



E-BULLETIN

FORUM FOR ACCESS AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

This is the **October 2009** eBulletin from FACE (the Forum for Access and Continuing Education), offered to practitioners, policy-makers, researchers and others with an interest in access, widening participation and lifelong learning. The eBulletin is sent to colleagues in the sector, members and non-members alike. If you would prefer not to receive it, please contact Jim at James.Tate@uwe.ac.uk and your details will be removed from the circulation list.

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FACE chair calls for a new funding model for HE

The FACE chair John Storan gave a keynote speech at a national conference at the Barbican Centre in central London recently. The conference title was 'The future for part-time and distance study. Enhancing flexible provision'.

In setting out his analysis John drew attention to the significant inequalities that currently exist between full and part-time learners in HE. In fact he went much further, arguing that the distinction between the two modes of study were largely redundant now in practice for a great many learners. However, funding for HE and the way that teaching and learning is organised, to name but two areas, are entirely predicated on the full-time model.

He proposed that there was an urgent need to move to a funding model for HE that was neutral in respect of study mode and based on funded learning credits. There was, he said, wide support for this not just amongst FACE colleagues but beyond.

The report by Professor Christine King (Vice-Chancellor, Staffordshire University, and FACE conference host 2009) to the then Secretary of State John Denham had also presented this argument and it is hoped that the report will be taken into account in the new HE Framework which is being taken forward by Lord Mandelson and his new department. As this framework has yet to be published, FACE members should watch this space.

Head of Access at the QAA to brief FACE Executive

Kath Dentith, Head of Access at the QAA, has kindly agreed to give a briefing to the **FACE Executive** at its next meeting on the 7th Dec at the University of Westminster.

With many changes taking place in relation to Access to HE courses which now lead to the award of the Access to HE Diploma this will be a timely opportunity to share views and experiences. Access to HE has been and continues to be a major route into HE and many FACE members and their institutions are directly involved so the meeting will also be a chance to explore how FACE and QAA can work together on the future development of Access to HE.

Speaker's Corner



SPEAKERS' CORNER

As a member-oriented organisation FACE would like to invite individual colleagues to have their say on any issue of concern in UK education policy and practice. This is a purely personal point of view and should not be thought to represent any institution, organisation, or official body. To have your say, email Jim at James.Tate@uwe.ac.uk

This month's contribution is from **Zita Eckett MBE** who asks: **Access and Widening Participation: a complete circle in 2 decades?**

Two Decades Ago - late 1980s

The pace and level of change in higher education in the United Kingdom over the last two decades has been phenomenal. First we had the abolition of the Polytechnic and University divide. Polytechnics, which were the bastion for vocational higher education, were also the drivers for widening participation. Removing the divide meant that the working classes could now get a degree from a university, but still there was reluctance on their part to take advantage of these monumental changes.

The early/mid-1990s

At last, the masses are beginning to wake up - higher education is accessible, there is unprecedented growth. Ah, but wait a moment, the Government can't afford to fund all of them. We should have seen this coming, but never mind we can cap the number of fundable students each institution can recruit – the MASN (maximum aggregate student number), and penalise institutions who transgress this ruling.

The late 1990s - 2005

Oh dear! The higher education student numbers are still growing and the bank account is shrinking because we have to spend money in places far away. But wait, we can't be seen to go back on the promise to raise the level of participation in higher education. Let us introduce a system of tuition fees and loans! Did you say it will discourage the working classes? Well, how about if we give institutions a small pot of money to help with projects such as their Out-reach and community work? That should help, shouldn't it.

2005- 2008

Still not enough money to fund the masses in higher education? Let us put the tuitions fees up by a couple of thousand pounds per student and increase the level of the loans. Surely you don't think it would have a negative effect on participation? IT will? Then let us introduce OFFA agreements to help the lower classes who still want to go to University.

2008 ?

What to do? The world economy is collapsing! How do we continue to fund all these people who want to go onto to higher education or retrain for something else?

I know We need to save money, so as a starting measure let us introduce a funding ban on those who already have a higher qualification. No, they are NOT referred to as an 'ELK', but as an 'ELQ'.

Oh dear, that still wouldn't make much of a difference, and we need more money to support the failing economy. The solution? Wait for it, tell institutions they can't recruit any more new students than they did in the previous year, and we will penalise institutions that transgress this ruling. Oh Dear! You don't seriously think this will adversely affect those institutions or individuals who are committed to widening participation in higher education ,do you?

Zita Eckett MBE

Face to Face Issue 31 Online

Issue 31 of the eJournal from Spring 2009 has now been placed online. The [FACE to FACE](#) page of the website has issues of this publication going back to the summer of 2002 for anyone interested in the recent history of FACE.

Issue 32 from Autumn 2009 is currently available only to members, and issue 33 is in the works under the guidance of our hard-working editor, Pete Jones.

If you have an idea for an article that you would like to contribute to the eJournal and would like to discuss it with the editor, please call Pete on 01782 294941 or email pete.jones@staffs.ac.uk.



What would the DCSF do without us?

On 26th October 2009 FACE executive member Graeme Atherton noticed that a piece of research [How young people formulate their views about the future](#), of which he was one of the authors, had been published on the Department of Children, Schools, and Families (DCSF) website and that on the same day another piece of research [Careers Co-ordinators in Schools](#) had also been published on the DCSF website, of which one of the authors was Tami McCrone; another executive member of FACE!

Two members of the FACE Exec having research published by the DCSF on the same day - should someone inform the Monopolies Commission?

Some Other Events

HE in FE: Learner and Practioner Identities

to be jointly hosted by

Universities Association of Lifelong Learning (UALL)
Women in Lifelong Learning (WiLL) Network

Birkbeck Institute for Lifelong Learning (BILL)

Date: Wednesday 11th November 2009
Venue: Birkbeck, University of London
Time: 1.30 - 5.00pm (coffee/tea provided)

Speakers: Professor Sue Jackson (Pro-Vice-Master, Learning and Teaching, Professor of Lifelong Learning and Gender, Birkbeck) will report on early findings of a research project entitled: *Foundation degree students, learner identities and career aspirations*.

Dr Becky Turner (Educational Researcher and Developer, HE Learning Partnerships, Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, University of Plymouth) will discuss the findings of a research project investigating the impact of expanding HE provision on the emerging HE ethos within FE Colleges and the effect of engagement with scholarship on the emerging identities of HE in FE professionals.

Seminar Fee: UALL members £40.00, Non-UALL members £55.00

To book a place, contact Kate Thomas, kate2.thomas@uwe.ac.uk, 0117 328 1436

The Widening Participation Dividend: Learners, Communities and Universities

10th Action on Access Annual Conference

Thursday 10th December 2009
Russell Hotel, Russell Square, London

The aim of the conference is to affirm the widening participation dividend and to explore the widening participation contribution to other national agendas, including raising educational attainment, improving social mobility, stimulating regeneration, and aiding economic competitiveness. The conference will explore the particular contribution of cross-sector partnerships; schools, colleges and universities working together; fair access; widening participation supporting an economic recovery and promoting social cohesion and mobility.

There is a charge of £175 to attend this event.

For further information, contact info@actiononaccess.org 01695 650 871

[Other forthcoming events from Action on Access.](#)

What else is in the News?

For the latest UK Education headlines and stories **go to the FACE News Feeds page** where you'll find the online news feeds of several of the sources listed below gathered together on one page for easy access.

The Guardian <http://education.guardian.co.uk>

The Independent <http://news.independent.co.uk/education>

The BBC http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/education/default.stm

The Times http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life_and_style/education

The Times Higher Education <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk>

DCSF News Centre <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/newslist.cgi>

LSC News <http://www.lsc.gov.uk/News>

If you wish to respond to anything in this eBulletin or contribute to the November 2009 issue, please email Jim at James.Tate@uwe.ac.uk