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Labour Party Manifesto



“In the coming years, priority in the expansion of student places will be given to foundation degrees and part-time study, and to science, technology, engineering and mathematics degrees, as well as applied study in key economic growth sectors.”

A future fair for all – The Labour Party Manifesto 2010

“Why not just give a first class honours degree and PhD to each child at birth then everyone is a winner (100% success rate). Schools could then be shut down and the universities can be used to raise revenue by teaching kids from overseas!”

Dr Jack Finchlegg, (comment in response to an article by Rebecca Attwood) www.timeshigher.co.uk, 13 April, 2010

‘Funding the “pursuit of knowledge is the hallmark of a civilised society”...Politicians treating higher education policy as a type of social engineering that leads to the closure of subjects in the arts and humanities, is a form of barbarism. While France and Germany see boosting higher education spending as part of their wider economic stimulus packages, Britain loses sight of the fact that everyone can benefit from higher education...’

Anthony Lerman, *The Guardian*, 5 February 2010

“Schools are pushing pupils towards vocational courses that are shunned by top universities.”

Jack Grimston

“...many children from less wealthy backgrounds are pushed into less academic courses simply because their school has low aspirations for them and one eye firmly fixed on league tables. Those children may be bright enough to go to a leading research university, but the doors to most will be slammed shut.”

Anna Fazackerley, Head of Education, **Policy Exchange**

From: *Under Half of Degree Students have A-levels*, The Sunday Times,
April 11 2010

Vocational qualifications as a brake on social mobility?!



“It shows you have this apartheid in education. Whatever the merits of vocational qualifications, if you do an academic course at one of the leading universities, you will earn more than if you have gone the vocational route.”

Lee Elliot Major, Research and Policy Director, **Sutton Trust**

From: *Under Half of Degree Students have A-levels*, The Sunday Times, April 11 2010

Higher Education: Professionals (Robert Reich)



- Abstraction (theorising and/or relating empirical data to theory, and/or using formulae, equations, models and metaphors)
- System thinking (see the part in the context of the whole)
- Experimentation (intuitively or analytically)
- Collaboration (involving communication and team-working skills)

Employability: What It Is - What It Is Not (Mantz Yorke, 2004)

What are higher level skills?



- Creativity and enterprise
- Analytical capacity and reflective practice
- Knowledge, understanding and skills
- Flexibility and capacity to understand the whole
- Problem definition and solution
- Team-working, decision-making and communication skills

What is work-based learning for employers?



- Problem-based learning
- Innovative capacity
- Autonomy, motivation and self-management
- Team work and communication
- Personal and organisational performance

Principles of work-based learning



- Workplace learning: context and curriculum
- Transdisciplinary knowledge: Recontextualising Knowledge (*Putting Knowledge to Work*, IOE)
- Currency and level
- Employee (or trainee)-centred flexibility and responsiveness in relation to the work and learning environment

Purposes of work-based learning



- Theorising practice/practising theory
- Evaluative thinking
- Systems thinking
- Personal, Professional and intellectual development
- Employability competence in context

Forthcoming *fdf* publication: ***Designing work-based HE for Foundation degrees*** (in partnership with the IOE Centre for WBL)

Institutional 'barriers' to work-based learning



Senior Management strategy

Staff capability

Lack of cross-institutional debate (silo-sitis)

Lack of staff development strategy

Assessment practice – AP[E]L

Lack of understanding of clients/markets

Lack of responsiveness and long lead times

Risk, collaboration and inappropriate funding models

Leitch Review of Skills



3.26 ‘A more highly-skilled labour force will enable businesses to innovate further, taking advantage of new technologies and ways of working in order to improve productivity and capture new markets.’

Prosperity for all in the global economy – world class skills (2006)

Leitch Review of Skills



3.56: Concentrating too much on younger age groups could create further longer term problems for the amount and the use of high level skills in our workforce...As the Higher education White Paper stated, new higher education growth should not be 'more of the same', based on traditional three year honours degrees. Rather provision should be based on new types of programme offering specific, job-related skills such as Foundation Degrees.

Prosperity for all in the global economy – world class skills (2006)

Higher Ambitions



‘Higher education equips people with the skills that globalisation and a knowledge economy demand, and thereby gives access to many of this country’s best jobs. Everyone, irrespective of background, has a right to a fair chance to gain those advantages. This is vital not just as a question of social justice and social mobility but also for meeting the economy’s needs for high level skills.’

Higher ambitions: The future of universities in the knowledge economy, p.3

Higher Ambitions



‘The UK retains a large pool of just under six million workers with qualifications at level three (equivalent to A-levels in standard) but no experience of higher education. Raising the potential of our workforce must involve drawing more of these people into higher education, while also strengthening the skills pipeline that helps young people and adults gain skills and qualifications at every level. Widening access means building new stronger ladders of opportunity from apprenticeships to advanced apprenticeships and new technician qualifications into foundation degrees and other vocational higher education programmes.’

Higher ambitions: The future of universities in the knowledge economy, p.9

Non-participation in higher education



'Evidence from our key informant interviews, corroborated by the accounts of our research participants, indicates that no agency is currently taking responsibility for providing impartial advice and guidance on education and employment decisions to adults across the life course, or more specifically, in relation to opportunities for higher level study.... We have found no evidence of universities directly reaching out to the type of people who participated in our research'.

ESRC, Teaching & Learning Research Programme

Higher Ambitions



‘The majority of businesses that invest in high level skills do not make enough use of higher education. This should change: businesses should tap the resources available in universities more effectively, and universities should become more flexible in providing for business demand.’

Higher ambitions: The future of universities in the knowledge economy,
p.14

Higher Ambitions



'...although their general view of the quality of our graduates is a positive one, employers continue to report skills shortages, particularly in science, technology, engineering, mathematics and other key skills that underwrite some of our most competitive sectors. They also report a lack of 'employability' skills in graduates such as business awareness and self-management. Both of these deficits are holding back our economic prospects.'

Higher ambitions: The future of universities in the knowledge economy,
p.42

A challenge for higher education to address preparation for :



Jobs that don't yet exist...

...using technologies that haven't been invented...

...to solve problems we don't even know are problems yet

UKCES Skills Audit



- More than half of the jobs in the fastest growing occupations (since 2001) require at least a level 4 qualification
- More than half of the jobs that have declined fastest (since 2001) are where the majority of people are qualified to level 2 or below

Skills for Jobs: Today and Tomorrow, The National Strategic Skills Audit for England 2010

UKCES Skills Audit



Sectors likely to see the biggest growth in jobs (2007-2017):

- Business services
- Health and social work
- Retailing distribution
- Hotels and catering

Skills for Jobs: Today and Tomorrow, The National Strategic Skills Audit for England 2010

UKCES Skills Audit



‘Emerging’ sectors with great potential for the future:

- Low carbon
- Advanced manufacturing
- Engineering construction
- Financial and professional services
- Digital economy
- Life sciences and pharmaceuticals

Skills for Jobs: Today and Tomorrow, The National Strategic Skills Audit for England 2010

UKCES Skills Audit



Sectors that currently exhibit the greatest economic significance and the greatest skills deficiency:

- Computing
- Retail
- Electricity, gas and water
- Construction
- Hospitality
- Manufacture of transport equipment

Skills for Jobs: Today and Tomorrow, The National Strategic Skills Audit for England 2010

UKCES Skills Audit



Sectors which combine growing significance for the economy and are likely to have the greatest skills deficiency in the future:

- Business services
- Health and social care
- Retail

Skills for Jobs: Today and Tomorrow, The National Strategic Skills Audit for England 2010

UKCES Skills Audit: Migration



Migrants may be:

- attracted by employment opportunities
- may compete with domestic workers
- fill skill shortages or other hard-to-fill vacancies

‘In some senses...migrant labour market participation reflects a response to a ‘mismatch’ between the skills required by the labour market, and those available in the domestic labour force.’

Skills for Jobs: Today and Tomorrow, The National Strategic Skills Audit for England 2010

UKCES Skills Audit



Sectors that employ the most migrants (EEA and Non-EEA):

- Health
- Business services
- Retail
- Hospitality

Foundation degree students: challenging our preconceptions?



“I didn’t know what a Foundation degree was. If I’d know about this before I would not have done my degree. This opportunity is too good to be missed.”

“Doing a Foundation degree is very different to doing a degree. I spend most of my time in a work environment...the Foundation degree is more intense and it is hard work...but I’m much more motivated than I was when I did my degree.”

Research commissioned by *fdf*



Learning, juggling and achieving: Students' experiences of part-time Foundation degrees

Mantz Yorke and Bernard Longden

Review of research literature focussed on Foundation degrees

Lee Harvey

Career decision making and career development of part-time Foundation degree students

Claire Callender, David Wilson and Rebecca Hopkin

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