









Flexibility through Listening

- the learner voice

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promoting adult learning

















Listening to *existing* students and alumni - necessary but not sufficient!

- Whose voices don't get heard?
- What does the profile of the student body say about which communities the institution values and which markets it seeks to serve?
- Who else could benefit and why don't they?



'We need to be that serious about adult skills and life-long higher and further education, for a number of simple reasons. First: almost half of British university students are already mature students. Second, most of the future British workforce of the 2020s is already in their twenties or older, and it is their skills that will determine our economic capabilities at that critical point. Third, the demographics of an ageing population mean that even with an influx of foreign students, the student market is going to get progressively older, and demand will reflect that.'



Social Mobility -a powerful motivator but not the only one

- 'Unleashing Aspirations' (Alan Milburn, July 2009) critical of opportunities and support for adults in universities.
- Need to reform
 - the academic calendar;
 - the accreditation of individual modules; and
 - the "indefensible" division in funding and support between part- and full-time students



'HE and FE also have a critical role to play in increasing social mobility in Britain. There is no silver bullet on social mobility, but education and higher skills are as close as you get to one. That means keeping up the pressure to widen access to HE - both with respect to the time in your life when you can access HE and with respect to your social background, which should be irrelevant. Access to all forms of training and education is a question of equity and social justice as well as competitiveness."



More Secretary of State

"In thirteen years as MP for Hartlepool I saw first hand the damage that can be done by low expectations and by barriers to social mobility. I have always believed that a fair Britain is one in which the daughter of a Hartlepool shopkeeper has the same shot at being a High Court Judge as the son of a Surrey stockbroker."



Higher and Further Education, - a single ecology?

- Reluctance in some parts of system to acknowledge common ground.
- Preference to reinforce/defend historic silos and privileges.
- These distinctions don't matter to most learners/taxpayers most of the time.



"HE and FE are two systems, joined by one goal. There was a time – well within most of our lifetimes – when our university and vocational training ststems were seen as having distinctly different functions. Universities provided elite education and a training in the mores of professional like for about one in twenty of the population. Apprenticeships were for craftspeople – or rather craftsmen who would go on to spend their lives in a particular trade. These were regarded not as different ways of making a living but as different universes."



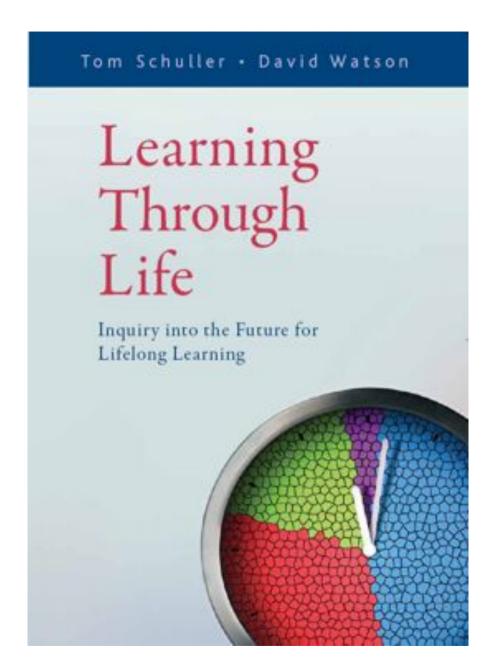
"It was a division based on social prejudice as much as economic reality, and if it isn't dead, it needs to be."



Part-time and Full-time

- a single ecology and an unhelpful distinction?
- ELQs
- Natural justice (taxpayer argument)
- Case for capped tuition fees stronger if not limited to full-time study.









Learning through Life: Recommendation 4

"Faster progress is needed to implement a credit based system, and to support people who combine study with other activities."



- We should move quickly to implement fully a coherent system of credits as the basis for organising post-compulsory learning.
- The funding for learning (both fees and student support) should be credit-based and should not discriminate against part-time provision or part-time students.
- There should be greater fairness and consistency in funding for further and higher education.



Why Worry?



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Claire Callender's Figures

