UNIVERSITY OF BRADFORD
MAKING KNOWLEDGE WORK

Higher Level Skills

Responding to the Challenge

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Outline of session

Context: HLS challenge & University of Bradford

Discussion: what are the challenges/issues?

Challenges and issues identified by UoB

Discussion ï what can HE do?

The Escalate response

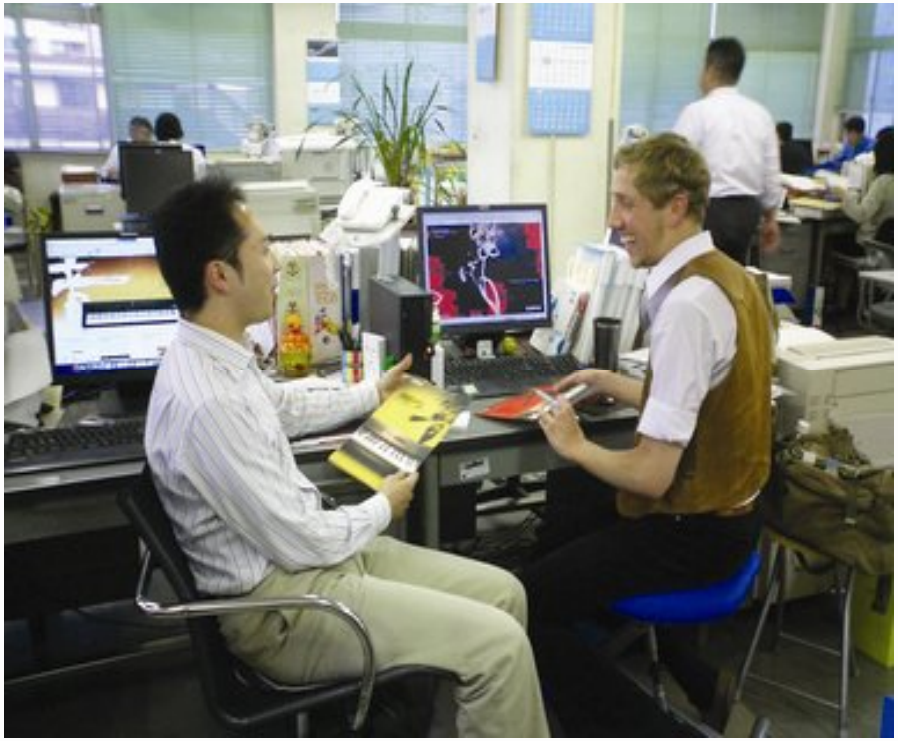
Concluding remarks

The Leitch HLS Challenge

- Importance of óworld class skillsô
- 40% adults qualified to L4 by 2020
- 70% 2020 workforce already passed age of compulsory education
- National culture change in relation to learning and skills
- Step change in progress to meet targets

University of Bradford

- Medium sized, research-active
- Strong reputation for engaging with employers ï especially graduate employment
- Strap-line ï ôMaking Knowledge Workô
- Successfully grown full-time student numbers
- Large % students from ódisadvantagedô backgrounds



Discussion 1

What are the challenges and issues in relation to the delivery of higher level skills

from an employer perspective?

from a higher education perspective?

Challenges/issues identified by UoB

External issues

Low skilled workforce in Bradford

Specific skills gaps/needs in Bradford and West Yorkshire

(Perception of) inappropriate ôofferô: F/T, traditional courses.

Training needs linked to immediate business benefits

Lack of demand for qualifications and awards.

Lack of knowledge of what HE can offer.

Reconciling employee and employer requirements

Perceived lack of responsiveness

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Challenges/issues identified by UoB

Internal

Traditional culture

Academic infrastructure built upon f/t

Lack of flexibility and responsiveness

Lengthy, bureaucratic procedures.

Lack of awareness of employer needs in some areas.

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Discussion 2

What can HE providers do to address the identified challenges and issues?

Escalate – an overview

Employer engagement programme funded by HEFCE Strategic Development Fund

Includes development funding, capital, and additional student numbers.

Core team of six staff.

Academic Champions in each School

Escalate aims and objectives

- Employer partnerships
- Meeting higher level skills needs
- Academic framework based on flexibility, credit and awards
- Catalyst for change across University and key employers

Escalate outputs

400 fte/ 1200 headcount students

10 major partners

Staff development and dissemination events

8 employer in-house training programmes accredited

30% learners with APEL

Active and effective Champions

State of the art learner facility.

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In Summary…

Internal cultural change is central

Involves both central infrastructure and academic Schools.

Influencing change and sharing new practice via demonstrator projects.

Early successes by starting with public sector, then large private sector, then SMEs .

Raising profile with and building sustainable relationships with employers