

Employability Conference

6-7 November 2008

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Anglia Ruskin University was 150 Years Old on October 28th 2008

Anglia Ruskin University was founded from a School of Art for working men which was established in Cambridge by John Ruskin – a famous British champion of the working classes. We have copies of the speech he gave when he did so!

Employer engagement

- “ New UK government idea
- “ ‘Employer Engagement’ means degree-level study delivered completely in the workplace
- “ In total there is £100 million funding from the government to encourage universities to do more of this (for staff and equipment)
- “ And funding for 10,000 student places – which is worth £60 million pounds annually.

What the UK government wants to achieve

- “ UK workforce is not sufficiently well educated for an economy based on high-cost workers
- “ Move UK up the OECD table which measures skills levels in the workplace
- “ UK’s birth-rate is falling
- “ So 80% of the UK workforce of 2020 are already there now so must focus on those already in work.

How does the UK government intend to achieve it?

- “ Share cost between those studying, employers and the state
- “ Aim eventually for employers and the state to pay the same amount
- “ Those studying to pay something also
- “ At first employers allowed to make no payment but that must change over three years.

Sharing costs

- “ If the degree costs £7000:
- “ The student might pay £1000
- “ The employer might pay £3000
- “ And the government might pay £3000.

What is Anglia Ruskin University's experience in this area?

- “ Specsavers, Boots, VisionExpress
- “ Barclays Bank
- “ UPS
- “ Crawfords
- “ Accreditation of Prior Learning
- “ Private Sector marketing partnerships.

Some of the issues (1)

- “ The government wants this but do employers?
- “ Do the workers?
- “ If it takes off government funding will be forced into a pay per-credit model
- “ Demand is likely to be for hybrid courses involving distance learning, workplace learning and even classroom activity
- “ Current Quality Assurance processes at national and institutional level are not fit for this purpose.

Issues (2)

- “ Will this help employers retain staff or promote employee mobility?
- “ Is the current list of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes and qualifications fit for purpose?
- “ Should this be employer-led or university-led? Boots BSc versus Nottingham BSc?
- “ Do we have the right academic staff to design and deliver these programmes?
- “ Do we have the right infrastructure?.

Anglia Ruskin University takes this forward

- “ We have been awarded £10 million from the UK government
- “ We will work with a commercial marketing company
- “ We will concentrate on degrees in Leadership and Management
- “ At BSc and MSc level
- “ Face-to-face
- “ Print-based distance learning
- “ Online distance learning.

Recognising what people already know

- “ It is boring to have to study again what you already know
- “ If you do not have to study things you already know you will get your degree more quickly
- “ Workers must prove what they already know
- “ By showing us certificates from government exams or other universities
- “ Or we can insist they take a special test or exam
- “ They do not need to study the parts of the degree programme which they can prove to us they already know.