



## The Vocational-Higher Education Interface: a view from England

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### My experiences tell me

- Differences between vocational systems in England and Australia are more than language and shared heritage might suggest
- This impacts on relationships with HE
- Vocational defined pragmatically in country as whatever vocational institutions deliver (*with apologies to Gavin Moodie*)

## **Differences England and Australia**

- FE College - different course profile to TAFE Institutes
- FE Colleges - large numbers of full time 16-19 year olds studying academic and vocational courses for university entrance
- FE Colleges – deliver 10% of all publicly funded HE. Funded by HEFCE (direct or franchise). Inspected by HE Quality Assurance Agency

## **Differences England and Australia**

- FE Colleges not self accrediting. Teach vocational awarding bodies and university courses. (Just changing with QCF and proposals around Foundation Degrees)
- Australian VET closer to English “occupational pathway” or “Work-based Learning (WBL)” than English “vocational”.
- Complex and bureaucratic structures. UK Commission for Employment and Skills “simplification plan”

## Differences England and Australia

- Less private providers – mainly WBL. Different emphasis in terms of competition policy.
- Skills sector rather than VET Sector
- Unlike AQF separate Qualification Frameworks for Vocational and HE Qualifications. Makes credit transfer “difficult”
- Policy driver “social mobility” as much as human capital and national stock of skills.
- Now changing with Leitch Review on skills for a global economy.

## Dominant relationships FE and HE

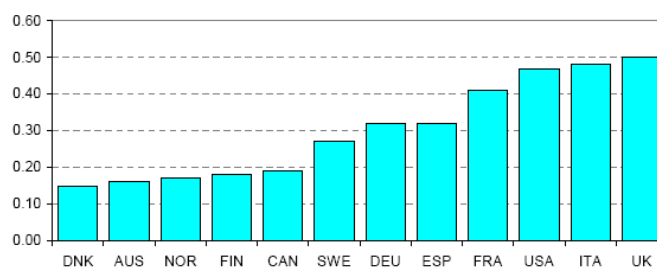
- FE supplier of undergraduates to HE. *Association of Colleges estimate 48% of all university entrants from FE Colleges.*
- “Franchise” deliverer of university programmes. *HEFCE suggest 10% of all HE delivered by FE Colleges*

## Widening participation as primary driver of HE in FE

- Target 50% of 18-30 age range in HE by 2010
- HEFCE initiatives include “Action on Access”, AimHigher, “Life Long Learning Networks”
- FE Colleges seen as local, friendly, strong on student support with small class sizes

## Social mobility – intergenerational earnings

Figure 1. Intergenerational Earnings Elasticity estimates from various studies



Note: The height of each bar represents the best point estimate of the intergenerational earnings elasticity resulting from the extensive meta-analysis carried out by Corak (2006). The higher the parameter, the higher is the persistence of earnings across generations and thus the lower is intergenerational earnings mobility.

## Sutton Trust Research

- Middle classes main beneficiaries of university expansion
- Getting into an “elite” university dependant on studying for “A levels”

***“English have a genius for making hierarchy out of diversity” Sir Howard Newby***

- From “A Levels” at selective state or independent school sixth form to a “Russell Group” university then the City, Old Professions or “fast track” Civil Service
- From “BTEC National” at FE College to post 1992 “recruiting” University then “white collar” job like nursing or teaching
- From NVQ apprenticeship to “blue collar” job

## Applications to Russell Group Universities

Previous School Type	Russell Group Application Nos.	Russell Group %	Other Application Nos.	Other %
State School	249,286	29.7	591,315	70.3
FE College	138,707	17.8	638,998	82.8
Independent School	104,040	50.3	102,857	47.7
Other	10,850	27.1	29,227	62.9
Unknown	28,140	19.2	118,575	80.8
Total	531,023	26.4	1,480,972	73.6

### Increasing emphasis on human capital model; more skills to compete in a global economy:

- Sir Andrew Foster's 2005 Report on future role of FE (sponsor Charles Clarke, then Education Minister)
- Lord Sandy Leitch's 2006 Report on skills (sponsor Gordon Brown, then Chancellor of the Exchequer)

**Economic and social differences have an impact. England:**

- Less primary more service sector
- Very ethnically diverse
- “Large” public administration. LSC alone employed 4,451 people in 2006

***Are the numbers of administrators employed the cause or effect of a very complex and bureaucratic system?***

- UKCES says employers do not understand the skills system. Too complex, bureaucratic with constant new initiatives
- Foster identified 17 agencies with a planning, funding or monitoring role for FE
- Steve Besley of Edexcel identified 4 planning and funding bodies; 4 regulatory/inspection agencies; 9 bodies representing or supporting providers; 10 support agencies; 12 strategic bodies; and 16 separate support mechanisms in VET.

**From LSEB “London Story..”**

**London’s businesses do not face major skills gaps due to high levels of inward migration and commuting.**

**London’s challenge is therefore to equip more Londoners to compete successfully for jobs alongside workers from across the UK and around the world...**

**London’s Future, *the London Skills and Employment Board Strategy for 2008-2013***

- 43% of London’s. current jobs require Higher Education Qualifications. This will rise to 50% by 2020
- London does not have major skills shortages. As a Global City can import skills from rest of world
- Biggest “skills issue” is highest unemployment rate in UK. 30% long term workless
- In this context “HE supplier” and “HE franchise deliverer” role of FE perfectly reasonable

### ***Form follows funding – LSC Funding Model***

- 14-19 funding for Colleges and School Sixth Forms
- Adult responsive
- Employer responsive (“Train to Gain”)

### ***14-19 Pathways (Raising expectations)***

- Foundation Learning Tier (remedial)
- A levels (academic route)
- Diplomas (applied / vocational route)
- Apprenticeships (occupational or work-based learning route)

## VRQs and NVQs

***Vocationally Related Qualifications (VRQs)** are based on national occupational standards having a balance of both academic and practical skills to better prepare the candidate for a career or further study. A VRQ is a qualification that provides knowledge and understanding in a particular subject area. It is not about competence, which is the job of an **National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ)** but can prepare candidates to deal with the underpinning knowledge and understanding which is required in an NVQ*

## Occupational and vocational

- What is classified as “vocational” in Australia is closer to:
- What is classified as “occupational” or “work-based learning” in England

## QCF – Qualifications and Credit Framework



## Ofqual mapping of NQF against FHEQ

(Qualifications taken from National Database of Accredited Qualifications)

### QCF / NQF Levels

**Level 8 (3)** CMI Diploma in Strategic Direction and Leadership

**Level 7 (48)** Trinity Guildhall Fellowship in Music Performance

**Level 6 (109)** OCR Certificate in French Listening (Mastery)

**Level 5 (275)** ABE Diploma In Financial Management

**Level 4 (609)** NVQ 4 in Construction Site Management

**Level 3 (3232)** BTEC National, (A level)

**Level 2 (2847)** BTEC First (GCSEs A-C)

**Level 1 (1739)** Vehicle (GCSEs D-G)

**Entry Level (441)** OCR ESOL

### FHEQ Levels

**D (Doctorates)** D.Phil, DBA, D.Ed

**M (Masters)**

**H (Honours)** Bachelors Degrees, Graduate Certificates and Diplomas

**I (Intermediate)** Foundation Degrees, Higher National Diplomas

**C (Certificate)** Certificates in Higher Education

## “Non prescribed” Higher Education

- Level 4 and 5 NVQs
- Trinity College Music Performance Certificates
- Professional association management diplomas – Chartered Institute of Management, Association of Business executives, Institute Of Leadership and management
- EFL and ESOL teaching
- Largely not publicly funded

## Credit transfer between sectors

- Universities interested in QCF from entry qualifications rather than credit point of view
- Some local arrangements – especially Open University
- “Reverse transfer” HE to FE or Vocational is **unknown or very rare**

## Draft national credit framework for England

Main HE awards	FHEQ level	FTE period (normal)	Normal total credit value	Normal min at level of award
Cert HE	C / 4	1 yr	<b>120</b>	<b>90</b>
Dip HE	I / 5	2 yr (ug)	<b>240</b>	<b>90</b>
FD	I / 5	2 yr (ug)	<b>240</b>	<b>90</b>
BA/BSc	I / 5	2.5-3 yr (ug)	<b>300</b>	<b>60 at H / 6</b>
BA/BSc (hons)	H / 6	3 yr (ug)	<b>360</b>	<b>90</b>
Graduate Cert	H / 6	4 mo (grad)	<b>60</b>	<b>40</b>
Graduate Dip	H / 6	8 mo (grad)	<b>120</b>	<b>90</b>
PGCE	M / 7	12 mo	<b>120</b>	<b>40</b>
PG Cert	M / 7	4 mo (pg)	<b>60</b>	<b>40</b>
PG Dip	M / 7	8 mo (pg)	<b>120</b>	<b>90</b>
Integrated Master	M / 7	4 yr (ug & pg)	<b>480</b>	<b>120</b>
Masters	M / 7	1 yr (pg)	<b>180</b>	<b>150</b>
Doctorate (credit based)	D / 8	3 yr (pg)	<b>540</b>	<b>360</b>
PhD / DPhil	D / 8	<b>3 yr (pg)</b>	-	-

## Higher Education in Further Education Colleges

- Long tradition
- Foundation Degrees
- Higher National Certificates and Diplomas
- Bachelors Degrees
- Masters Degrees
- "Non prescribed" HE

## **Distinctive characteristics of FE in HE**

- Local delivery
- Flexible delivery
- Strong personal support teaching and educational support staff
- Small teaching groups
- Greater teacher contact time – “more teaching”
- Industrial experience of FE Staff
- Continuing access to high specification equipment

## **University networks with FE**

- *Recruiting universities want FE College students and our happy to franchise their degrees so they form networks*
- Associate Colleges Networks
- Combined Universities in Cornwall
- Life Long Learning Networks

## **Foundation Degrees**

- HE qualification delivered by FE Colleges (and universities)
- Two years with pathway to Bachelor's Degree
- Employer related
- Open and closed to one employer, e.g. Tesco's
- Flexible entry requirements including NVQ and apprenticeship
- Exempt from ELQ policy

### **Further Education and Training Act allows FE Colleges to apply to Privy Council for Foundation Degree Awarding Powers**

- Surprise to Colleges
- Unpopular with Universities
- Undermine new qualification
- Universities argue FE staff not research active
- Introduce competition rather than collaboration

## Higher Education “Duals”

<i>Type</i>	<i>% Vet Funds</i>	<i>Association</i>	<i>Degree Awarding</i>	<i>Example</i>
Post 1992 University	Up to 5% LSC Funded	UUK	Degree Awarding	Middlesex University
Dual Sector University	Up to 45% LSC Funded	UUK	Degree Awarding	TVU (UCB?)
Specialist HE	Up to 45% LSC Funded	GuildHE	Degree Awarding	Writtle College
University “acquires” FE College	Up to 10% LSC Funded	UUK	Degree Awarding	U of Derby and High Peak College

## “Mixed Economy” FE Colleges

<i>Type</i>	<i>% Vet Funds</i>	<i>Association</i>	<i>Degree Awarding</i>	<i>Example</i>
Mixed Economy Group	Up to 85% LSC Funding	AoC	Potentially Foundation Degree Awarding	New College Durham; Croydon College
FE College with direct HEFCE and franchise funding	Up to 90% LSC Funding	AoC	Awarded by partner Universities	City of Westminster College
FE College with university franchise	Up to 97.5% LSC Funding	AoC	Awarded by franchising University	Hertfordshire regional College

## **One aspect of University College Birmingham's view of university status**

*What difference will the name change make to current and future students?*

*The name change will actually mean very little in terms of the courses we offer and the qualifications students receive. Our graduates will still receive their certificates from the University of Birmingham. Students studying City and Guilds, BTEC and other courses will still get their certificates from those awarding bodies.*

*In the future we will offer a small number of courses with the UCB name.*

## **FE and HE Quality Agencies Grading**

<b><i>Ofsted FE / Work-Based Learning Grading</i></b>	<b><i>QAA Higher Education Grading</i></b>
Outstanding	Broad confidence
Good	Confidence
Satisfactory	Limited confidence
Inadequate	No Confidence

## **Delivery by HE Providers no guarantee of quality**

“Leadership and management of the FE provision are unsatisfactory. Since the merger in 2002, senior managers have focused their attention on undergraduate and postgraduate provision, which represents the overwhelming majority of the university's work.” *(2006 Ofsted Judgement on a Post 1992 University)*

“The overall effectiveness of further education provision is inadequate, in contrast to the college's judgement of satisfactory” *(2008 Ofsted Judgement on an HE College)*

## **Some exemplary University delivery of FE**

“Inspectors judged education and training to be good in foundation art and design. They judged leadership and management of FE provision to be good. The university's key strengths and aspects that should be improved are listed below.

### ***Key strengths***

- o very good progression to, and preparation for, HE*
- o good academic and pastoral support*
- o good use of HE facilities by FE students*
- o strategic commitment to FE*
- o good partnership working*
- o social inclusion*
- o accurate self-assessment.*

### ***What should be improved***

- o the monitoring of attendance and punctuality*
- o the proportion of teaching that is good or better“*

## Management and Governance of FE in HE – Degrees of Integration

***Unitary duals** seek to integrate structures and processes to maximise integration between further and higher education often despite contrary pressures for separation through government funding and audit regimes. **Binary duals**, whilst seeking to maximise opportunities for internal articulation between further and higher education, essentially maintain separate structures and operations (Garrod and Macfarlane, 2007, p14)*

## Examples of Structure and Governance

- TVU - “Sixth Form Academy for A Levels” but otherwise integrated Faculties for vocational subjects
- Croydon College - Separate Academies for Higher Education Academy, 14-19 and Employer Facing
- City of Westminster College – “integrated where there is dual offer”

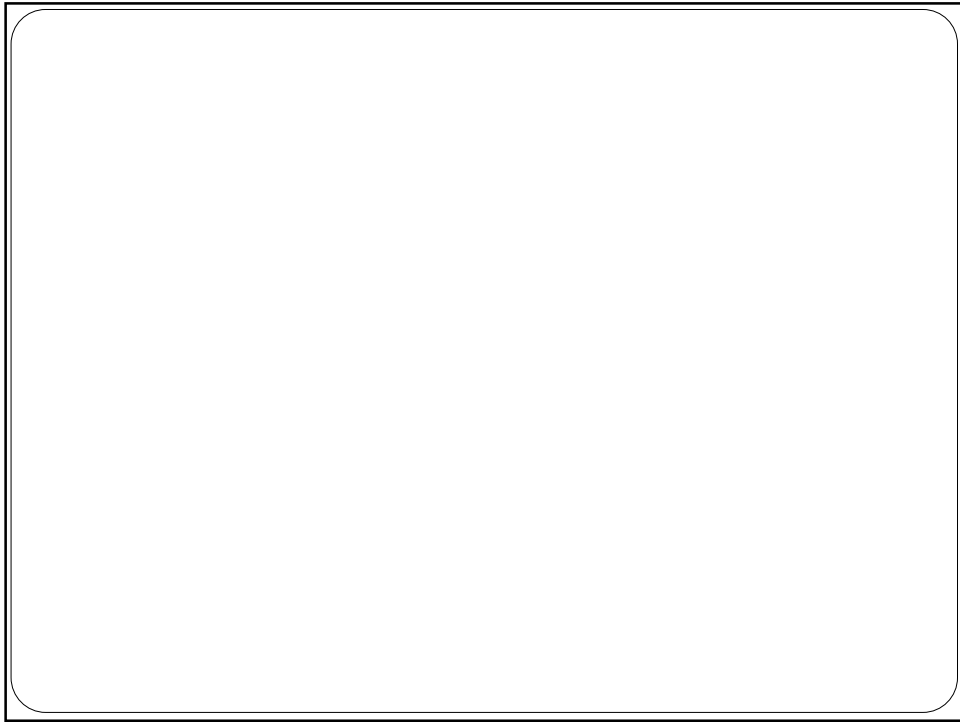
## Conclusion

- VET in Australia closer to “work-based learning” in UK
- Large number of “vocationally related” qualifications delivered by English FE Colleges used for university entrance
- Most Colleges have some HE provision – but it is HE not “advanced”, “cross over” VET (also have large profile of pre-university provision)
- Foundation Degree the significant initiative
- HE in FE formerly about “widening participation” to increase social mobility - rationale of friendly, local college
- Since Leitch becoming more about human capital and skills to compete in a global economy – FE links with industry a positive in this context

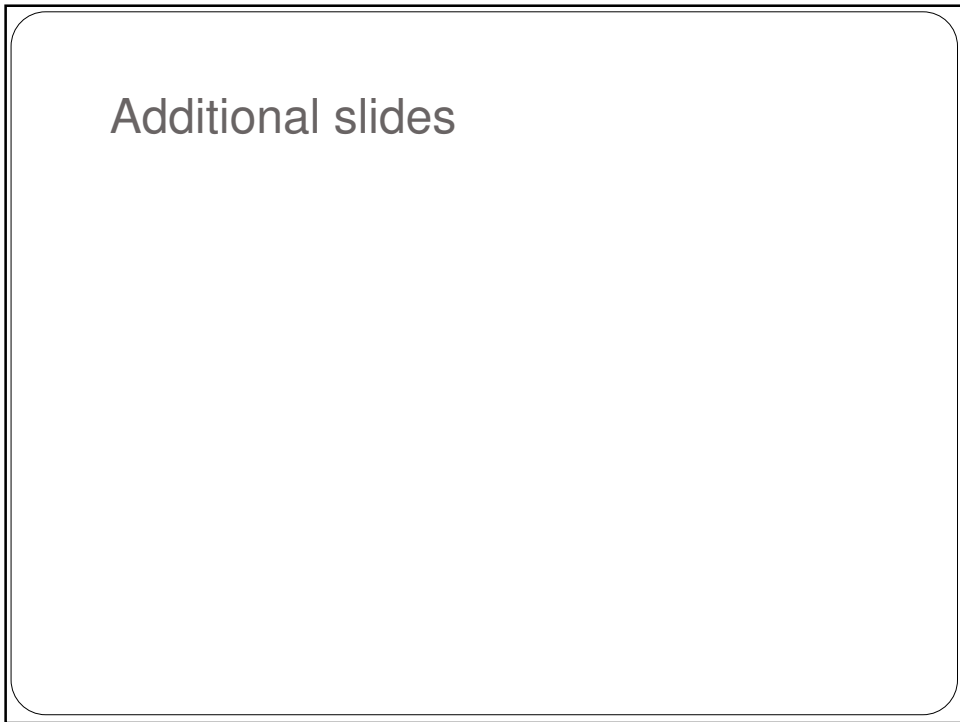
*Had he been alive today, Jude, the Victorian stonemason and aspirant undergraduate in Thomas Hardy's novel “Jude the Obscure”, might have got a NVQ and a VRQ but he still would not have got into the University of Oxford.*

*He would probably be fortunate to get into Oxford Brookes University for a degree in the built environment.*

*But he also may have made his fortune in Australia.*



Additional slides



## David Lammy, Minister of State for Higher Education

Applications( 1) to full-time undergraduate courses at UK institutions: by previous school type and type of institution— year of entry 2007

Previous school type	Type of institution					
	Russell Group		Other institutions		Total	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Maintained schools(2)	249,286	29.7	591,315	70.3	840,601	100.0
FE/HE colleges(3)	138,707	17.8	638,998	82.2	777,705	100.0
Independent schools	104,040	50.3	102,857	49.7	206,897	100.0
Other(4)	10,850	27.1	29,227	72.9	40,077	100.0
Unknown	28,140	19.2	118,575	80.8	146,715	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>531,023</b>	<b>26.4</b>	<b>1,480,972</b>	<b>73.6</b>	<b>2,011,995</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(1) In 2007, each applicant could submit up to six applications. The figures cover applications from students domiciled in the UK.

(2) Maintained schools include comprehensive, grammar, sixth form centres, and other maintained.

(3) Including sixth form colleges.

(4) Includes adult colleges, language schools, special schools and miscellaneous institutions.

Source:  
UCAS

Figure 2.4

