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Adaptation and use of flexible learning solutions

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Contents:

- The challenge to the health sector and HE
- Responses – configuring flexibility and innovation
- Models of flexible learning
- Conclusions – what next?

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The challenge for the public sector

Budget cuts – feeding through to training and development?

Increased pressure on public services

Increased competition – resulting in closures, mergers?

Central control grows?

Restrictions on innovation?

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The challenge for health

- Service transformation - person-centred, quality, accessible, integrated care
- Enhanced workforce planning – support staff pathways; increase % with higher skills/HE; change leaders at all levels
- Better educational commissioning– reduce attrition, maximise value-for-money; encourage innovative, flexible staff

..In a climate of shrinking resources

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The challenge for HE

- Protect and enhance quality – in an era of cuts
- Introduce more flexibility– prior learning, credit transfer, mix + match; blended and elearning, partnership
- Employer responsiveness – work-based, organisational development

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Some innovative responses

- Increasing flexibility in delivery –using e- and blended learning in new ways
- Assessment of prior (experiential) learning (APEL) – counting in staff learning & experience
- Credit rating - of in-house courses
- Customising – re-use of curriculum for new needs
- Co-creation with employers – learning modules, new learning pathways
- Incorporation/accreditation of existing workplace learning

Flexible LBR/CPD

- Eg. UWE
  - flexible learning fostered by CPD unit in School of Health and Social Care
  - Learners map own required learning journey
  - Learning is work-based
  - Blended – elearning, action learning sets, lectures
- Eg. Southampton
  - One day CPD courses and stand alone modules
  - Pre-operative assessment – multimedia, structured learning journey, delivered to group, assessed at different levels

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Workplace change

- Eg. NHS Core Learning Unit programme on Public Health Awareness (developed by OU)
  - Small chunks (30 mins.) of interactive, on-line learning
  - On-line assessment and certification
  - Use as stand-alone, single module or complete
  - Blend with workshop, group work, action learning sets
  - Use for organisational and individual development

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AP(E)L

- Eg. South Bank University
  - Learning and Teaching Enhancement unit
  - Focus on accreditation of prior learning
  - Push towards institutional level framework

- National APEL survey (2009)
  - Practice varies within/between institutions
  - Students can feel isolated
  - Numbers still small (though largest in health)

Credit rating

- Eg. OU provides UK-wide service
  - Employer-led
  - Review group assesses credit value and credit level
  - Externality required in provision
  - Award of general credit – no requirement that other institutions accept it

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Co-creation

- County Durham PCT and Teeside University
  - Co-creation of learning to meet specific development needs of County Durham PCT's community health workforce
  - Use of problem-based learning drawing on learners' skills and competences
  - Academic credit for informal supervisory duties
- University of Bolton
  - Work-based training programmes designed by employers
  - University of Bolton develops structured assessment and award
  - Employees can gain academic credit as well as employer-based training certification

Incorporation/accreditation of WBL

- Derby NHS Trust- OU-RC Strategic Alliance
  - RCN professional development programme for ward matrons
  - + OU project course Exploring Practice (K316)
  - In-house tutor supports learners & facilitates learning transfer
  - Supports organisational and individual development

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Some conclusions:

No shortage of innovation

-Scaling up and cooperation needed
-Position innovation as a joint HE-health sector activity
-Learning blend flexible
-Learner support infrastructure essential
-WBL as key component