

**An increasingly diverse sector?  
Positioning and differentiating your university in the HE market**

**Seminar Discussion**

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## Introduction

- Consider how UK HE is becoming increasingly diverse
- Provide an overview of current policy developments and trends
- Explore the potential impact on universities
- Discuss the challenges for Comms/Marketing professionals
- Examine what the HE sector market looks like to students and businesses
- Give examples of how universities are positioning and differentiating their offers
- Share examples of how you are positioning and differentiating your university in the HE marketplace

## An increasingly diverse sector?

Not all universities are the same.

Diversity in UK HE is a major strength but also a serious challenge

Diverse

... types of provision

... methods of delivery

... students backgrounds

... offers to students

... offers to business

... in our relative strengths and weaknesses

... tasks we're expected to deliver

... missions

<b>Current trends and policy developments</b>	<b>Potential Implications</b>
Better and more accessible information for students and businesses	Better informed consumers
Increased spending on HE internationally	Greater competition for students, staff, research grants
Growing demand for HE and wider access	Further expansion of HE, including new providers
Contestability in teaching funding, focus on STEM	Increased funding for some, less funding for others
Increased research concentration	Fewer universities able to place research or doctoral students at centre of mission
Imminent fees review	Greater marketisation, more demanding customers
Greater focus on employability and economic impact	Increased importance of 'offer' to business and meeting skills needs

## Questions for Discussion

- How are these trends likely to impact your university? What are the opportunities and threats?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- What challenges does this pose for Communications and Marketing professionals?

## **A crowded and confusing market place?**

Where should students choose to study?

Which universities should business choose to work with?

- Around 140 Universities
- Over 50 other Higher Education Institutions
- Around 50 universities claim to be in the top 20 in various league tables!
- Most universities claim to be 'research-led' or 'top-ranking for research'
- Most universities claim to offer 'an excellent student experience'
- Most universities are 'successfully engaged with industry' or 'meeting business needs'
- Many universities are 'world-class' or 'internationally excellent'
- How are universities describing themselves?

## How are universities positioning and differentiating?

The 1994 Group

Examples from 1994 Group universities

- University of York
- Loughborough University
- Birkbeck, University of London
- University of Leicester

Examples from outside the 1994 Group

- University of Hertfordshire
- University of Kent

## Questions for Discussion

- What are you doing to positioning and differentiate your university in the HE market?
- What could the Government and/or national HE organisation do better to support you?