projects with colleagues and by working in professional practice, business and other organisations. They need to be aware of local ,regional and international developments in their subject areas. They need to build and maintain contacts, e.g. in business, industry, the professions, local and national government, the European Commission, learned societies and other universities; in 'networking' through participation in national and European networks; increasingly, academic staff are expected to have, or to acquire, a teaching qualification and many universities now offer a qualification on adult education, or on teaching and learning generally; they need skills to do research, which raises the status of the university and which promotes collaboration between staff in lifelong learning centres and departments; They need to keep abreast of skills in IT and its educational applications for course development; to strengthen the management skills needed to run successful in lifelong learning and to take on additional responsibilities as their career progresses; Staff need access to materials on in

lifelong learning (books, reports, journals, examples of good practice etc;) through a staff library, resource centre or electronic source. Staff also need access to suitable professional development courses, including distance learning programmes. Continuing professional development is a major branch of LLL and this expertise can be used to provide excellent programmes for its own staff. Some universities have recognised this and given the same unit responsibility for UCE and for the staff development for all the university's staff.

Training for success: a case study

The School of Education at Queen's University Belfast, Northern Ireland, is a major provider of lifelong learning courses, having approximately 10,000 students studying part-time for degrees, diplomas and certificates and for non-accredited courses. Courses are offered at different levels, i.e. general interest, graduate and postgraduate levels. Learners are drawn from a diverse range of occupations and abilities. The work of the Institute also spans a number of subject disciplines including management and teacher education. The School of Education has established close links with industry, the voluntary and community sector, and other training providers. In addition to a core of full-time teaching staff, the School employs some 200-300 part-time teaching staff each year to assist with the delivery of courses. These staff help with teaching on short courses (both credit and non-credit), certificate, diploma and degree programmes. Some tutors teach only one or two sessions while others deliver whole modules or courses. Some teach in the day-time and other in the evening or at weekends, and many are employed in occupations related to the particular subjects that they teach, so bringing valuable experience to their teaching. Since the early 1990s, the School of Education has had a staff training and development unit, with a remit to develop a support programme for all new staff and to meet the ongoing training and development needs of all staff in the University. The main thrust of this unit has been to provide support for full-time members of staff teaching mainly on full time courses in the University. A few short courses around the needs of mature students have been offered through this programme but, in general, the particular needs of part-time tutors working with mature students are not catered.

As most of the non-traditional students or mature students who study in the university are registered on courses in the School of Education, it is here that there is principally here that special need for courses geared towards the training and development needs of staff working with mature students. Many of the Institute's staff are employed on a part-time basis because of their particular knowledge from their work in business and industry, the professions, and in the voluntary and community sector. While these staff have specialised knowledge relevant to adult and continuing education, often they have no specific knowledge or skills in adult teaching and pedagogy or in the use of technology in teaching (e.g. the use of web-based study materials or online tutorial support in teaching). In addition there are constant changes in teaching and administration of courses. As a part of its drive to improve quality and standards, the Institute of Lifelong Learning appointed a full-time member of staff whose role includes the development of a training programme which meets the ongoing development needs of staff working in the School.

A further consideration is the need to run courses at times when part-time tutors could attend (i.e. evenings and week-ends). This is, of course, normal practice within the School where most courses are offered outside normal working hours, but not elsewhere in the University, where courses are largely provided only in the day-time.

A compulsory induction programme is offered for all new tutors. In addition, short courses, each lasting for up to 30 hours per year, exist to support the ongoing training needs of tutors. Each programme is offered as a 'credit' course and all new tutors appointed in the Institute are invited to complete this training (unless they have already completed a similar one elsewhere). Such credit points are transferable and holders can use them for entry to, or for remission from, elements of other training programmes in the University and elsewhere. The content of study is described below and is decided by the expressed needs of the part-time tutors and lecturers, who are surveyed annually to determine their specific needs and interests. The induction for part-time tutors is offered normally three times a year. The induction lasts for 3 hours, and participants are introduced to educational and administrative issues relevant to working in adult and continuing education. An induction pack, containing information on diverse issues such as health and safety, using the University and departmental libraries, preparing lecture handouts, regulations regarding off-prints and copyright, and audio visual support, is given to all new tutors. The pack also includes introductory educational material on working with adults, guidance and counseling, assessment methods and course evaluation. Tutors who are unable to attend are given an induction pack and all tutors are invited to meet individually with the staff development officer for advice on curriculum or administrative issues or to discuss any particular issues or concerns.

The School of Education offers both a credit and non-credit route according to the individual's circumstances and needs. Programmes are offered both in the evenings and at weekends and at different times during the academic year. Many tutors have chosen to attend just a few sessions each year, sometimes refreshing their knowledge on issues, or sometimes attending sessions on new topics of interest. If participants wish to take the course for credit they must attend all of the teaching sessions in any one year and they must also complete a formal assessment. Topics covered have included: adults as learners, planning for teaching and learning, using audio visual aids, assessment methods, reviewing learning, working with small and large groups, guidance and counseling, skills involved in making good presentations and using technology in learning (e.g. use of PowerPoint, the world wide web, designing computer-based assignments, the University's virtual learning environment, etc).In addition, specialist lectures on issues of particular concern are sometimes given by visiting experts from other universities and providers of LLL at home and abroad. These have included talks on aspects of assessment, project and work-based learning methodologies, and comparative studies of provision in other countries (e.g. study circles).Course participants who wish to receive credit for completing the course, submit a reflective learning journal demonstrating their learning from the course. They are also required to give a presentation demonstrating some aspect of their learning form the course. The scope of the written journal is wide-ranging. It is usually linked to the participants' current teaching and is intended to show how they have used the knowledge from the course to enhance their own knowledge of skills in teaching and learning. The journal helps the participant to:

- identify aspects of their role in lifelong learning ;
- demonstrate an understanding of key issues in promoting effective teaching and learning;
- develop knowledge, skills and experience for effective practice;
- demonstrate how the course has met the individual's own further professional development needs.

Course participants submit a written account of a course which they are currently teaching. This includes information about the learning group, the aims and objectives of the course, course content, assessment, teaching methods and resources used, and information on how the course will be evaluated. They must also submit a critical evaluation of the course and samples of materials they used as a result of doing the course (e.g. course outlines, handouts, teaching aids, forms of assessment used, etc). Finally, participants are asked to give a short oral presentation to the rest of the group, outlining key issues which have emerged from their learning during the course. Feedback suggests that participants see them as useful, enhancing their understanding of educational issues and ultimately improving their teaching performance. Tutors can also progress on to other certificate, diploma , master's and doctoral programmes which seek to development practical skills, theoretical knowledge and an understanding of the local, national and European policy contexts. They provide support for learning, teaching and research in a lifelong learning university .In addition, self-access materials have been developed on a wide range of topics related to teaching, learning and adults. Course materials have been developed into self study units with self-assessment exercises, and these are available via the University's virtual learning environment - 'Queen's Online', for which all tutors are given a password. Examples of units of study include assessment methods for adults, small group teaching, using ICT in the classroom ,the learning environment, and equal opportunities issues, etc. The web-site is particularly useful for staff who cannot attend training sessions, or who prefer to access information from University access centers, from their home, or from another convenient access point. As well as training modules and units of study, the site contains information on special announcements, meetings and guidance for day-to-day administration. The site is also very useful for staff who are new to working in the Institute, and who need much guidance on day-to-day administrative issues. It is hoped that the information will make it easier for staff to get their particular problems and enquiries answered immediately. It also frees full-time staff from handling routine enquiries and enables them to deal with more specialised issues of concern.
Some of the courses are aligned to standards and qualifications which not only provide a university award but also professional recognition from an external awarding body known as Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK) . This body works closely with employers and stakeholders across the UK to develop standards and qualifications for the lifelong learning sector. In recent years ,Lifelong Learning - UK has developed new generic teaching qualifications as part of the reform of initial teacher/tutor/trainer education.

Conclusion

This paper has demonstrated the importance of meeting the training needs of staff working in university lifelong learning. As the paper shows, the needs are wide and varied and considerable support is needed both from within and outside the university. Where this challenge is met, the university will reap many reward and the task of becoming a lifelong learning university will be more certain to succeed.

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EU-US EXPERIENCE IN APPLICATION OF EFQM MODEL FOR LLL MANAGEMENT

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A. Introduction

The paper is divided in two main parts. The first one addresses the presentation of the results of the EU-US financed project DAETE – Development of Accreditation of in Engineering Training and Accreditation (daete.up.pt) that occurred between 2006 and 2008. The second is dedicated at presenting an ongoing project that continues and enlarges the objectives of the previous project. Both are dedicated at the quality improvement of the management of LLL centers. The first project aims at internal impact based on self-assessment tools of LLL centers and the second project is dedicated aims at improving the management system of the LLL centers. DAETE was based on the adaptation of the EFQM model to LLL while providing a tool allowing the analysis of performance and results of LLL centers. UNIQM tries to integrate existing tools (like the DAETE matrix) and provide a set of tools focused on the continuous improvement of LLL. UNIQM tries to provide a coherent model for continuous improvement of LLL centers.

The DAETE project was financed by the program Atlantis and is supported on equal terms by the European Commission in the European Union and by FIPSE (Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education) in the USA. The project was approved under the strand Policy Oriented Measures. There were four partners in Europe (U. Porto, Helsinki U. Technology, Imperial College and U. Polytechnic of Valencia) and one partner in the USA (U. Wisconsin) joined later by three other universities (U. Michigan, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and Georgia Institute of Technology).

The UNIQM project is financed by the European Commission and is included in the LifeLong Learning program. It has four universities as initial partners (U. Polytechnic of Valencia, Imperial College, Helsinki U. Technology and U. Porto) and may have four other partners (U. Krems, Katholieke U. Leuven, Tecnhical U. Delft and U. Aarhus) if the extension is accepted by the European Commission. The project started in 2007 and will end in 2009 but a new ending date was proposed.

B. DAETE Project Overview

The relevance of this project is directly connected with the mobility of engineers between Europe and the USA. This may be relevant with the outsourcing of engineering projects on both sides of the Atlantic and with the need to cooperate in the Lifelong Learning paths of engineers. These issues are currently important and crucial for engineering education and training. This also reflects the need for new and innovative quality assurance procedures for Continuing Engineering Education, in particular, and for Lifelong Learning, in general. In fact, the motivating issues and the results are common to the specific and general areas of LLL.

The objectives of the project were to present among the partners the experience and practices of the participating institutions in quality control and accreditation for engineering education and vocational training, to analyze and debate the models that can be used taking account the different experiences on both sides of the Atlantic, to produce guidelines advisable for quality assurance and accreditation, to test the recommendations and to adapt the guidelines to the feedback results.

The innovative strategies of this project consisted in addressing the different approaches of EU and US about the topic, allowing the exchange of experiences and of results of the case studies. This allowed a reciprocal understanding of the benefits of the methods that can be used by the engineering educational and training community in the UE and in US. That was particularly relevant to the part of the EFQM model in the area of the Results section where the contribution of the US partners fostered the progress and adaptation of the new sub-criteria.

The added value of this transatlantic cooperation can be me measured under two perspectives. The first perspective is related to the sharing the experiences of the partners on EU and US concerning the quality assessment of education and training in LLL. In effect the environments that framed the

progress of this area have been different in these two regions. In Europe the research and development about quality evaluation of LLL has been based on joint projects supported by the EU funding. As examples of this group are the projects where EUCEN (European Universities Continuing Education Network) participated like Equipe and Equipe Plus. In the US the quality assessment has been developed using market analysis and the activities of organizations like ASEE (American Society of Engineering Education) and UCEA (University Continuing Education Association).

These two lines of action have created different management approaches and benchmarking results that were analyzed together by the partners. The partners of this project have worked closely to extract the benefits of the differences existing in theories and in the implemented practices. The project had this significant motivation of having this exchange and debate about the methods and the practices that would lead to an improvement of the specific knowledge and of the implemented practice.

The planned activities consisted in presenting experiences and case studies in the area of accreditation and quality assessment of engineering education and training, in running joint meetings of partners to discuss the models and strategies (evaluated by the partners) and in testing the improvement recommendations among partners. This first phase produced a version accepted by all partners based on the model of the EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management – www.efqm.org). A large amount of work was done to include the correct criteria and sub-criteria that would be valid and effective on both sides of the Atlantic by the LLL managers. This was the most difficult and challenging part of the project. It brought intense and fruitful debates among the partners with clear results.

A second phase consisted in testing and benchmarking the model within the organizations of LLL and to reformulate the model and guidelines according to the testing results. There were two motivations for this activity. The first was to disseminate and engage the LLL communities in Europe and in USA. The second was to test, on an enlarged scale, the model accepted by the partners. This phase was implemented in three conferences. One was European and organized by SEFI (Société Européenne pour la Formation des Ingénieurs – www.sefi.be) in Rovaniemi, Finland as the Forum for CEE. The second was the conference of ASEE (American Society for Engineering Education – www.asee.org) CIEC (Conference for Industry and Education Cooperation) held in New Orleans, USA. The third workshop, where the final version of the model was tested, was the 12th World Conference of IACEE (International Association for Continuing Engineering Education – www.iacee.org) held in Atlanta, USA.

The final result of these two phases was a model that is composed by a matrix for self evaluation for the LLL centers. This can be used for improvement of the LLL centers in two ways. One is to compare the results with those of other LLL centers. The second is to use the matrix of self-assessment to perform an internal reflection and debate about the management of the center. In both cases the help of experts on the method from IACEE or from other LLL or quality assurance organizations can be applied to improve the management.

The reaction from the European and American partners that participated in the workshops helped the tuning of the model and of the criteria and sub-criteria. There was also a good reaction from participants with some possible developments in adaptation of the tool for a more generalized approach to LLL management. One of those developments from the DAETE project was also the possible continuation in subsequent research projects in Europe and in the United States. For instance, in Europe there is already the execution of the project UNIQM (University Quality Management) that will try to extend to a more coherent and abridging model of the university LLL management system. Another development is the new proposal being prepared for the Atlantis program in 2009 looking at similar issues on both sides of the Atlantic. Another important step in the exploitation of the matrix tool is the possibility of IACEE to adopt it as part of the quality evaluation activities of CEE centers around the world. Another relevant action to the project results was the translation into Chinese of the DAETE matrix by Tsinghua University and the distribution of the publication among the Chinese centers.

C. UNIQM Project Overview

As mentioned before the project in the continuation of DAETE in an European context is UIQNM (University Quality Management). The importance of quality helps improving standards and increasing efficiency in LLL centers. While this is widely understood with respect to undergraduate programs, this is not the case with LLL activities, where there is a wide diversity of both offerings and providers. The questions raised in terms of quality is how it can be assessed effectively and can it be produced a general model that can meet a wide range of needs in terms of management. The project tries to define a framework and several tools, which will enable centers of LLL to evaluate the quality of their operations and enable them to benchmark against other similar institutions. Another objective is to offer institutions a forum and a test-bed for these tools through the establishment of a network based on UNIQM.

The project partners, listed below have experience in addressing quality issues within the university sector, especially in regard to LLL. The partners in UNIQM are Universidad Politecnica de Valencia, Spain, University of Porto, Portugal, Helsinki University of Technology, Finland, Imperial College London, UK, University of Aahrus, Denmark, Danube University Krems, Austria and KU Leuven, Belgium. The approach is not arbitrary, but is rooted within the broad principles of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM), with its specific criteria and sub criteria revised to suit the needs of a LLL environment. Case studies, best practices guides and a scoring system will be developed. The final outputs comprehend a set of three coherent quality management web-based tools: (1) questionnaire for self assessment, (2) matrix for self assessment and (3) matrix with facts for external evaluation.

The work-packages of the project are nine. The first is Project Management intended as service to research activities, administrative daily management, progress reports preparation, co-ordination of partners among themselves and towards the Lifelong Learning priorities, meetings organization. It is also considered the continuous monitoring activities, including risk analysis and actions to be taken. The second WP is Quality and Evaluation Plan. There will be an external evaluator that will monitor the project management activities. The external evaluator will prepare a report every six months analyzing project activities and determining the main strengths and weakness of project management. There will also be internal evaluation reports made by each of the partners reflecting on what was performed versus what was planned and a preview of the future tasks. The WP3 is Dissemination. It has three main components: website development, community building and international conferences. The first one is related with the website of the project designed to inform about project activities and to involve centers and professionals interested on quality management of LLL. The community building consists in creating a virtual social network on LLL. The third is a possible presentation on each related international conference. The WP4 is Exploitation. It aims at increasing the level of importance of LLL quality management at a policy level. The WP5 is Development of the model of LLL Quality Management. The goal is to define a methodology and a set of standard forms intended to revise the model of EFQM adapted to LLL. The WP6 is Development of Tools for Quality Management in LLL. The objective will be to create a set of three quality management tools: (1) questionnaire for self assessment, (2) matrix for self assessment and (3) matrix with facts for external evaluation. WP7 is Definition of Standard Processes and Indicators. It deals with the definition of standard processes and indicators for lifelong learning activities. WP8 is Development of Web Based Tools for Quality Management in LLL. It aims at creating the needed infrastructure to deal with the services foreseen on the project. The WP9 is an International Conference on Quality Management in LLL. The objective of this work-package is to contribute to the dissemination of the results of the project, to help on valorization activities and to share experiences on quality management in LLL. Another important objective of this international conference is to lay the foundations for the creation of a network dedicated to QM in LLL. Major organizations will be invited and, together with results presentation, the possible statutes will be presented for the start of the network.

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TO BECOME A LIFELONG LEARNING ORGANISATION
THE UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGY OF LILLE[1] EXPERIENCE

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The backgrounds

In 1986, the University of Sciences and Technology of Lille (USTL) decided to open most of its regular programmes to adults. Concretely it meant:

- provision of pedagogical arrangements making possible flexible participation for people engaged in professional life or for unemployed people;
- creation of new dedicated services merged in an Access Centre, the SUDES (Service Universitaire de Développement Economique et Sociel –Social and Economic Development University Service) whose mission was to provide advice and counselling for designing learning pathways for adults, to organise validation of non formal and informal learning for access and exemption (according to a new decree published in 1985), to manage at administrative and financial level their participation in regular programmes and provide guidance and support during their route in the University.

By this way the University wanted to consider continuing education as a central element of its activity, fully integrated in its policy.

This strategic choice showed clearly to external actors, decision makers, companies, social partners, that the USTL wanted to become a partner definitely involved in society and able to contribute, with its competences and resources, to the economic and social rebirth of the Region. At this period, the Nord Pas de Calais Region economy mainly based on coal mining, textile and steel, employing low qualified workers, was deeply affected by the successive crisis met by these traditional industrial sectors and it was necessary to imagine a new model based on new activities, implying new technologies and organisations, calling for higher competences for employees.

It appeared to the management team of the University and to numerous actors within the University (teachers and administrative committed to the development of "their" Region) that the first urgency was to increase the level of qualifications of the population of the Region to make possible further economic developments. USTL together with local and regional authorities decided to take up this challenge. To concretise these intentions, the USTL decided to create a new Service, the SUDES, responsible for preparing the University policy and putting into practice the decisions. More than 20 years after this decision, what are the progresses on the route leading to a lifelong learning organisation? Where are we now? And what are the lessons learnt that could be useful for others?

This paper will try to answer to these three questions.

The milestones of our progressive route

Our route towards a lifelong learning organisation is made of three steps.

The **first step** started with the creation of SUDES. The role of SUDES has been defined by the new statutes of USTL adopted in 1986 as a transversal Service, directly linked to the president, for access and participation of adults. More specifically it must be an interface between demands from individuals, companies regional and local authorities,… and internal resources. The objective was to

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[1] The University of Sciences and Technology of Lille is most important scientific university on the North of Paris. It enrols around 18000 students (among them 3000 are "adults") and 13000 trainees in short continuing education programmes. It is a multidisciplinary university (sciences and technology, economics and management, social sciences). It is made of 9 Faculties, 3 Institutes, 2 Schools of engineers, 39 laboratories.

open our classical university programmes to adults, wishing to come back or to have access to higher education. The answer was supported by three pillars:

- a central and unique Office taking care of adults from reception to enrolment in a programme and ensuring administrative and pedagogical support services during their learning pathways;
- programmes offering flexible learning pathways, close to individualisation;
- support programmes for those who met difficulties or needed reinforcement in some domains.

To reach this goal the SUDES was intended to offer to candidates or participants four main types of provisions and services:

- reception, information, advice and guidance;
- validation of non formal and informal learning, firstly based on 1985 decree for derogatory access and exemption, then on 1993 decree for awarding credits and later on 2002 decree for awarding fully or partly degress;
- admission and participation in "normal" university programmes;
- adapted and negotiated programmes for companies based on our competences in faculties or laboratories

Rapidly this organisation met a big success and the number of adults applying for our programmes increased, especially when we decided to give some impetus to validation of non formal and informal learning. After just a few years, more than 1000 candidates were applying for validation each year to have access to our programmes. This open-mindedness of the University has been welcomed by professional bodies as well as regional authorities which decided to support our demarche and to facilitate access and participation of employees (for professional bodies) or of unemployed people (for the Region).

We can situate the start of the **second step** when the Ministry of Higher Education decided to introduce a new way of granting universities by negotiating and signing which each of them a contract every four years. This new demarche obliged the universities to introduce a new of management, to reflect on their strategy, to define objectives and build a work plan to be discussed with the Ministry.

For SUDES these discussions offered an excellent opportunity to reinforce the internal commitment of the Board of the University and of colleagues to continuing education issues to definitely install these activities as core activities of USTL. At the same time, the negotiations with the Ministry demonstrated the leading role of USTL in France on continuing education issues offering arguments to try to establish our university as a reference for the other French universities and to grant us specifically.

Thus, the first contract signed in 1990 gave us the opportunity:

- to define our short term and mid term strategy intending to give a new dynamism to our well established and successful policy[2]. Four principles helped us to make concrete this strategical orientation: individualisation (offer an adapted answer to the project of the individual), fluidity (accumulation of credits taking into account the rhythm of individuals and their professional constraints, systematic validation of non formal and informal learning and reorganisation of academic schemes allowing people to have access at any moment of the year;
- to contribute to establish a new organisation of SUDES with the creation of three specific internal Services: the Access Service, the Validation of non formal and informal learning Service and Competences Appraisal Service (Option+);
- to finance the construction of a new building designed to accommodate and facilitate the different missions of SUDES linked to access and participation of adults.

With the following results, on average each year

- 5000 individuals are received personally by advisors;
- 3000 are enrolled in "normal" university programmes;
- 1500 application forms for validation of non formal and informal learning are examined.

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[2] The contribution of the SUDES to the definition of this strategy was a 28 pages document entitled "Technicians and Executives for 2000"

The **third step** started with the discussions of the 2002 and 2006 contracts with the Ministry. We decided to make a rupture in our way of thinking access and participation of adults in universities and we based our discussions on the project to become forward a lifelong learning organisation, to move from a university largely open to adults, offering second chance to those who have not attended higher education before or for those who had to turn to a new type of employment, to an organisation making possible access to our university programmes lifelong in a logic of continuity and progression.

This institutional positioning was linked to our vision of the future professional life and of the challenges to face:

- a professional life in deep transformation (the current economic crisis is providing additional evidences of this evolution): increased internal and external mobility, professional trajectories less linear, broken up by ruptures, marked out by periods of unemployment, changes of positions, reconversions,…;
- but activities more "intelligent", more complex, offering more and more opportunities to learn formally and informally;
- a large part of the future occupations are not yet existing, obliging educational institutions and, on the forefront, universities, to prepare and equip students to face this situation and to provide them with possibilities to come back to formal studies several times during their professional pathway, in order to face radical evolutions in technologies and organisations.

This implied:

- to help teachers and "learners" to change their mind, to move from a continuing education or continuous professional development approach to a lifelong learning vision, to help them become more aware of this new perspective and of its potential results;
- to prepare our students to become lifelong learners, to train them to learn to learn, to become more conscious of what they are learning, whatever the situation they live, to become able to organise, formalise, criticise what they learn or have learnt in different settings and to refer it permanently to the current state of knowledge in use;
- to reinforce our services to learners in information, reception, advice and guidance, helping them to define their individual projects and to drive their individual routes in the university;
- to review our administrative, financial and pedagogical arrangements;
- to build up or to develop new competences for staff: new roles and attitudes for teachers who have less to teach than to help students to learn, integrate and formalise what they have learnt by themselves, new missions for advisors more guides than counsellors.

This strategy has been clearly asserted by the 2006 contract. The proposal presented an integrated vision with no separation between initial education and continuing education, putting forward a general arrangement offering at any individual, young or less young, to have access and participation to our university programmes, at any moment of his/her personal and professional trajectory and guaranteeing validation of what he or she has learnt elsewhere. Our proposition to the Ministry was to become a pole to experiment this demarche, this global answer and to disseminate later the results.

We knew that this proposition was too demanding for all, internally and externally, but our purpose was to oblige everyone to debate, to change progressively his/her mind and to introduce some cultural and organisational changes. But it has been clear from the beginning of the negotiation, even if they were interested by our radical proposal, that the Ministry was not ready to change its way of thinking and granting and had no means to follow concretely our project. So, it became rapidly clear that the only possibility that we had to implement such a strategy was to work by ourselves and to try to convince later our authorities.

What are the lessons learnt?

First of all, we would like to insist on **principles having guided our internal strategy** to try to convince our colleagues. We have identified five:

- a permanent involvement of the management of the university during twenty years;

- regular policy discussions with the different Councils of the University and with Faculties and Departments, but also with external actors (regional and local authorities, social partners,…);
- the existence of a Service not doing things separately but acting as support for the lifelong learning activities developed by Faculties and Departments, offering central services;
- the mobilisation in continuity of teachers;
- a common preoccupation: to meet the needs of participants.

This lead to what we call the successful triangle which implies the learner as end-user on the process and a couple made of two internal partners, the teacher and the advisor, providing in articulation the expected services.

From our experience **there are three conditions to meet** to be able to move progressively towards a lifelong learning organisation:

- introduce the lifelong learning issues in all the debates in the university, put permanently the lifelong learning issues on the agenda of discussions and approach permanently pedagogical and organisational issues in the perspective of lifelong learning;
- work concretely and continuously with teachers;
- work simultaneously on three dimensions:
    - administration and organisation
    - pedagogical arrangements and provisions
    - and financing

What are the benefits for the institution? From our experience we have identified three main benefits, to appear as a lifelong learning organisation, offering flexible pathways and making possible validation of non formal and informal learning:

- make your university more attractive for students, provide an image of dynamism, open to external demand and preoccupations;
- increase external contacts at local, national or international level and develop links and partnerships with companies, local and regional authorities;
- explore new ways for funding.

However, **there are some risks**. Strategies, organisation and arrangements are necessary, this is not enough. The only chance to be successful is progressivity (to respect the rhythm of colleagues, to take time for experimentation,…) and sustainability. Sustainability depends of men and women involved in the process, of the permanent support from the successive presidents of the university and from their management team and of the possibility to attract young generations, whose interest is most based on investment in research, because their individual careers leads on this investment. And, until now, lifelong learning is not a criterion in Shangai ranking and not yet considered as a contribution to excellence. And finally this radical evolution of our institutions is so in rupture with traditional approaches that even good results are fragile and may be questioned.

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RETURNING STUDENTS AT UNIVERSITY: MOTIVATIONS, OBSTACLES AND TRAINING IMPACT

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THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Training entry motives

Training entry motives may be defined as all the learners' justifications concerning their entry in a training setting (Aubret, 2001). Several taxonomies were created to resume these motives, mostly by extrapolating from existing classifications about goals adults pursue in the different domains of their life (see Austin & Vancouver, 1996 for a review). The most recent and rigorous works in this field were led by Carré (2001). On the basis of data from more than 2000 adult learners, he brought 10 motives into light and ranged them in a two axis model. With the first axis, Carré distinguished between intrinsically and extrinsically oriented motives. In the line of self determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), intrinsic motives can be fulfilled in the training in itself (*e.g.*, to learn new contents), whereas extrinsic motives refers to goals that are exterior to the training (*e.g.*, for the future financial rise I will benefit). The second axis separates learning and participation motives. In this way, Carré indicates whether the reason of the training entry concerns new knowledge acquirement (learning) or the simple subscription/attendance to the training group (participation).

In spite of the interest of Carré's descriptive work, his sample only contained adults engaged in short training settings (2 to 5 days), and not University programs (that can consist in 120 ECTS, or two years). Therefore, we asked 300 adults undertaking a University program to answer an adapted version of the Carré's questionnaire in order to verify the adequacy of his model to university programs. Our results showed that only four motives were relevant in our population. In order of importance, these motives were epistemic, self promotional, vocational and professional operatory (Vertongen, Nils, Traversa, Bourgeois & de Viron, 2009). The research presented hereafter will among others try to replicate these new results on a larger sample. Furthermore, thanks to a longitudinal design, we will be able to analyse how these entry motives evolve in time, identifying persistence motives.

Involvement obstacles

Returning adult students meet different types of obstacles in the pursuit of their training period (Nils, 2005). Some studies tried to shed light on these obstacles, and confirmed their deleterious relation to involvement (Beguin, Frenay, Kestemont, Lecrenier, Parmentier, Tyteca & Verwaerde, 2002). Indeed, adult students are confronted to several external constraints linked to their financial, familial and professional responsibilities.

McGivney (2004) summarised in a rather exhaustive way the reasons commonly cited by adult learners for non completing courses programs. First of all, talking about personal factors, she argues that adult interests, priorities and life circumstances can vary widely during this particular period, and can sometimes lead to dropout if training doesn't fulfil these evolving needs. Secondly, she adds that problems related to time pressure and time management are particularly relevant for these students who have to manage a job and/or fulfil domestic commitments. What's more, McGivney cites the lack of family or partner support. Still, obstacles can be of financial nature: adults who must assume the price of their training are more susceptible to drop out than those who benefit from a financial aid from their organisation. Dissatisfaction with a course or institution seems also to be a possible non completion reason. Let's mention here that returning students in general think universities do not take sufficiently into account their particular daily life and the numerous responsibilities they must assume. Furthermore, as Tinto (1997) insisted on, social integration problems that are essentially due to non adult friendly institutions can provoke dropout. Finally, bad pre-course information or guidance can also be an obstacle to adult involvement (McGivney, 2004).

Looking through the literature, we wanted to mention two more dropout factors. First, adults sometimes live far away from their learning and work places, this time coming on top of an already full booked diary. Distance should thus be taken into account (Nils, 2005). In addition, regarding the time elapsed since their last exams, adult learners sometimes think that their learning abilities aren't efficient anymore, inducing low self efficacy (see Bandura, 1997 for more details about self efficacy beliefs).

Because most of the above researches (1) considered short training sessions and (2) didn't give a real weight to all these factors, this paper will try to propose a taxonomy dedicated to adult university students obstacles.

Expectancy value model

The expectancy value theory has been developed by Wigfield & Eccles (2000). Nowadays, this theoretical framework is the most often used to apprehend motivation in an educational context. To summarize, this model postulates that motivation results from two perceptions. On the one side, motivation would result from the learner's expectations of success in the task (expectancies). On the other side, the subjective value the learner attributes to his training/lessons would explain his motivation and involvement in the task. Expectancy is related to the question: "am I able to succeed in this task?", whereas value asks: "why do I want to realize this task?".

In a previous research, we confirmed the relevance of the five factors of the Wigfield & Eccles' model (2000), identifying the following components: expectancy, intrinsic value, attainment value, utility value and cost (Traversa, Nils, Vertongen, Bourgeois & de Viron, in press). In this regard, we will try to understand which kinds of motivations are the most essential for adult university students.

METHOD

Participants

331 adult learners, 128 men and 206 women, took part in our research (mean age = 35 years). They were all undertaking the first year of a University program (leading either to an official diploma or a university certificate).

Procedure

We conducted a longitudinal internet questionnaire survey, collecting data at the beginning of the academic year (Time 1) and half of the second semester (Time 2). At Time 1, participants were asked about their entry motives, their motivations and the obstacles they already met. At Time 2, questions concerned persistence motives, motivations, perceived obstacles, training satisfaction and training impact.

Material

Concerning entry/persistence motives and expectancy value components, the scales we used in this survey had been previously validated on a similar population, showing evidence of their consistency (Vertongen & al., 2009; Traversa & al., in press).

For involvement obstacles, we proceeded in two times. First, we generated 5 items for each obstacle potentially relevant for our population. Then, we interviewed different adult learning counsellors and 10 adult students, checking for face validity and relevance of the different items. Finally, 15 items were kept in the questionnaire.

Relating to satisfaction and impact, we adapted the scale created by Nils (2005), measuring training satisfaction with 7 items (e.g., "the training sessions corresponded to what I expected"), and distinguishing between personal (3 items, e.g., "I have the feeling to better know myself") and professional impact (4 items, e.g., "I have the feeling to better understand my work").

All items were assessed with a Likert scale ranging from 1 (I totally disagree with this statement) to 7 (I totally agree with this statement).

RESULTS

Some descriptive statistics

On the descriptive level, results revealed some features of these non traditional students: more than 80 % of them were working, half of them had at least one child, and only 5 % had no higher education diploma. Table 1 shows the frequencies of our participants concerning the level of their training program.

Table 1. Distribution of our participants following the level of their training program.

Levels	N	%

Baccalaureate	24	7.25
Preparatory class	63	19.03
Master 60	61	18.43
Master 120	79	23.87
Agregation	16	4.83
Certificate	88	26.59

Entry and persistence motives

In order to replicate the results obtained by Vertongen & al. (2009), we conducted exploratory factor analysis at both times of measurement. They confirmed the presence of the four expected factors, explaining respectively 61.33% and 63.59% of the total variance at time 1 and 2.

In a decreasing order of importance, adults started and persisted in University programs because of the following motives: intrinsic interest, vocational transition, professional competencies development and self promotion needs. Adults in qualifying programs referred more to self esteem, intrinsic interest, and vocational motives than those who followed a certificate program, more concerned with the development of their professional competencies.

Table 2 reports test retest coefficients of the four motives. They are all superior to .60, which means that entry motives are relatively stable in time.

Table 2. Test retest coefficients of the four entry and persistence motives.

Motives	r
Intrinsic interest	.67
Vocational transition	.60
Professional competencies development	.64
Self promotion	.70

Involvement obstacles

First of all, we conducted exploratory factor analysis so that we could extract groups of obstacles. Our results explained respectively 64.05 % (Time 1) and 59.09 % (Time 2) of the total variance, identifying four factors at both times of measurement. University adult students seemed to be confronted to four kinds of obstacles that could undermine their academic involvement. In a decreasing order of importance, those were time management obstacles, obstacles coming from private life/learning period interface (extraprofessional activities), self esteem and material (fees, trips) obstacles. Test retest correlations are resumed in Table 3, showing a rather mean stability in time of the involvement obstacles.

Table 3. Test retest coefficients of the four involvement obstacles.

Obstacles	r
Time management	.54
Private life	.45
Self esteem	.55
Material	.50

Let's mention that students in qualifying programs scored higher for time management difficulties at Time 1.

Expectancy-value

Here, factor analysis revealed a four-factor structure, distinguishing between expectancy, intrinsic value and utility value, and merging cost and attainment value. Results highlighted that the factor cost/attainment value was systematically the lowest for adults embarked on certificate programs. What's more, except for the utility value, test retest coefficients were good (Table 4), showing that motivation indices are rather stable in time.

Table 4. Test retest coefficients of the four expectancy value components.

Expectancy value components	r
Interest value	.67
Cost/attainment value	.76
Utility value	.31
Expectancy	.57

Adult satisfaction and training impact

Now how do all these variables predict adult satisfaction and training impact on their personal and professional life? Among others, Pearson correlations showed firstly that variables which best predicted satisfaction at the end of the year were intrinsic interest entry motives ($r = .31$, $p < .01$), time management obstacles rated at the beginning of the training ($r = -.26$, $p < .01$), perceived utility of the program ($r = .40$, $p < .01$) and cost ($r = -.48$, $p < .01$) at Time 2. Secondly, results stressed the link between professional impact and competencies development entry motives ($r = .32$, $p < .01$) and perceived utility at Time 2 ($r = .31$, $p < .01$). Finally, personal impact of training was associated with self promotion entry motives ($r = .28$, $p < .01$), intrinsic value ($r = .36$, $p < .01$), cost ($r = -.30$, $p < .01$) and attainment value ($r = .26$, $p < .01$) at Time 2.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In a sample of adult University students, we wanted to show links between motivations, obstacles perception, satisfaction and training professional and personal impact. This section will underline some key findings and give some potential practical implications.

Firstly, we validated the factorial structure proposed by Vertongen & al. (2009), identifying four entry and persistence motives: intrinsic interest, vocational transition, professional competencies development and self promotion needs. We showed that these motives were rather stable in time.

Secondly, we brought to light that university adult students could be confronted to four kinds of obstacles: time management obstacles, obstacles coming from private life/learning period interface, self esteem and material obstacles.

Thirdly, we noted some differences regarding the level of the training program considered, essentially between programs leading to a qualification and those leading to a certificate. In summary, (1) intrinsic interest motives were predominant for all types of programs, and (2) adults in qualifying programs referred more to self esteem and vocational motives whereas those who followed a certificate program were more concerned with the development of their professional competencies.

Fourthly, in terms of a first practical implication, it seems obvious that a better knowledge of adult needs is required in order to increase the adequacy between learners' expectations and program contents.

In addition, results showed that intrinsic interest was the most important motive cited. Therefore, teachers should try to arouse adult students' interest. To do that, they should show links between lessons contents and adults daily life, give lots of illustrations and examples, and let adult students talk about their own experiences during the classes.

Besides, we saw that time management obstacles were the most problematic ones. For that reason, we think universities should adapt the schedules of all the services they already offer to traditional students: secretariat, reprography, etc. Portfolio use would also give the possibility for adult learners to keep a track of their learning activities, and thus to have more control over the training program progress. Finally, the implementation of some e-learning lessons would help adults to reduce time problems regarding trips and transport.

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