**WEA Scottish Literature class**

**The group**

Workers’ Educational Association Scottish Literature class.

**Aim of the session**

To capture the learner voice in deciding the future of the group in terms of when, where it would meet and how the group would continue to be funded. We were also aiming to discover the impact the class has on the learners.

**Method**

Focus group meeting to discuss the following:

1. **Getting Involved**
* Why did you decide to become involved?
1. **Participation**
* What have you been learning/involved in?
1. **Influencing**
* Are you involved in deciding what you do/learn? Can you give an example?
1. **Impact**
* What difference has being involved made to you? Has it had any impact on other areas of your life? Are there any things that you do differently now or that you didn’t do before?
1. **Progression**
* Have you moved on to any other courses, groups etc?
1. **Involving You**
* What is the best way for us to involve you in making sure that the CLD services we offer are the services you want/need?
1. **Barriers**

What does CLD need to do better in order that more/other people take part?

**The Results**

I was able to discuss WEA educational priorities in the context of our funding from City of Edinburgh Council and how these impact on the continuation of the Scottish Literature class. Learners were able to articulate how important the class was to them particularly in terms of health and well- being benefits.

**What impact might this activity have on the organisation involved?**

The group will think about becoming a constituted student group which will enable them to co-produce their own curriculum, venue and collection of fees based on the assets of the group. This will assist the South East Scotland education team to pursue more targeted work tackling poverty and inequality in Edinburgh.

**What impact might this have on local or national planning for adult learning?**

This focus group captured the learner voice from WEA’s Open Programme of fee paying courses. The results of the focus group were submitted to the Short Life Working Group of Edinburgh Community Learning and Development Partnership (ECLDP) thereby capturing the learner voice in the production of Edinburgh’s Community Learning and Development Plan 2015-2018.

**How are expectations generated through engagement managed after meeting the group?**

I will visit the group again and pursue their interest in becoming a constituted student group. One of the learners has been attending Lothian Local Association Committee meeting to get a feel for the roles and responsibilities of being a learner representative.

**What the learners said about their learning:**

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*A better world - equal, democratic and just; through adult education the WEA challenges and inspires individuals, communities and society*.

**Focus group with WEA Scottish Literature class, Central Library, 13th November 2014**

**Education Development Manager Tim Green**

1. **Getting Involved**

Why did you decide to become involved in WEA Scottish Literature class?

There was a mixture of responses from those wanting an opportunity to learn about Scottish culture and literature for the first time to people wanting to further their interest in Scottish literature.

1. **Participation**

Participants are encouraged to read out extracts from the literature, often in the Scots’ tongue, which is a challenge for some of the learners but one they relish and enjoy.

1. **Influencing**

The group co-produce the curriculum with the tutor for the next session of learning and they will be discussing ideas for authors and themes next week.

The group are thinking about becoming a constituted student group.

1. **Impact**

What difference has being involved made to you? Has it had any impact on other areas of your life? Are there any things that you do differently now or that you didn’t do before?

The learners benefit greatly from the social aspect of the course enjoying meeting a range of new people who all learn from each other. For most the class is one of the highlights of their week and is very good for breaking down the social isolation of retirement and a home based interest in Scottish literature.

1. **Progression**

Have you moved on to any other courses, groups etc?

Many of the group attend other WEA classes, University of Edinburgh and City of Edinburgh Council adult learning classes.

1. **Involving You**

What is the best way for us to involve you in making sure that the WEA offer are the services you want/need?

It would be better if City of Edinburgh Council, University of Edinburgh and WEA had greater consistency in their fee structure and information on adult learning across the City.

Keep us informed about any changes and new courses

The learners appreciate the work of the South East Scotland office in organising the course particularly the efforts of Janette Bond but would like the Education Development Manager to visit the group regularly to give updates and information.

1. **Barriers**

What does WEA need to do better in order that more/other people take part?

Accessibility of venues for those with mobility problems

Quiet venues with low background noise for the hard of hearing

The groups hope that WEA students can return to Riddle’s Court when the refurbishments have been completed.

Prefer three short terms to one or two longer terms mainly because of the worry of paying up front costs and committing to 16 or 24 weeks rather eight weeks at a time.