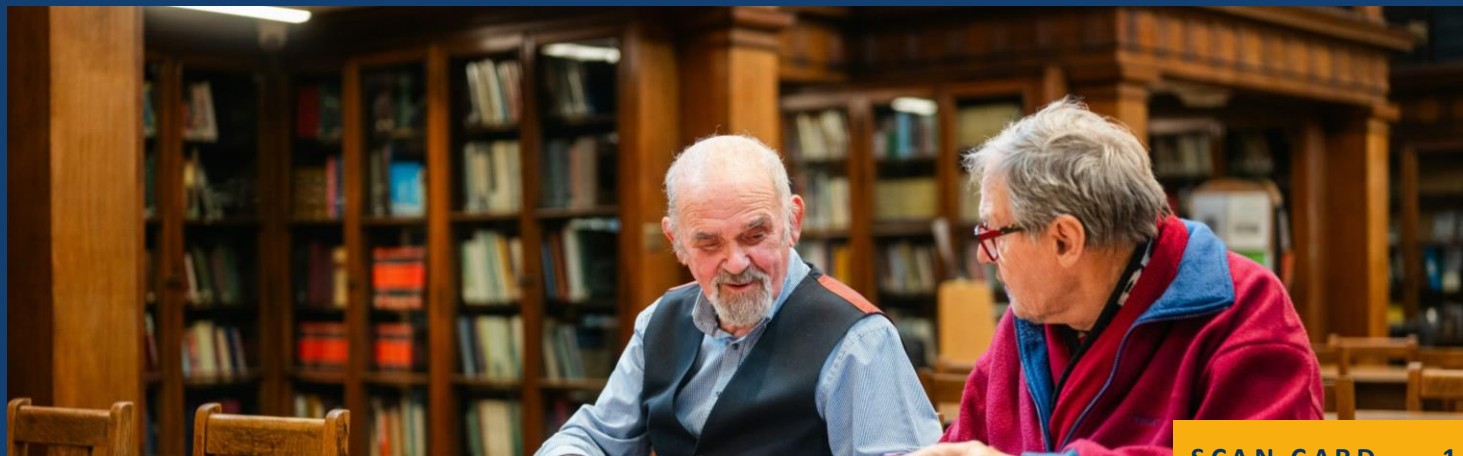


LIFELONG LEARNING

RESHAPES

COMMUNITY RELATIONS



SCAN CARD · 11

DESCRIPTION

Demographic change, longer working lives and rapid shifts in the labour market are increasing demand for lifelong learning. Universities are no longer serving only young, full-time students — they are engaging learners at different life stages seeking reskilling, upskilling or personal development. Engagement takes the form of open courses, micro-learning, professional programmes and cooperation with local employers.

This broadening of the learner base strengthens universities' local relevance but also challenges traditional teaching models, funding structures and academic identity. Demand will intensify as demographic change and labour market transitions accelerate.

RELEVANCE

Lifelong learning links universities more closely to social and economic development in their regions. It creates new entry points for community engagement and expands access to higher education.

At the same time, it raises questions about quality, inclusiveness and the balance between public mission and market-oriented education.

NEED

Universities need coherent lifelong learning strategies connected to their engagement mission, not only to revenue generation. Partnerships with employers, local authorities and civil society are needed to ensure lifelong learning responds to real community needs and does not exclude vulnerable groups.

Without clear positioning, lifelong learning may develop as fragmented, demand-driven activity without connection to community engagement goals.

CATEGORY

Social · Economic

SIGNAL STRENGTH

Strong



SCANNING METHOD

Policy analysis · Institutional review

SOURCES

EC (2022) European Strategy for Universities · OECD (2021) Skills Outlook: Learning for Life · UNESCO UIL (2023) Lifelong Learning in Higher Education