Structural Change: New Opportunities and Challenges

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Structure of presentation

• Summary of the issues
• Risks and opportunities of the current structural change
• Case study of York College’s experiences
• Required focus and reputational priorities
• Role of FERSG
Extremely turbulent time: nationally and for the sector
Issues faced by the sector:

- Impact of ‘Credit Crunch’ – not sure what this will be yet (Capital projects, funding spend, College deposits, TtG and Apprenticeship recruitment...)
- Machinery of Government changes
- New 14-19 qualification structures (Diplomas, A levels, Apprenticeships, Progression Pathways (FLT), mix and match)
- Impact of other strategies (FfE, new funding methodology, sixth form presumption etc)
- Will all this change distract from what really matters?
All may impact on reputation...

- Already seen the damage to the reputation in the banking sector
- Already seen national reputations threatened (e.g., Iceland).
- Could these changes damage the reputation of:
  - Local Authorities
  - FE Colleges
  - The sector?
But if planned properly change can enhance reputation...

- York College - £60 million new build
- Two sites on one
- New principal
- Much upheaval – curriculum/recruitment/staffing structures etc

Serious risk...could have damaged reputation...results...staff morale...
But...2008 saw

• Move into brand new College
• Improved results (substantial)
• Enhanced reputation (new build, results, student/parent feedback, sector visits/talks etc)
• Increased recruitment (+6%, 220 more students)
• All as a result of meticulous planning
• Getting it right really benefits all at all levels
Benefits for staff, students, community, city...
Opportunities present in structural change:

• Change can be for the better!
• FE is now seen as central to Government strategy
• There is a duty on all to collaborate
• Opportunities to work closely with LAs and local communities/schools
• Value of learning and skills clear
• Self regulation could bring real results
• New proposals around qualification structures – real benefit for students
Colleges have...

Massive expertise
- Real knowledge of our community
- Good employer relationships
- Valuable experience in partnership working
- Real progression opportunities through to HE

FERSG working to promote this for FE nationally.
Huge opportunities for FE to:

- Work with Ministers via the Single Voice
- Use FERSG to promote FE reputation nationally
- Get Self Regulation right
- Embed ourselves in the work of the Local Authorities
- Keep people in work via Employer Engagement
- Respond – as we always have done
- Develop Higher Level Skills (via HE partnerships)
- Get Progression Pathways, FLT, qualification structure right
FERSG hopes to build reputation

With apols to Frank Villeneuve-Smith/LSN
So that we ensure

• A vibrant and rich curriculum meeting the needs of
  • Students (at all levels)
  • Employers
  • Government
  • The country
  • And across national boundaries
We all must continue to focus on

• delivering high quality
• the right strategic direction
• student success

especially in times of change.