

**Tikrit University**

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## **Adult Education**

### **Second Year**

#### **What is Adult Education?**

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## What is Adult Education?

Adult education means teaching and learning for adults over 18 years old in ways that fit their needs, goals, and life situations. It helps people gain skills and knowledge for work, daily life, personal growth, and keeping up with a changing world.

### Core features that make it different from school teaching

- **Learner-focused and goal-driven:** Adults want learning to be useful for them. They ask, “How will this help me?”
- **Experience-based:** Adults bring their own knowledge and life experiences, which help learning.
- **Self-directed:** Many adults like to choose what, when, and how they learn.
- **Problem-focused:** Adults prefer learning that solves real-life problems, not just exercises.
- **Practical limits:** Time, work, family, money, and motivation affect learning.
- **Varied learners:** Adults have different backgrounds, skills, and technical abilities.

## What is Pedagogy?

Pedagogy is the art and science of teaching **children**. It focuses on how teachers plan, deliver, and manage learning experiences, assuming learners are dependent and need guidance.

### 🏰 Origin of the Term

The word comes from:

“paid-” meaning **child**

**“-agogos” meaning leader or guide**

So literally, **pedagogy** = “**leading the child.**” It was originally used in ancient Greece to describe the person (often a slave) who would guide a child to school and oversee their education, not just teach them. It is very old term used 2,400–2,500 years ago.

## **What is Andragogy?**

**Andragogy** is the art and science of helping adults learn. It focuses on how adults think, behave, and engage in learning differently from children. Unlike traditional teaching (pedagogy), andragogy puts learners at the center -giving them more control, connecting lessons to real-life experiences, and focusing on practical use rather than memorization.

### **🏰 Origin of the Term**

The word *andragogy* comes from two Greek roots:

- “**Andra**” = adult man or person
- “**agogos**” = leading or guiding

So literally, *andragogy* means “**leading adults.**” The concept first appeared in **1833** in Germany by Alexander Kapp, who used it to explain Plato’s ideas on adult learning. But the term wasn’t widely used until the 20th century, when Malcolm Knowles (an American adult educator) popularized and developed it in the 1960s–1970s.

Knowles argued that:

- Adults learn best when they are **involved in planning and evaluating** their learning.
- Their **life experience** is a valuable learning resource.

- They are **ready to learn** things relevant to their personal and professional lives.
- They are **internally motivated**.

## **Major learning theories used in adult education**

- **Andragogy (Knowles):** Adults are self-conceptive, experienced, ready-to-learn, task-centered, internally motivated. Use autonomy, relevancy, and problem-based tasks.
- **Transformative Learning (Mezirow):** Deep learning comes from critical reflection and perspective change — useful for identity/work transition programs.
- **Experiential Learning (Kolb):** Cycle — concrete experience → reflect → conceptualize → experiment. Great for workplace training and practicum.
- **Self-Directed Learning (Tough, Merriam):** Learners plan, resource, and evaluate their own learning; good for adult learners with intrinsic motivation.
- **Motivation theories (Deci & Ryan, Wlodkowski):** Autonomy, competence, relatedness increase persistence and engagement.

## **Typical settings where adult learning happens**

- **Formal:** Colleges, universities, accredited vocational institutes.
- **Non-formal:** Community centers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), employer training, short courses.
- **Informal:** Self-study, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), YouTube, podcasts, peer groups, workplace mentoring.
- **Blended / Hybrid:** Mix of face-to-face and online — currently the dominant practical model.

# The Role of the Teacher in Adult Education

## 1. Facilitator — Not Lecturer

- The teacher **creates learning opportunities** instead of just delivering information.
- Adults bring knowledge with them — so the teacher's job is to **activate and connect** that knowledge to new learning.
- Learning is a **two-way street**, not a one-way lecture.

*Example:* Instead of explaining everything about email writing, the teacher gives a real-life work scenario and lets learners build solutions together — guiding them only when needed

## 2. Guide and Mentor

- Teachers help learners **set clear goals** and **find their learning path**.
- They provide **feedback, motivation, and emotional support**.
- They help students build **confidence**, especially those returning to education after years.

## 3. Designer of Learning Experiences

- The teacher **plans activities, tasks, and projects** that match adult learners' goals.
- Lessons are **problem-centered**, not textbook-centered.
- They **adapt** materials to real-life situations: workplace, community, daily life.

## 4. Flexible and Responsive

- Adults have **different schedules, backgrounds, and learning styles**.
- The teacher must **adjust methods**, use **different technologies**, and give **flexible options** for participation and assessment.

⌚ Example: Offering recorded lessons or alternative activities for working learners.

## 5. Co-Learner

- Teachers in adult education are **not the only source of knowledge**.
- They **learn with and from students**, encouraging discussion, peer teaching, and shared experiences.
- This builds respect and trust — essential for adult learning environments.

## 6. Motivator and Encourager

- Many adult learners face **self-doubt, time pressure, or fear of failure**.
- The teacher plays a big role in **keeping motivation high** through praise, realistic goals, and showing progress.

## 7. Evaluator and Reflective Practitioner

- Assessment is not about “catching mistakes” but about **helping learners grow**.
- Teachers use **feedback, portfolios, performance tasks, and self-assessment**.
- They also **reflect on their own teaching** to keep improving.