

The Future of Higher Education Teaching and the Student Experience

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Summary

The aim of this contribution is to provide a reference point for policy decisions about teaching and the student experience over the next 10-15 year period¹.

I show that we provide outstanding teaching and that the quality of our students' experiences is among the best in the world. The outcomes for our economy and our society, as well as for graduates themselves, are excellent. Academics and higher education institutions have worked energetically to address the needs of a student body that is larger and more diverse than ever before.

However, our country will need different kinds of student experiences to enable its graduates to contribute to the world of the future. We must extend our students, whether they study in traditional or less traditional ways, enabling them to find resources of courage, resilience and empathy that traverse national boundaries.

To do this will require a clearer sense of relative responsibilities. We will not be able to take the student experience forward unless we see it as a joint venture between students and those who provide higher education. Universities and colleges should be prepared to contemplate remodelling their curricula, perhaps radically, and building a more flexible workforce. Government and agencies should be ready to introduce funding models and quality systems that will realise a vision of higher education as an engaged partnership between students and providers.

¹ The contribution considers the United Kingdom as a whole, while recognising that distinctive approaches in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales each play a role in the development of UK higher education.