



Positioning Colleges as HE Providers

Sue Dare



HE in FE – a few key facts

- Over 257 FE colleges teach undergraduate and post-graduate degrees
- 8% colleges with over 1,000 students
- 170,000+ students study HE in FE (1 in 12 of total HE population)
- Half of all Foundation Degree students are taught in colleges
- 67% of colleges teach Foundation Degrees
- 22.9% of full-time first degree students at colleges were from low participation neighbourhoods (over double the rate of English Universities at 10.5%)
- Majority work in partnership with a University – franchise and/or validation

HE in FE challenges

- **Impact of changes to student loans and student numbers**
- **Government focus on migration numbers and HTS**
- **Small numbers and franchise arrangements affect KIS**
- **Competition growing with HEIs and private providers/schools entering the market**
- **Getting the message over on quality, price, support and outcomes**
- **Tracking progression and promoting it effectively**
- **HE 'experience' especially for F/T students (only 4% of total FE college students)**
- **Higher fees equates to higher student expectations**
- **Introduction of 24+ Loans for non-proscribed HE**

Myth-busting and distinctive features

- Good feedback from IQER process
- NSS shows student satisfaction with assessment/feedback and academic support higher in FE than HE
- Normally lower staff/student ratios than many HEIs
- Many staff undertake scholarly activity, higher degrees and their own research
- Excellent facilities for vocational study
- Employer responsive and supported (60% saw benefit in association in MEG/157 study)
- High levels of progression into employment(?)/higher study

HE in FE – USP

- Locally accessible, vocational and skills based, sometimes niche specialisms
- Reaches the parts that others don't i.e. WP
- Colleges provide 33% of entrants to HE – in-built market
- Flexible and blended learning may challenge the full/part-time distinction
- Role of colleges in higher apprenticeships
- Links with LEPs and other strategic bodies looking to higher level skills for economic growth
- Employer links and benefits

