

'Renewing' England's FE colleges: an update

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I hate to say it - but 'I told you so' . . . In issue 48 of *Post-16 Educator* I reviewed the Government's *Renewing England's FE Colleges* initiative and discussed some of the problems with this programme. Unfortunately, it appears that some of my predictions are now coming true. Despite unprecedented levels of spending, the programme of 'renewing' our colleges is now grinding to a halt; building projects are being put on hold; and many colleges are being pushed to the brink of insolvency. This situation brings me no satisfaction. FE has traditionally been a 'make do and mend' service. Staff and students have often been housed in inadequate accommodation and provided with poor facilities. This is a great pity - they deserve better.

FE's history of neglect and under-funding meant that many institutions developed in a haphazard and uneven way. When colleges were under municipal control local education authorities (LEAs) tended to have variable levels of commitment towards providing further education, and it is perhaps fitting that FE has often been referred to as 'the Cinderella service'. Sitting between the politically-sensitive school sector on one hand and more prestigious universities on the other, FE was often 'the neglected middle child' of English education. Consequently, spending upon colleges usually came well down the political agenda. However, the budgetary restraints placed upon LEAs during the 1970s and 1980s worsened matters significantly and meant that much investment went on hold and many college buildings and premises were allowed to degenerate. FE colleges were generally in poor physical condition as they went into incorporation in the early 1990s.

The years since incorporation have been deeply problematic in a number of ways and staff - particularly for FE teachers - have suffered greatly since colleges were removed from LEA control. There has, however, been increased expenditure on FE's physical infrastructure in England. Whilst the early years of incorporation saw relatively modest expenditure upon estates and premises, greatly increased levels of spending have taken place since New Labour came to power. As is character-

istic of the present Government, this has been accompanied by much rhetoric and a rather zealous discourse about 'renewing' England's FE colleges. Nevertheless, the amounts of money involved have been huge: between April 2001 and March 2008 a total of £4.2 billion was spent on FE building projects (NAO 2008, 5-6); by the end of 2008 bids for over 140 more developments have been submitted. The estimated cost of these latest proposals amounts to £5.7 billion (BBC 2009a, 2). All this sounds quite exciting.

There are, however, a number of problems that accompany the present trend of demolishing old buildings and replacing them with new ones. One issue is that levels of debt have soared in FE. Whilst the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) provides part of the funding for capital projects, the majority of building costs need to be met by colleges themselves. Many are now in serious debt as a result of over-ambitious building projects and an increasing number of colleges are being classed as 'financially weak' (NAO 2008, 30-31). Rather than opting for refurbishment and the improvement of existing building stock, there has been an indecent haste to demolish old buildings. Even when they are still fit for purpose, the LSC has consistently encouraged colleges to flatten existing buildings and go for 'new builds'. As I have argued, this is problematic for a number of reasons, not least on the grounds of environmental sustainability (Simmons 2008). On another level, it appears that colleges are increasingly being sucked into some kind of building competition - an unhealthy culture emphasising size and cost has taken root. Principals talk about 'super colleges'. 'New builds' are being used as marketing tools in order to gain perceived advantage in a competitive marketplace. Colleges seem to be involved in some kind of construction 'arms race' in order to outgun each other and seize 'new business'.

Recent developments have sharpened and refocused my attention on the issue of 'renewing' our colleges. Since January 2009, over 140 new FE capital projects have been put on hold. Skills Secretary John Denham has admitted that not all schemes can be completed 'on the timescales

originally envisaged' (BBC 2009 b; c). The harsh reality is that LSC budgets have been significantly overspent and some institutions are being left in limbo with half-finished building projects. Furthermore, many new schemes rely on the sale of land or other assets and on the ability of colleges to gain financial support from the banks. As we all know, borrowing large amounts of money has become increasingly difficult in the current economic climate. The LSC claims that the college rebuilding scheme had been 'a victim of its own success'. However, David Collins, the principal of South Cheshire College and president of the Association of Colleges, has accused the funding council of mismanagement (BBC 2009c). Shadow Skills Secretary David Willetts has described the current situation as a 'shambles' (BBC 2009b). Sir Andrew Foster, the former head of the Audit Commission, is now leading an 'independent' review of FE capital funding projects - the findings of which may be available by the time this article is published (BBC 2009a).

Some colleges are now in chaos after embarking on building projects only to find out that promised funding has been withheld by the LSC. Brooklands College in Surrey was advised by the LSC to merge with a local sixth-form college. It was then encouraged to demolish its existing premises and to go for a new build. When Brooklands submitted its plans the funding council told the College that its proposals were not ambitious enough and it was invited to submit a far more expensive project bid. Staff and students have been moved into temporary accommodation at a rental cost of £80,000 per month and £9 million has been spent on preparatory work for new premises. However, the College has now been informed that its plans have not been fully approved and developments at Brooklands are now on hold indefinitely. Barnsley College finds itself in a similar situation - it has spent £2 million on fees and demolition costs and has taken out £9 million of loans. But Barnsley College is also stuck with temporary buildings until further notice. Meanwhile, South Thames College in London is in massive debt: so far £70 million has been spent on a new building project. However, this will remain unfinished unless further funding is made available (BBC 2009c).

David Collins believes that local authorities should intervene and provide up to £3 billion of additional money to help finance FE building plans (Lee 2009). This, he argues, would be a far better use of public money than bailing out the banks and would help to stimulate the economy in this period of recession. Broadly, I agree with Dr Collins on these points: taxpayers' money should not be given

to failing private enterprises; and the state should provide funding for services such as further education. However, if these funds are to be provided by local authorities then surely FE colleges should also be returned to their control. Some of the grandiose FE building projects that have taken place have been ill-advised and, had local authorities been able to check and balance the proposals made by over-ambitious principals, perhaps much of the current predicament could have been avoided. Colleges have been too hasty in selling off their premises and in demolishing old buildings. They have too easily been seduced by architects and consultants, the prospect of shiny new buildings and increased 'market share'. College managers and governing bodies have been unaccountable for too long.

Although there are occasions when investing in a new start is the best option, in most cases repair and renovation is more desirable. I don't want a college to look like a corporate headquarters; or to have central locations sold off and new buildings plonked on the outskirts of conurbations, where they are inaccessible to many. Personally, I love the Victorian facades of many old college buildings and would have liked to have seen them properly maintained, sympathetically developed and improved. In most cases this option has not been taken - the ruthless demolition and construction programme has, to a large extent, been a result of the commercial environment in which colleges are forced to operate. Many college principals believe they are business executives running private companies rather than providing a public service. They need to realise that colleges should be run for the public good rather than as quasi-businesses. The current FE buildings crisis is just another example of the pernicious influence of 'market forces' upon public services. Colleges need to be returned to democratic control if such debacles are to be avoided in future.

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News update: March - April 2009

Week beginning 2/3/09

[Previous week.] University of East London (UEL) vice-chancellor Martin Everett, suspended in July 2008 by chair of governors Jim McKenna, resigns. Commenting, the UCU branch says: 'Governors are answerable to no one. They have used secretive and authoritarian methods to drive out a respected manager'.

[Previous week.] In a lecture given at Oxford University, Gordon Brown says he will shift the UK economy towards science and technology and away from its dependence on financial services.

Commenting on booing by Campaigning Alliance for Lifelong Learning (CALL) lobbyists when DIUS secretary of state John Denham counterposes literacy funding to 'subsidising people who want to learn Spanish for holidays', National Institute for Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) director Alan Tuckett says: 'If the object is to share the pain it certainly worked. But if the object is to look at the most effective ways to support the principles we were all lobbying around, you've got to get into a dialogue with ministers'.

Points in the HE Funding Council for England (HEFCE) annual announcement of funding allocations include: the total allocated is £7.99bn, up 4 per cent on 2008-09; this includes £4.78bn for teaching and £1.57bn for research; within these research allocations, some prestigious institutions (eg Imperial College London, King's College London and the Universities of Surrey, Birmingham, Southampton and Sheffield) receive increases below the rate of inflation, while others (eg LSE, SOAS, the London Business School and Essex University) suffer actual cuts; as a result of the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), there is a limited reallocation from prestigious to less prestigious institutions, such that the total share of HEFCE-allocated research funding going to Russell Group and 1994 Group universities in 2009-10 is 81.2 per cent, as against 84.8 per cent in 2008-09.

Research by an anonymous academic reveals that, of the 851 sub-panel chairs and members involved in the 2008 RAE, 742 (87 per cent) came from the top 50 institutions whereas only 109 (13 per cent) came from the remaining

82 institutions. (The implication is that the RAE allowed well-funded institutions or departments to allocate themselves even more funding.)

HEFCE allocates a total of £184.2m to the 124 FE colleges doing HE work (up from £175.8m in 2008-09). The top ten such institutions range from Newcastle College (on £11,826,260), via Blackburn, Bradford, Blackpool and the Fylde and Grimsby Colleges, Leeds College of Art and Design, Havering College and North East Surrey College of Technology, to New College Durham on £4,025,766

On the day (4/3/09) when John Denham tells parliament that FE college building projects worth £5.7bn are in the queue for LSC funding, and that the LSC has given in principle approval to at least £700m of spending in excess of the available budget (ie £2.3bn over three years), an LSC council meeting authorises an additional £300m of spending, covering projects in Stoke-on-Trent, Coulsdon, Liverpool, Solihull, Bolton, Northampton and West Kent. Bids totalling £3bn from a further 65 colleges await approval.

Denham issues a parliamentary written statement extending, with eight exceptions, the freeze on building projects announced in December by the LSC, and disclosing that he has asked former Audit Commission CEO Sir Andrew Foster to investigate what has happened.

Job losses amongst agency staff are expected to result from a change announced in the March 2008 budget, by which FE colleges will from 1/4/09 have to pay VAT at 15 per cent on their total agency staff wage bill, rather than just on the agency fee. .

Week beginning 9/3/09

'Caps', an online UCAS-style system through which year 11 school students apply to enter 6th forms, colleges etc, is being piloted in a few areas. The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) intends this to become a compulsory, national scheme, and is expected to announce this at the end of March.

Features of the situation at Liverpool University, a Russell Group institution, include: an internal management document concerned with the departments of statistics, philosophy and politics and communication studies says that 'it is not feasible to continue to support these areas in future'; closure of the departments of civil engineering, cancer studies, dentistry, American studies and sociology is also being considered; Liverpool's total HEFCE allocation for 2009-2010 is up 8.8 per cent on last year, to almost £115m; the vice chancellor is former Universities UK CEO and University of the West of England vice-chancellor Sir Howard Newby; the UCU branch is considering strike action.

At a Commons Innovation, Universities, Science and Skills (IUSS) committee hearing, chairperson Phil Willis MP tells [HE]

Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) head Peter Williams that: 'You have no teeth, you don't look at standards', and asks: 'Is it time not only for you to move on to a new job but in fact to have a new agency altogether?' Williams replies that: 'A lot of our power is the power of influence and fear'.

The London Region of the Association of Colleges (AOC), which claims to speak for 53 'London colleges' and is chaired by South Thames principal Sue Rimmer, issues a report, *Tackling and Preventing Gang Problems in London Colleges*.

A *Times Higher Education (THE)* analysis of the HEFCE allocations finds that, despite increases in overall funding, all 16 Russell Group institutions have experienced a drop in research funding per researcher entered for the RAE (ranging from a £12,101 reduction at Southampton to a £415 reduction at Liverpool, and averaging £6,100 across the whole group), and with two exceptions, the 1994 Group (ie smaller 'research-intensive' institutions) has also experienced a drop (averaging £5,100 per entered researcher).

As examples of the FE buildings crisis, it emerges that Abingdon and Witney College, which expected to receive final approval in December for a £30m rebuilding bid, is paying £40,000 a month for 57 temporary cabins to house students, while South Cheshire College (where AOC president David Collins is principal) submitted a £35m bid and was encouraged by the LSC to increase this to £75m.

The Unite Against Fascism (UAF) organisation has launched a petition calling on Birmingham City University to dismiss a visiting lecturer at the Birmingham Conservatoire, Andrew Glover, whose name appeared on a list of BNP members leaked last year.

There are doubts about the Government's proposed 'national skills academies', as it emerges that the academy for the food and drink manufacturing sector has only received £1m in cash sponsorship from companies, and the power industry one only £1.5m. (When the programme was launched in 2006, the Government expected each academy to obtain about £5m sponsorship.) The LSC claims 11 academies are now in existence, as against the target of 12 for the end of 2008.

Despite the claim made by the Government in 2007 that it would use the money cut from funding ELQs (equivalent or lower level qualifications) to provide extra places for people undertaking degrees for the first time, it emerges that it has in fact cut by 5,000 the 15,000 additional places which this was supposed to produce in 2009-10.

A panel of 'higher education experts and senior examiners' which advises UCAS on its tariff has decided that, because of new, extended A-levels, A-levels as such should retain their existing tariff value, ie rather than having this lowered to take account of alleged 'grade inflation'. (One effect will be that points awarded for the International Baccalaureate [IB] will fall from 768 to 720.)

Imperial College London, along with Oxford, Cambridge and Edinburgh Universities, is pressing via science minister Lord Drayson for the Government to direct £1bn of research funding into subsidising the start-up costs of spin-off companies (ie firms started from within research-intensive universities to exploit the commercial potential of researchers' discoveries).

A study of FE college mergers carried out by the Hay Group consultants finds that, of 16 merged colleges studied, six showed clear improvement, six

showed clear deterioration and four were uncertain, indicating that: 'two out of every three mergers do not deliver improvements for students in terms of attainment or achievement'. The report notes that: 'Almost every merger included a ghastly moment when the cupboard doors opened and the skeletons fell out'. (27 mergers were under consideration at the end of 2008, as well as 13 proposals for federations and the like.)

Aston University is to sponsor a 'vocational academy' for 14-19 year olds in Birmingham, at which, from September 2012, they will specialise in engineering and manufacturing. The idea for such 'technical schools' originates from former Tory education secretary Lord Baker and the late Lord Dearing. Schools minister Jim Knight says they could 'become hubs of progressive, modern education . . .' Twelve other universities are reportedly discussing such sponsorship.

A HEFCE report on HE in FE alleges that plagiarism is more likely to be prevalent there than in universities.

Manchester University confirms that, as of summer 2009, it will close its Courses for the Public programme.

Reading University is 'reviewing' its School of Continuing Education, after a 69 per cent reduction in 'other recurring teaching grants', which results mainly from government policy towards ELQs.

In a submission to the IUSS committee, the 157 Group (of large FE colleges) calls on the Government to force universities to form partnerships with local colleges, so as to 'make access to university a mainstream option for further education learners'.

Nottingham University admin. worker Hicham Yezza, previously arrested on a false accusation

relating to a widely available Al-Qaeda training manual, is jailed for nine months for immigration offences.

A TUC analysis for 2008 shows that, by comparison with five years ago, 11,500 more FE teaching staff do unpaid overtime. However, the average weekly amount done by each person is down by 30 minutes - to 8 hours, 18 minutes.

Following lobbying by Universities UK (UUK - ie the vice-chancellors), ministers agree to small changes in the points-based immigration system which will apply to non-EU students from 1/4/09.

Former NATFHE general secretary Paul Mackney announces his retirement, for health reasons, from his current post at the National Institute for Adult Continuing Education (NIACE).

Week beginning 16/3/09

The *THE* publishes HE Statistics Agency figures (collated by the accountants Grant Thornton) showing the incomes of vice-chancellors and of all other full time academic staff in UK universities in 2007-08 (except for staff at London Met. University and Leeds College of Music, included only in overall averages). The figures for vice-chancellors range between £585,000 paid to Nottingham University vice-chancellor Sir Colin Campbell, which includes various special payments related to his retirement, and £102,457 paid to the vice-chancellor of Liverpool Institute for the Performing Arts, the average payment for a vice-chancellor being £193,970 in salary plus £26,129 in employer's pension contribution. (The salary figure represents a 9 per cent increase on 2006-07, and the pension figure a 16.4 per cent increase.) For other staff, the overall averages are: professors (male) £70,854, (female) £65,568; senior lecturers and senior researchers £47,167 and £44,764;

lecturers £38,466 and £37,628; researchers £32,695 and £30,824; other grades £47,916 and £40,726. The average for both sexes across all grades other than vice-chancellors was £43,486. No figures are given for part time staff.

There are reportedly moves amongst management in the 97 sixth form colleges to form an organisation separate from the AOC, in anticipation of the distinct status these colleges will have from April 2010 under the so-called 'apprenticeship reform bill' currently going through parliament. (At present, the Sixth Form Colleges Forum operates under the umbrella of the AOC. Five colleges in Surrey have already left it.)

Changing Landscapes: Future Scenarios for Variable Tuition Fees, a report based on interviews with vice-chancellors and produced for UUK by the consultants CRA International, puts forward eight possible models for increased HE fees from 2013, one of which would give rise to an average student debt of £32,557 in 2016 (up from an estimated £17,794 in 2011).

An LSC report on capital investment in FE colleges up to December 2008 claims that the building programme has created 10,000 jobs and that each £1m spent has 'led to' an extra 111 students.

An independent review of alleged racism at Bradford University, and especially in the School of Health there, conducted by a panel headed by Peter Herbert, chairperson of the Society of Black Lawyers, alleges widespread systemic failure in the handling of grievances and disciplinaries, both by management, by the institution's race and diversity champion, Uduak Archibong, and by the UCU branch.

The LSC notifies colleges that funding allocations covering 16-18 year olds for 2009-10, due on 13th

March, will be delayed. This is reportedly because the recession has produced a 13,000 increase in demand for places, which translates into a £65m shortfall in the funding available.

Redundancies are likely at Leeds University, especially in the schools of education and of biological sciences (due to a loss of research funding) and up to 33 posts in the school of healthcare (due to a change in the NHS' contracting methodology).

Liverpool John Moores University is to close 37 courses with effect from September 2009, after being warned by HEFCE that it has exceeded its admission limit by 1,000 (17 per cent) in 2008-09.

There is evidence that Cambridge University, Imperial College London and University College London all intend to make the achievement of at least one A* grade A-level mandatory for would-be entrants from 2010.

UCU issues a press release stating that, because the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) has 'ruled out a pay freeze' for August 2009 (a point denied immediately by UCEA), the union will not ballot for industrial action over UCEA's stance on pay bargaining.

The Skills Commission, 'an independent group of experts in vocational learning funded by the Edge Foundation' (*TES*), of which Commons DCSF committee chairperson Barry Sheerman is the co-chair, issues a report on apprenticeships calling for easier routes into HE for apprentices and former apprentices.

Points in a UCAS submission to the Commons IUSS committee include: in 2008, only 228 people applied for full time degree places via UCAS on the basis of having done advanced apprenticeships; there should be a single, common system for part time degree

applications; between 2007 and 2008, the overall numbers applying via UCAS for courses with admissions tests rose from 46,213 to 52,294; of these latter figures, 21,939 were for courses requiring the UK Clinical Aptitude Test (ie medical courses), and 7,593 for courses requiring the National Admissions Test for Law (LNAT).

A study by two Australian National University academics, Linda Butler and Ian McAllister, of how the 2001 RAE in the UK operated with respect to the funding of political science research finds that submissions from departments with an RAE panel member did better than those without, indicating, in their view, that a system based on bibliometrics (eg counting how often academic papers are cited in peer-reviewed journals) would be fairer.

41 NASUWT members at Rhyl High School in Denbighshire picket the school over plans by the Welsh Assembly and county council to close sixth forms there and at the only other relevant local school and concentrate all such provision at a site administered by Llandrillo College of FE. (Staff at the other school, Blessed Edward Jones RC, have also been balloted for action.)

In the second phase of Salford University's 'Project Headroom', 15 staff in the business school have been given voluntary redundancy as part of a bid by management to save £865,000 in academic pay.

Bristol University dean of arts Robert Fowler writes to staff to say that, because of a £500,000 loss to the faculty resulting from the Government's ELQ cuts, lifelong learning provision in such areas as drama, history of art, historical studies, music and philosophy will be withdrawn at the end of this academic year.

Christine Williams, Reading University pro vice-chancellor for enterprise writes to staff announcing that, as a result of ELQ funding

cuts, and with effect from the end of the summer term, lifelong learning courses offered by the School of Continuing Education are to be closed, professional management programmes merged with another school, and the Careers Studies Unit transferred to another institution.

The LSC has confirmed it will fund over 80 per cent of a £90m building scheme proposed jointly by Bolton Community College and Bolton Sixth Form College.

Bristol University student recruitment director Angela Milln tells a Westminster Education Forum event that the Government should make it compulsory for all A-level students to do the AS-level Extended Project qualification.

Brian Roper resigns as vice-chancellor of London Metropolitan University.

Week beginning 23/3/09

An industrial tribunal begins eleven days of hearings in which, supported by UCU, two lecturers, James Meadows and Paul Hughes, sacked for union activity during the restructuring of Harlow College which began in April 2007, argue that the management failed to implement correctly the 90-day redundancy consultation process.

Warwick University looks set to close its Centre for Translational and Comparative Studies. Strathclyde University is cutting 140 posts. Sussex University is closing its undergraduate linguistics course. Reading University is closing its School of Health and Social Care.

Cambridge University Press is axing 150 jobs in its printing division. (These workers are organised by Unite.)

John Denham puts out his *The Learning Revolution* White Paper, which promises: £20m of 'new

money' for adult learning, a 'festival of learning' in autumn 2009, and a web portal for adult learners. Among organisations supposedly supporting this initiative are the Women's Institute, the National Trust, the Church of England, Microsoft and BUPA. NIACE CEO Alan Tuckett says of this: 'Working together, we want to make this the start of a renaissance of learning opportunities for adults in Britain'.

Of 3,000 plus students admitted to Oxford University in October 2008, five were from black Caribbean and 24 from black African backgrounds, the equivalent figures at Cambridge being eight and 20. Across all years and subjects, Oxford's student population of 20,000 currently includes about 380 black/mixed race students. Among the 11,900 undergraduates, 175 are from this background.

In 2007-08, the LSC made available £6m to support the Mobile Learning Network programme (which involved 2,000 staff and 10,000 students in 75 colleges and 18 schools in using smart phones and personal digital assistants for teaching/learning purposes). 69 per cent of 902 students responding to a survey about this said it had helped them to learn.

Office for Fair Access (OFFA) figures for 2007-08 reveal that: the proportion of additional fee income spent by universities on bursaries to 'lower-income' students ranges from 6 per cent to 48 per cent, with half spending between 15 and 25 per cent, and 24 spending less than 15 per cent; the total spent on students defined by OFFA as 'poor' (ie those with household incomes under £48,333) was £192m, of which £136m went to those with household incomes of £17,910 or less.

LSC CEO Mark Haysom resigns over the FE buildings fiasco, receiving a £100,000 payment in lieu of notice but also foregoing

the £250,000 he would have received if he had stayed until the LSC is dissolved in 2010. Geoff Russell, recently retired from accountants KPMG, succeeds him.

The Welsh Assembly is to phase out from September 2010 the £1,940 'tuition fee grant' paid to all new students to counteract the burden of top-up fees.

DIUS director-general of FE Stephen Marston tells a 'summit' of FE principals, held to discuss the buildings crisis, that nothing remains of the £2.3bn budget for this, and the estimated cost of 'renewing' all campuses is now £8bn, rather than the £5bn anticipated. The total cost of projects which have been planned but not yet funded is now £5.7bn.

Points in a *THE* article on the effect of ELQ cuts, published to coincide with the Universities Association for Lifelong Learning conference in Brighton, include: City University London is likely to close the languages, arts and creative writing courses offered by its Centre for Adult Education, affecting up to 100 jobs; Bucks New University has withdrawn its combined studies programme of adult learning modules; Thames Valley University is reviewing its Associate Student Scheme; Lancaster University is phasing out its Open Studies Programme; Bath University is scaling back its adult education provision.

UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) chairperson, Sir Michael Rake, tells a conference organised by the consultants Deloitte that 'employability skills' should be compulsory in all FE programmes, while skills and apprenticeships minister (and former CWU general secretary) Lord Young says: 'I don't know why we call them soft skills, because, to me, employability skills are essential skills'.

In its final report on the governance of Cambridge University,

HEFCE criticises the arrangement by which academics form a majority on its governing council.

Sussex University's senate rejects a plan to reduce its elected members to a minority.

NASUWT general secretary Chris Keates criticises moves by Staffordshire LEA to concentrate all sixth form facilities at a school in Tamworth which is at present called Woodhouse Business and Enterprise College, but which the LEA plans to turn into an academy sponsored by the Landau Charitable Foundation and Rocco Forte Hotels. Members at the school are balloting for action over this latter change. Keates points out that national pay and conditions have been bypassed at Landau Forte post-16 'college' in Derby.

Goldsmiths College UCU branch passes a motion calling on members to ignore Home Office regulations requiring academics to report international students' absences to the immigration authorities.

UCU members at four colleges - Dearne Valley, Doncaster, Rotherham College of Arts and Technology and the College of North West London - take two days of strike action in the pay harmonisation dispute.

In a statement to the IUSS committee, the British Medical Association (BMA) points out that the number of academics teaching medicine has since 2000 fallen by 27 per cent, to 2,937.

Members of UCU, ATL, ACM and Unison at three FE colleges in Wales - Swansea, Gorseinon and Sir Gar (in Llanelli) take protest action over budget cuts.

Skills minister Sion Simon indicates in parliament that he will change a schedule in the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Bill so as to give adequate protection to LSC staff

facing redeployment when the quango is dissolved in 2010. Their union, PCS says he must do this by 31/3/09. (The Skills Funding Agency is expected to absorb about 1,800 of the 2,300 former LSC staff, the Young People's Learning Agency 500, and local authorities the remaining 1,000. But only 150 want to go to LEAs, and many of the other redeployments may involve unacceptable moves or travel requirements.)

Keele University has entered into partnership with a private company, Study Group, by which the latter will provide, on Keele's premises, a one-year course, success in which will enable non-EU students without conventional entry qualifications to start the second year of undergraduate programmes, at a cost to the student of £11,600. (The course consists of modules validated by Keele in computing, business and international relations, plus preparation for the English Language Testing System [IELTS] test.) Huddersfield University is to launch a similar arrangement.

Week beginning 30/3/09

At a meeting of the Joint Negotiating Committee for HE Staff (JNCHES), the UCEA (ie the employers' side) chooses not to make a pay offer, and maintains that up to 100 universities are planning redundancies.

It emerges that the report on the FE capital programme issued in summer 2008 by the National Audit Office (NAO) said that: 'The cost of renewing the remaining colleges is becoming more expensive, putting the affordability of the programme at risk within the limits of the LSC's capital budgets'.

The incoming CEO of the HE Funding Council for England (HEFCE), Sir Alan Langlands, formerly vice-chancellor of Dundee University and NHS CEO, says

that he has 'never known a less propitious time to be arguing for more public investment'.

Responding to a report by the Commons IUSS committee, in which the Department was criticised for transferring to HE the £49m Train to Gain underspend, DIUS maintains that transfers to the LSC budget this year mean that FE has made a net gain of £144m.

The management of UEL cancels an alternative G20 due to be held there on 1/4/09 and suspends an organiser of this, UEL Docklands UCU branch chairperson Chris Knight.

The six unions organising FE college staff submit to the AOC a 6 per cent across-the-board pay claim for 2009-10.

Evaluation of the Effectiveness and Role of the HFECE/OSI Third-Stream Funding: Culture Change and Embedding in the Higher Education Sector Towards Greater Economic Impact, a report commissioned by HEFCE from the Public & Corporate Economic Consultants, finds that between 2001 and 2007 universities 'generated' £10.3bn through the exchange of knowledge with businesses.

Having missed its 13/3/09 deadline for announcing next year's budgets for 16-18 year olds in colleges and school 6th forms, the LSC has reportedly told FE principals informally that funding for 16-19 year olds would be an average of 2 per cent lower next year than this, representing an average £200,000 cut per college and supposedly jeopardising both 14-19 diplomas and additional learning support for special needs students. This supposedly results from a failure to anticipate that the recession could lead to more full time students in FE. Specifically, the LSC projected that the numbers of 16-18 year olds in colleges in England would be the same in

2010-11 as in 2009-10, ie 786,000, and that the numbers in sixth forms would fall from 383,000 to 372,000. At the same time, the LSC is expected to announce later in April a cap on Train to Gain funding which could lead to mid-year cuts in recruitment to these programmes.

The LSC informs FE colleges officially that in 2009-10 they will be funded for only 98 per cent of the 16-19 year olds they teach. In a separate communication it also tells them that: '... left unchecked, Train to Gain and 25+ apprenticeship activity will exceed the budget allocations we have available in the 2009-10 financial year...' and that 'We must take action now and agree with you contracts that enable you to meet the needs of employers and learners, but within the levels of investment we have available'.

The LSC writes to schools with 6th forms to notify them of funding for 2009-2010, which represents a 'massive shortfall' (TES).

In a letter to staff, vice-chancellor Patricia Broadfoot says the University of Gloucestershire needs to save £5m over two years. Broadfoot claims the institute is 'growing and is confident about the future', but up to 100 redundancies are thought likely and one staff member reportedly told a local paper that 'We aren't even allowed to buy ink for the printers'. HR support consultant Scott Harvey says that: 'If people are not willing to support change, then maybe it's time for them to use their skills elsewhere'.

The ELQ cuts mean that the Open University (OU) is facing a £20m shortfall. Commenting, pro vice-chancellor David Vincent says: 'It means every university is actively disincentivised from retraining the unemployed. Any banker coming to us wanting a new career is just a cost to us. No university will want to touch them'.

Points made by Sir Andrew Foster in his (government-commissioned) report *A Review of the Capital Programme in Further Education* include: the LSC ignored a warning in February 2008 that an overspend was likely, and went on to approve projects worth £2.6bn; it encouraged colleges to raise their bids but had no mechanism for choosing between them; its risk management procedures were not applied to the Building Colleges for the Future programme until the end of 2008; DIUS officials should have challenged the LSC more rigorously; there is no evidence that ministers knew about the crisis before November.

Following last month's favourable HEFC (Wales) funding allocations, the UCU branch at Swansea University is calling upon management to reconsider its plan, announced in 2008, to cut about 60 academic posts.

After the vice-chancellors of Oxford and Oxford Brookes Universities (respectively John Hood and Janet Beer) appear before an IUSS committee hearing on HE access for state school students, chairperson Phil Willis questions whether their replies would 'pass a GCSE essay'.

Average earnings for FE college principals rose from £86,000 in 2003 to £106,000 in 2008. In 2003, five principals received £150,000 or over, while 13 do now. The number receiving salaries of £100,000 or over has risen in the same period from 102 to 202.

In 2007-08, 3,480 students began university courses co-funded by employers. It emerges that the February board meeting of HEFCE has set a target of 5,000 such entrants this year, 10,000 next and 20,000 in 2011.

The QCA formally accepts the resignations (in December 2008, over the national tests marking fiasco) of its former CEO Ken Boston, and of David Gee, manag-

ing director of the now-disbanded National Assessment Agency.

At Thames Valley University (TVU), 80 staff have taken voluntary severance under a scheme introduced in 2008, and another such offer has been extended to this April.

Overruling a senate decision, Lancaster University's council has passed a motion in favour of redundancies.

Noam Chomsky has lent his support to a struggle at Sussex University to prevent closure of linguistics courses.

Provisional Office for National Statistics figures show that in 2007-08 the proportion of 17-30 year olds with experience of HE was 43.1 per cent, indicating that the Government's target of 50 per cent by 2010 is not likely to be achieved.

Points in a *THE* report on a dispute within UCU in Wales include: the chairperson of UCU in Wales, Peter Jones (ie a member in FE) drafted a new set of rules which allegedly give the FE sector an automatic majority at UCU Wales annual conference; the UCU branches at six universities - Aberystwyth, Bangor, Cardiff, Glamorgan, Lampeter and Swansea - all voted not to send delegates to that annual conference, which took place in April; the conference voted to accept Peter's draft rules; the boycotting branches contain over 45 per cent of UCU members in Wales; they are considering a challenge to the conference's quoracy.

The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) announces funding allocations totalling £199m for postgraduate research studentships over the next five years. Points about how this is to be distributed include: 5,602 students across 48 universities will receive something; all but 4 of these 48 are pre-1992 institutions;

of the 5,602 students, 697 are or will be at Oxford and 586 at Cambridge.

A Degree of Influence, a report written by Robin Simcox for the Centre for Social Cohesion, claims that universities here, including Cambridge, SOAS, and Edinburgh, are accepting large donations from despotic regimes on terms which allow the donors to influence such matters as teaching materials, staff recruitment and student selection. For example, several universities have accepted £50,000 each from the Chinese Language Council International to set up Confucius institutes, and both Cambridge and Edinburgh last year accepted £8m donations from Prince Alwaleed bin Talal of Saudi Arabia to set up Islamic Studies centres.

Week beginning 6/4/09

Following last year's lack of take-up in Train to Gain, the LSC allocated £30m to build capacity amongst potential providers. There are signs that it may attempt to alleviate this year's shortfall in Train to Gain funding by diverting this to direct provision of training.

Royal Holloway University of London vice-chancellor Stephen Hill is to stop work at the end of July but will continue to receive his full salary during a two-year 'sabbatical', until he retires officially in 2011.

An employment tribunal finds that Liverpool John Moores University was guilty of 'unlawful victimisation' of Helena Lunt, a senior lecturer in Public Health suspended when she lodged a legal claim for disability discrimination against the institution.

There are indications that local LSCs are telling Entry to Employment (E2E) providers (mostly private trainers) to stop recruiting 16-18 year olds, because the numbers starting have exceeded

the 70,000 for whom funding (totalling £185m) was allocated this year. Meanwhile work-based learning providers say that about 17 per cent of this year's £637m budget for apprenticeships remains unspent (ie because employers cannot be found).

In the context of the recession a debate is going on about the teaching of corporate social responsibility (CSR) as a curricular element in university business schools. Global learning director at Queen Mary University of London school of business and management, Stefano Harney comments: 'There has been absolutely no fundamental rethinking of the business curriculum as a result of this crisis. British business schools are behaving like ageing Latin American dictators after the cold war. Abandoned by all, even the US, they fight on, continuing to proclaim the theology of free markets and maintaining an anachronistic anti-socialist vigilance'.

The two candidates to succeed South Cheshire College principal David Collins as AOC president from August are St Helens College principal Pat Bacon and Cirencester principal Nigel Robbins.

Commenting on the CBI's annual survey of employers' views on skills, the CBI's head of education and skills Richard Wainer claims that poor literacy and numeracy amongst staff costs the economy £2.5bn a year. (However, 57 per cent of responding firms cite deficient IT skills as the main problem.)

Research by Anna Vignoles (at London University Institute of Education), based on OECD figures, reportedly indicates that attempts to raise the basic skill levels of UK adults have boosted neither productivity nor earnings.

Following the letter sent to HEFCE on 22/1/09 by John Denham,

instructing it to 'bear down on over-recruitment by institutions', HEFCE has blocked a merger between the private Academy of Contemporary Music and the London College of Music (part of TVU), on the grounds that this would increase TVU student numbers by about 1,000.

Schools minister Jim Knight claims that 40,000 students will by September 2009 have registered to start 14-19 diploma courses, and by September 2010 97 per cent of LEAs will be providing them.

An investigation by Glasgow University research fellow Eric Levin reveals that the value of the fund held by the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS), intended to cover the pensions of 250,000 HE employees, fell from £29bn in March 2008 to £22bn in December.

On the advice of Ofqual, a plan to make A-C grades in GCSE English, maths and ICT dependent on passes in the corresponding functional skills has been dropped.

Both Westminster and Central Lancashire Universities are to close BSC degrees in complementary and alternative medicine (CAM).

Following the JNCHES meeting, Sally Hunt writes to all vice-chancellors to say that: 'There is a very strong feeling about the wave of ad hoc job cuts across the sector. Failing an acceptable response [ie a pay offer and a commitment to reach a national agreement on avoiding redundancies]. . . I am mandated to consider balloting members for industrial action'.

Week beginning 13/4/09

The successor to Mark Haysom as LSC CEO is Canadian-born Geoff Russell, whose previous employer, the accountants KPMG, brought

him to this country in 1988. He worked for KPMG through to autumn 2008, the last two years of this period being spent 'on secondment to the Treasury in charge of the financial management policy agenda'.

In a speech to the national conference of the Association of University Administrators, held in Exeter, Exeter University vice-chancellor and UUK president elect Steve Smith says that: '. . . if you were sitting in the Treasury, you would ask: do we need 159 institutions doing humanities and social science research?' and 'The only source of future funds, whatever the colour of government, is the individual [ie fee-paying student. Ed.] in the long term'.

The FE Reputation Strategy Group, established in 2007 and chaired by York College principal Alison Birkinshaw, publishes a selection of DIUS statistics intended to show how successful the FE system is.

Vice chancellors and other senior managers at eight HE institutions have so far agreed to forego scheduled pay increases for the current year, and several more seem likely to do so.

LLUK claims that financial cut-backs over the last 25 years have led to a situation where the average age of technicians working in HE is 45.

Speaking of the concentration of research funding in elite institutions, UUK president-elect Steve Smith says that, despite the appearance created by the recent RAE: 'I think it's going to come back, and if you want my prediction, it's going to come back through the research councils' (ie the other main funding source) and: 'The more you move [towards biblio-] metrics, the more you move [towards] concentration'.

Week beginning 20/4/09

In the aftermath of the employment tribunal which found that Liverpool John Moores University had unfairly dismissed Helena Lunt, it emerges that 27 cases have been brought to tribunals by staff there over the last three years, many of them centring on health sector training provision.

The Local Government Association welcomes the move by the Government (in January 2009) to include the day-to-day running of academies in the remit of the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA - one of the two quangos that will replace the LSC), whereas the chairperson of the Independent Academies Association (Mike Butler) claims that this is a further example of the Government undermining the 'independence' of academies. (It is not clear yet whether the YPLA will have a say in whether academies can open 6th forms.)

34 jobs are at risk of either redundancy or redeployment at the University Campus Suffolk, an arrangement set up 18 months ago by the Universities of Essex and East Anglia, which also involves an FE college. There are suggestions that this may reflect wider problems with the Government's New University Challenge scheme to open 20 HE centres in areas lacking such provision.

The Welsh Assembly government allocates a further £8.9m to FE (£2.16m to 6th form colleges and £8.9m to general FE colleges), bringing the total for 2009-10 to £400.6m, thereby supposedly cancelling out shortfalls in the original allocations (made in January) and removing the threat of redundancies.

Only nine MPs (as opposed to the original 14) currently participate in the Commons IUSS committee, and one of the highest attenders,

Bolton East Labour MP Brian Iddon says that it is not 'working properly'.

The Anglia Assessment consultancy issues figures indicating that last year challenges to A-level grades had a 1 in 8 chance of succeeding with AQA as compared with one in 17 with OCR.

Points in HE Statistics Agency (HESA) figures about international operations by UK universities in 2007-08 include: 342,790 international students were studying here in that year, up 4.8 per cent from 325,985 the year before; there were also nearly 200,000 'offshore' students; the latter includes 100,000 people doing distance learning courses run by UK universities, 89,000 people studying for qualifications offered jointly with overseas partner institutions, and 7,000 on overseas campuses of UK universities.

Points in *TES* coverage of measures announced in the budget include: a £1.2bn fund 'intended to ensure' that every 18 to 24 year old unemployed for a year or more will have access to a job, a long-term work placement or training; £260m for 'skills in growth industries'; an extra £251m for 16-19 funding in 2010 and an extra £404m for this in 2011; a further £300m for FE college building programmes. (This last sum will become available from June, when the LSC and colleges will supposedly have agreed how to prioritise the 79 projects - worth £2.7bn overall - awaiting detailed approval. The other 65 projects will have to wait until at least 2011.)

A DIUS study shows that the average debt for an undergraduate at university is £8,857, whereas the average debt for someone doing a degree in an FE college is about £6,515.

Where we stand:

Post-16 Educator seeks to defend and extend good practice in post compulsory education and training. Good practice includes teachers working with students to increase their power to look critically at the world around them and act effectively within it. This entails challenging racism, sexism, heterosexism, inequality based on disability and other discriminatory beliefs and practices.

For the mass of people, access to valid post compulsory education and training is more necessary now than ever. It should be theirs by right! All provision should be organised and taught by staff who are trained for and committed to it. Publicly funded provision of valid post compulsory education and training for all who require it should be a fundamental demand of the trade union movement.

Post-16 Educator seeks to persuade the labour movement as a whole of the importance of this demand. In mobilising to do so it bases itself first and foremost upon practitioners - those who are in direct, daily contact with students. It seeks the support of every practitioner, in any area of post-16 education and training, and in particular that of women, of part timers and of people outside London and the Southeast.

Post-16 Educator works to organise readers/contributors into a national network that is democratic, that is politically and financially independent of all other organisations, that develops their practice and their thinking, and that equips them to take action over issues rather than always having to react to changes imposed from above.

NUT Conference 2009

Philippe Harari reports

The 2009 NUT Conference in Cardiff was united around a very important set of policies. All the key decisions were either unanimous or almost unanimous. However, I left Cardiff feeling that it is not enough simply to make decisions about policy - we have to turn them into action. In this article I have summed up the main conference decisions.

No more SATs - 3 down, 1 and 2 to go

The Government has already abolished SATs at Key Stage 3 and the Conference was held in Wales which, like Scotland, is a SAT-free zone. The NUT is opposed to SATs because of the damage that they do to children's education in the way they distort the curriculum and to schools and teachers through their use in league tables. The NUT's position is that, unless the Government abolishes SATs at Key Stages 1 and 2 for 2010, we will ballot our members to boycott them. We have tried this before but the ballot fell due to a low turnout despite an overwhelming majority in favour of the boycott. We have now changed our action rules, and it is certain that the next ballot will be successful. Following the unanimous conference vote the entire chamber rose as one and started chanting 'no more SATs'. This included the current President of the National Association of Headteachers (NAHT), and they are united with us in our determination to see off the scourge of SATs. A week later, the NASUWT voted to strike if getting rid of SATs meant additional workload for teachers. There is a point here; we do not want SATs to be replaced by anything worse, but they do have to go. Hopefully the Government will get rid of KS1 and 2 SATs for 2010, but if they do not, then we will. A joint NUT/NAHT boycott should do the trick!

The NUT is the 'no-cover' union

New arrangements are coming in this September to make sure that teachers will 'rarely' cover. As far as the NUT is concerned, 'rarely cover' means no cover, and this must be accompanied by no increases in contact time, absences to be covered by qualified supply teachers, and clear limits on the use of cover supervisors. One key principle reaf-

firmed in the Conference was the right of every class to be taught by a properly qualified teacher. One aspect of this was the need for local authorities to establish supply pools of properly qualified teachers to end the exploitation of supply teachers by agencies and to limit the use of cover supervisors and Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTAs) being used as cover teachers in schools. While Conference would probably have wished for a complete ban on the use of cover supervisors and HLTAs as cover teachers, they recognised that these posts do exist in schools. We did not want to argue that these posts and the people in place be made redundant and so Conference agreed to a compromise: that cover supervisors 'are to be used for no more than the first three days of absence in secondary schools and no more than the first day of absence in primary schools'. We also agreed that HLTAs should only cover under the supervision of a teacher. All these arrangements only apply to schools; teachers in Sixth Form Colleges have no agreement to limit their cover, but hopefully colleges will recognise that expecting teachers to cover for absent colleagues can lead to unacceptable increases in workload.

On jobs and cuts

Public sector workers are not to blame for the current economic crisis and we shouldn't pay the price. When things were going well, the Government still saw fit to cut our pay. Now things are going less well, they will be coming for our schools, our jobs and our pensions. Conference welcomed a speaker from the Visteon car components plant in Enfield, who described how agreements that had been reached at the time of their splitting off from Ford had been torn up: including pension entitlement. We heard about how at Enfield they were sacked at six minutes notice, and that they and workers at their sister plants in Belfast and Basildon had responded by occupying the plants. This inspirational refusal to lie down was widely welcomed by delegates (some of whom no doubt saw important resonances for conditions of service in Trust Schools and Academies). Many delegates were also inspired by hearing two of the Glasgow parents who are occupying their primary school;

they spoke to fringe meetings and were delighted to see the support they received, in turn, spurring us on with their down-to-earth and resilient response to proposals for school closures. The spirit of resistance (to SATs, cuts, cover and OFSTED) permeated the conference agenda too. Since Conference, it seems clear that whatever government is in power over the next few years will try to cut back on public expenditure - and that means us. Funding for post-16 education is being cut already, and Sixth Form Colleges are having to worry now about how they are going to make ends meet in September. We are likely to see larger classes, increases in contact time, the imposition of minimum set sizes leading to the closure of some subjects etc. The NUT is committed to fighting cuts in education so we are likely to see stormy times ahead.

Early years

Early years teachers have the longest working day in any sector of education and it's getting worse. An entitlement of a minimum of 15 hours a week for parents with young children is coming in and, unless this is matched by more teachers, then the existing ones will really struggle to meet the increased demand. Early years teachers can feel isolated and it is our job to bring them together and let them know that they have the backing of the Union - see the new Early Years section of our website.

Campaign against the BNP

Conference delegates were horrified to hear that the chair of the Children and Young Persons' Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee in Stoke upon Trent is a BNP councillor. There is a real possibility of BNP candidates being successful in the forthcoming European elections. The NUT intends to use its political fund to do what it can to prevent this from happening.

. . . and finally

Congratulations to Christine Blower who stepped in as acting General Secretary following the untimely death of Steve Sinnott last year. Following a truly inspiring speech, Conference gave her a well-deserved standing ovation and we need to make sure that she is elected as General Secretary in her own right.

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Health and Social Care programmes: are they comprehensive enough?

Dariusz Tereszowski-Kaminski

Studying Health and Social Care in post-16 education via an OCR National Certificate at levels 1, 2 or 3 is steadily becoming a very popular choice amongst young people, especially women.

Most of them become employees of the National Health Service, which is a natural consequence, as the NHS is one of the biggest employers in the world.

The NHS employs more than 1.5 million people, and its budget will reach £110bn by 2011.

Some 60 per cent of the NHS budget is used to pay staff, 20 per cent is spent on drugs, and the remaining 20 per cent is split between buildings, equipment, cleaning and training costs.

Primary Care Trusts control 80 per cent of the NHS budget. Is this something that Health and Social Care students are aware of? Maybe yes, maybe no, but according to the curriculum they are not taught a word about it. Is this information important for social workers, nurses and other health professionals? In my opinion, it is.

Costed

Of course, this is only one example. In our modern world, everything is costed. The cost of health and medical treatment is going to become greater and greater. So will the NHS budget.

On its website, the NHS claims it is the most egalitarian and most comprehensive centrally-

funded health service in the world. But is it the most efficient? Are there any other efficient healthcare systems, ie including not only those centrally-funded from national taxation but also from insurance based sick funds? What are their advantages and disadvantages?

We teach our students how to work as a team, how to plan a meal, how to reduce risk of service, how to monitor health service users in health and care settings etc, etc. Why should we not also teach students the basic elements of microeconomics and health economics - to let them know what is going to cost most and least? How should they organise their work environment? Why should they not know what alternatives exist to our 'most egalitarian, most comprehensive and most efficient system'?

Leitch

In the *Review of Skills*, Lord Leitch's report published in 2005, we can read: 'The global economy is undergoing fundamental and dramatic changes . . . These changes place an increased premium on improving skills . . . As the economy changes, the minimum level of basic skills is rising . . . Global changes also place an increased emphasis on having high skill levels to encourage and take advantage of innovation'.

If we want to follow through the outcomes of the Leitch Report, we should try constantly to improve the curriculum. I am the first to help redesign it. Who is next?

Education for sustainable development

Patrick Ainley reports on the launch of the pamphlet *Education for Sustainable Development: a Philosophical Assessment*, by Randall Curren (£7.99 from PESGB@resourcesforassociations.co.uk)

The launch of a new pamphlet in the Philosophy of Education Society's 'impact' series was a significant event at London University's Institute of Education on 21st April. It was only disappointing that the substantial attendance comprised mainly members of the Society and not others in the Institute and the wider educational community.

Even though G20 politicians dropped the 'sustainable' prefix to economic development - emphasising instead an illusory return to business as usual - it cannot be just professors of philosophy, like the pamphlet's author, Randall Curren of Rochester University, who realise that Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is 'the defining educational challenge of our age'.

This is not only because without sustainable development there is no point in education critically transmitting to future generations the expanding corpus of human knowledge. It is also because, as Curren says: 'appropriate and effective ESD would be socially transformative'. We are, after all, the only known species that can learn from its mistakes to consciously change behaviour in the future.

Curren's pamphlet therefore begins by outlining the emerging

crisis, including the momentum of human population growth that since the 1980s has outrun the 'carrying capacity' of the planet. As an instance of the revaluation of human purposes he proposes, Curren suggests reconceiving reproductive rights as 'limited welfare rights'.

He then reviews obstacles to achieving such a change in consciousness, including the influence of 'the fallacy of redemption: the irrational belief that we can expect technological deliverance'. He sees the advertising-capitalist complex, which demands producing more and more to make profit, stifling awareness of environmental crisis. The history of these efforts revealingly began with the tobacco industry denying that smoking causes cancer.

The term 'sustainable development' was coined by the 1987 World Commission on Environment, and defined as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. We are now in the middle - though few are aware of it - of UNESCO's Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, and Curren outlines progress during this period, noting that 'ESD was never intended to be simply an

extension of environmental education'. Indeed, UNESCO defines 'environmental literacy' as 'the capacity to identify root causes of threats to sustainable development and the values, motivations and skills to address them'.

Even though, in the UK, sustainable development is a National Curriculum cross-curricular theme, 'high stakes testing in reading and math have marginalised the teaching of science', and the 'competitive rationality' to which teachers and students are dedicated 'yields collective ruin'. As gestures, 'Many schools make ESD the focus of activities, themed assemblies, or highly publicised "earth days", but these are rarely coordinated with the formal curriculum and in most schools' - and, he could have added, colleges and universities - 'sustainable development is considered a peripheral issue'.

Amongst Curren's concluding recommendations 'Teaching critical thinking to enable students to distinguish truth from propaganda' is especially relevant to post-16 educators. We will also be looking out for the forthcoming 'impact' pamphlet on *14-19 Education and Training*.

General education in 14-19 diplomas: the prospects

Colin Waugh

In my article in *PSE 50*, 'General education in 14-19 diplomas: the precedents', I identified eleven criteria that could be used in the attempt to bring about valid general education in these courses. (By general education, I mean the course elements which currently take the form of Key Skills and have previously taken the form of Core Skills, Common Skills and Core Themes and the like.) These criteria can be summarised as follows. The 'additional' Key Skills of Working with Others, Problem Solving and Improving Own Learning and Performance need to become mandatory. General education needs to be integrated with main course content. Students must be required to pass the general education element to get the overall qualification. General education must have its own timetable slot. Vocational and general education lecturers should collaborate on the extended project or similar units. Students must be free to choose the topic they investigate in those units. General education ought to be assessed in the same manner as other course elements. General education needs to be criterion-referenced and based on competences - combinations of skill, knowledge and understanding. There must be a clear basis for progression within general education. This progression needs to be organised in equal steps. The arrangements for general education must be neither pious nor bureaucratic. To these criteria one more should be added: that a general education presence should run through the whole course. The question is, then: which, if any, of these criteria can provision within the diplomas meet?

Obviously the answer to this question will depend partly on what happens with the diplomas generally. The balance of probabilities is that they will repeat the history of GNVQs and Curriculum 2000. In other words, it is more likely than not that, soon after they become widespread, a high profile media campaign against them will develop, the broad thrust of which will be to defend GCSEs and A-levels. Effects of this campaign are likely to include that, for people who are 16 and over, the diplomas will be done mainly in FE colleges, and that some of their more obviously desirable and progressive aspects will be excised. They will then probably

continue on this shrivelled basis for a few years until the wheel is reinvented yet again. There is next to no chance that they will supplant GCSEs and A-levels (although these may be eroded by other factors). General education practitioners within FE, then, will have to organise themselves to achieve the best they can with and for working class students inside this overall scenario - in other words, they will have live with the diplomas and try to provide something valid through them. This is likely to involve them in a variety of struggles, including for resources, for time, for control, and for influence over values and ideas. The more success we have in these struggles, the more chance there will be of breaking out of the vicious circle noted above.

One feature of the current situation is that, on paper, the arrangements officially proposed for general education in the diplomas reflect the approach advocated by the present writer and co-thinkers from a General and Liberal Studies background in *PSE* and its predecessors from the late 1980s. In particular, the approach to teaching and learning, to the extent that it focuses on problem solving and 'mastery' (not our term) - that is, the capacity to transfer knowledge, understanding and/or skill from one context to others - is in line with, and in places seems even to be copied from, what we have said. However, this does not guarantee that such an approach will determine what really happens.

By far the most positive aspect of the diplomas from a general education point of view is the extended project. It is reasonable to suppose that this reflects the requirements of the least reactionary employers and the least narrow interest groups within universities. There is a good chance that it will generate an incentive for colleges to have vocational and general education lecturers work together, with some discretion and freedom to innovate, to enter into dialogue with students, and hence to do valid and imaginative work. There is also a prospect that this element will survive through at least the opening stages of the media campaign described above - that is, it may be several years before this particular general education space comes under pressure. There are two main tasks here, then, for practitioners. First, we

need to enter into this course element fully and do it well, which means breaking with the narrow skills mentality that has grown up, including among ourselves, with Key Skills and such precursors as City and Guilds Communication Skills certificates. Secondly, we need to be organised to defend the extended project if and when awarding bodies eventually do try to push it out of the diplomas, which would reduce it to a freestanding qualification for the better-off.

Secondly, despite the official decisions to back away from integrating functional skills into GCSEs, a requirement is still in place that students must pass the three functional skills in order to achieve full diplomas. The most valuable aspect of this is that it guarantees our presence on programmes and in course teams. It represents a step forward from the position with Key Skills, and obviously it reflects lobbying by employers and by academics about how people coming out of colleges and schools cannot read and write, do maths and so on. The problem may be, however, that although this requirement reverses Dearing's decision to make Key Skills freestanding, the parallel attempt, driven by the same lobby, to 'correct' another problem with Key Skills - that they have allegedly become too easy to achieve - may lead to Dearing's approach being restored. The functional skills tests are being 'sold' LSN trainers and the like as the solution to the supposed problem that a multi-choice test demands only 'passive' qualities from candidates, and that teachers give too much help with portfolios. However, if, as is likely, a high proportion of FE students simply cannot pass the new tests - which in the case of Communication will require level 1 and level 2 candidates to do what is currently demanded only at level 3 - this may generate pressure to make these skills freestanding again. This in turn could jeopardise our chances of broader involvement, including in extended projects, especially when managers are looking to save money. It is in the interests of valid general education, then, that the requirements for passing these tests should be made more realistic. What would this entail, and what are the chances of it happening?

To answer this question we need to take into account an issue which has in the last few years developed around the multi-choice tests used since Curriculum 2000 to assess Key Skills at levels 1 and 2. It seems to be quite widely recognised that the Communication test at level 2 has been made steadily harder, and in itself this must reflect the influence on the QCA of the same lobby which has now brought about the shift to written tests for functional skills. However, this influence is in practice tied up with another factor, namely that these tests of 'communication' have begun to

function also as tests that determine who can be fully a citizen - in short as a measure used by the employing class to police the movement of workers and potential workers which goes with globalisation.

By a strange irony, the broad knowledge of culture, municipal administration, current affairs and the like which industrial release students were supposed to acquire through old-style Liberal Studies, having been driven out of FE over the period between about 1976 and 1985, has returned in these tests, which are about forming a new working class fraction of globalised and unorganised office workers in 2009. The passages used in the questions are Anglocentric and hence, although purportedly a neutral basis for the assessment of ability with spelling, punctuation and grammar, in fact test familiarity with UK life, culture etc in the respects in which these are least accessible to people from overseas - and especially from non-European - backgrounds. In addition, whereas the actual citizenship tests are a softer version of the tests used in the US in the 1950s and 1960s to stop black people registering to vote - that is, they demand answers to absurd questions about the constitution and the like - these Communication tests embody subtler assumptions about tone of voice, irony, cultural signifiers etc. So given also the decision by recruiting universities to require that applicants from FE have achieved Key Skills Level 2, and given also the impact of top-up fees, the effect now being produced by these tests is that a section of young people who would previously have progressed to those universities are being forced to do HE qualifications in FE colleges. In other words, they are being restricted to a lower rung in the workforce than that to which they might previously have aspired. The change to written exams can only compound this situation.

We do not want universities to row back on Level 2 general education as an entry requirement, but we also do not want the Million+ Group, or some other spokesperson for recruiting universities, to demand a return to multi-choice tests.

The best chance of a principled response to this dilemma lies in the 'harder' side of the additional Key Skills, in particular in logical reasoning, action planning and decision-making. A central feature of teaching and learning in these areas is the use of graphical devices to represent conceptual processes, for example mindmaps, timelines, flowcharts, matrices, family trees, Ishikawa fish diagrams, Venn diagrams and Gant diagrams. These and other such devices, all of which can be developed through several levels of sophistication, offer a way of getting past the 'citizenship test' problem sketched out above, because they possess a cross-cultural translatability analogous to that of

many mathematical procedures. Further, as aspects of problem solving they are supposed, as noted earlier on in this article, to form the methodological basis on which functional skills, and the diplomas more generally, are to be taught, assignments devised etc, to a point where LSN consultants are themselves already drawing them to practitioners' attention. Therefore I think we can argue with a reasonable chance of support, for example from employers, that the assessment criteria for functional skills tests in Communication should be geared more to these areas, and that the functional skills tests should be modified to assess 'mastery' in this area of reasoning, planning and decision-making. This would include arguing that candidates should be allowed to convey arguments by diagrams (of course with labels, keys etc) as well as by written language. At the same time we should argue that the criteria relating to spelling, punctuation and grammar should be determined on a 'fitness-for-purpose' basis rather than by standards of correctness which are virtually never required in practical life. The combination of these two approaches would allow the tests to do what they are supposed to do - that is, find out whether students can communicate in writing in real life situations and provide a framework for teaching them to do so, instead of reducing still further their life chances.

The third general education element in diplomas, the PLTS framework, ought to provide support for this approach, but as it stands it does not. On the contrary, it exemplifies in its present form exactly the kind of approach that is likely to be eliminated at an early stage in the implementation of diplomas. The PLTS specifications (p21) include a lot of good ideas, some of which derive from the direction we have just advocated and some from other, 'softer' aspects of the additional Key Skills. These ideas are then mixed with ideas from management training and notions about 'employability skills'. However, the fundamental problem with the framework as a whole, and with each of the six areas within it, is that they do not contain their own principles for progression. Because they are not organised in levels you cannot tell how a person would progress through them, and hence they can become at best desiderata to which lip service is paid.

If we can find the space, time and resources to do so, general education practitioners should try to initiate and/or support moves to give the PLTS criteria a more rigorous basis. This can be done. For example, in art and design courses tutors routinely assess students' ideas sheets, mood boards and research sheets and by the same token teach them how best to carry out such development

work. There is no fundamental reason why this sort of expertise could not be applied to the PLTS framework. Moreover, progression criteria worked out in this way could be linked to the development of 'mastery' in the use of conceptual diagrams as set out above with respect to the functional skills tests. Specifically, the four parameters that are supposed to form the basis for progression in 'mastering' the functional skills - that is, the complexity of the operation, the technical demands of the process itself, the candidate's familiarity with the context and the extent to which he or she is able to operate 'autonomously' or 'independently', should be brought to bear on the PLTS area as it is extended into FE from the curriculum of statutory schooling. This would allow candidates' 'mastery' of the PLTS 'skills' to be enlarged, enhanced, and accredited both through a revised version of the functional skills tests and through the extended projects.

CAFAS Council for Academic Freedom and Academic Standards

- ◆ **campaigns against the decline in standards**
- ◆ **defends individuals against victimisation**
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A framework of personal, learning and thinking skills

Independent enquirers

Focus:

Young people process and evaluate information in their investigations, planning what to do and how to go about it. They take informed and well-reasoned decisions, recognising that others have different beliefs and attitudes.

Young people:

- identify questions to answer and problems to resolve
- plan and carry out research, appreciating the consequences of decisions
- explore issues, events or problems from different perspectives
- analyse and evaluate information, judging its relevance and value
- consider the influence of circumstances, beliefs and feelings on decisions and events
- support conclusions, using reasoned arguments and evidence.

Creative thinkers

Focus:

Young people think creatively by generating and exploring ideas, making original connections. They try different ways to tackle a problem, working with others to find imaginative solutions and outcomes that are of value.

Young people:

- generate ideas and explore possibilities
- ask questions to extend their thinking
- connect their own and others' ideas and experiences in inventive ways
- question their own and others' assumptions
- try out alternatives or new solutions and follow ideas through
- adapt ideas as circumstances change.

Reflective learners

Focus:

Young people evaluate their strengths and limitations, setting

themselves realistic goals with criteria for success. They monitor their own performance and progress, inviting feedback from others and making changes to further their learning.

Young people:

- assess themselves and others, identifying opportunities and achievements
- set goals with success criteria for their development and work
- review progress, acting on the outcomes
- invite feedback and deal positively with praise, setbacks and criticism
- evaluate experiences and learning to inform future progress
- communicate their learning in relevant ways for different audiences.

Team workers

Focus:

Young people work confidently with others, adapting to different contexts and taking responsibility for their own part. They listen to and take account of different views. They form collaborative relationships, resolving issues to reach agreed outcomes.

Young people:

- collaborate with others to work towards common goals
- reach agreements, managing discussions to achieve results
- adapt behaviour to suit different roles and situations, including leadership roles
- show fairness and consideration to others
- take responsibility, showing confidence in themselves and their contribution
- provide constructive support and feedback to others.

Self-managers

Focus:

Young people organise themselves, showing personal responsibility, initiative, creativity and enterprise with a commitment to learning and self-improvement. They actively em-

brace change, responding positively to new priorities, coping with challenges and looking for opportunities.

Young people:

- seek out challenges or new responsibilities and show flexibility when priorities change
- work towards goals, showing initiative, commitment and perseverance
- organise time and resources, prioritising actions
- anticipate, take and manage risks
- deal with competing pressures, including personal and work-related demands
- respond positively to change, seeking advice and support when needed
- manage their emotions, and build and maintain relationships.

Effective participators

Focus:

Young people actively engage with issues that affect them and those around them. They play a full part in the life of their school, college, workplace or wider community by taking responsible action to bring improvements for others as well as themselves.

Young people:

- discuss issues of concern, seeking resolution where needed
- present a persuasive case for action
- propose practical ways forward, breaking these down into manageable steps
- identify improvements that would benefit others as well as themselves
- try to influence others, negotiating and balancing diverse views to reach workable solutions
- act as an advocate for views and beliefs that may differ from their own.

Trade union education: some thoughts from the past (4.)

Geoffrey Stuttard, *interviewed by Linda Clarke and Michael Gold*

This is the fourth article based on an interview, conducted on 24 July 2006, with Geoffrey Stuttard, who spent his working life till 1986 in trade union education. In the first article (*Post-16 Educator* 48, November-December 2008), Geoffrey explored the distinction between the liberal education of trade unionists and trade union education itself. The second article (*PSE* 49, January-February 2009) described his work in the London WEA, particularly in different industries, while the third (*PSE* 50, March-April 2009) considered the problems of dealing with controversial issues, international aspects of his work and social mobility. In this final article, Geoffrey sums up by examining the activities and outlets that he used in his work, notably seminars, books, radio and television.

Society of Industrial Tutors

Politically, we didn't have any trouble. No one brought us before a tribunal and accused us of being politically minded. It was quite interesting. At the Society of Industrial Tutors (SIT) - we formed it in Sheffield in '67/'68 - there was a move to call it the Society of Trade Union Tutors. I said, 'No, we're not just trade union tutors, we're tutors of industrial relations'. It happens we had more to do with trade unionists than with managers because that's where the work needed doing. There was plenty of management education, so I manoeuvred for it to be called the Society of Industrial Tutors, which I'm pleased about.

We had an annual conference in our main centre in Manchester. There was a motion over the title, either to change it to Trade Union Tutors or to affiliate to the Labour Party, or something like that. One chap stood up and said, 'The value of this group is that nobody is really concerned. There's so-and-so who's a member of the Communist Party. There's so-and-so who's this, that and the other, and goodness only knows what Geoffrey Stuttard is! You know, the value of it is this mixture of all sorts of views'.

I did a survey of the academic background of tutors, and found that they came from all shapes and sizes. You couldn't take a degree in industrial relations. Industrial relations was a specialist post-

graduate degree. Michael Barratt Brown read Classics at Oxford. I read English and History at Cambridge. Some read Economics, some read Sociology, some read Law, and so on. There was a terrific variety in the background of the tutors, because there was no subject called industrial relations anyway. Industrial relations was an amalgam. I wrote a book for technical colleges called *Learning from Industrial Relations*, and each chapter is on a different academic subject background - sociology, economics and so on - showing how they're all part of industrial relations.

Of the 200 or so members of SIT, nearly all were either WEA tutors or extra-mural tutors. The WEA, as I say, from my time on, because of the work I was doing and others were doing, started appointing full-time tutors in industrial relations, and it was those tutors and the extra-mural tutors who worked together. Others came from technical colleges or from polytechnics or other institutions. We were all qualified people, and we earned our spurs in some way or other. People often started as part-time tutors in the WEA and then they got a post with the WEA or perhaps in the extra-mural department. That's what I did, as a matter of fact.

But the SIT disappeared into the ground in the early 1990s. It kept running conferences and things for a time, and the Treasurer of it was a full-time tutor of what was then the ASTMS College out at Bishop

Stortford. He used to come to the seminars - and the Secretary was someone at Middlesex University, and she gave it up. I didn't know she'd given it up. All the documents disappeared, unfortunately. The SIT had a journal, which I edited for many years. I have copies of every issue until I retired.

London BUIRA Seminars

The next thing is the London Industrial Relations Seminar. In 1971, I recorded it as 'The introduction of a Saturday seminar for industrial relations tutors, drawing tutors from inside university extra-mural departments, WEA districts, polytechnics, technical colleges and colleges of further education. Two meetings have been held so far'. I canvassed people, and Friday was a day on which they had few obligations at the end of the day, and so we used to meet for our London seminars at 4.45, but then it was changed over to Saturdays. The seminars still continue, though they were originally arranged jointly between the extra-mural department and the SIT. That was the financial backing for it, and secretarial backing. It's run every year since then, without fail, since 1971, right up till 1986, when I retired, and then I kept it going for a bit and then handed it over to University of Westminster staff. But it was an interesting one, looking at the sort of tutors whose names are on it, including Assistant Secretary, Industrial Tribunals, a member of the London Transport Executive and so on . . .

Sometimes the seminars used to take a theme. We did motor industry industrial relations, and I wanted someone from an American company, from America, and I got in touch with the American Embassy and with the American Chamber of Commerce. I rang up Ford's in Dagenham, well, Ford Europe who were in Brentford, and they offered me an English one. I said, 'No, I don't want an Englishman'. About a week after this, I was rung up and a chap said, 'You won't remember me. I was the secretary when you negotiated day release for the shop stewards with Leslie Blakeman in the 1950s, and you might like to know that the head of Ford World Tractor Industrial Relations is going to be in London that weekend, and would be willing to come along and talk to the group.' So we had Bud Rosenthal, a Texan, head of World Tractor Industrial Relations Ford, talking to this seminar - 'Call me Bud!'. 'We in Ford are going for EI - Employee Involvement!' I said, 'Well, that's what Robert Owen was doing in New Lanark in 1802.' 'Who's this Owen guy?' he said! We had some marvellous meetings!

This seminar, at the time, was the only way in which industrial relations tutors met. The British Universities Industrial Relations Association (BUIRA) at that time consisted of Hugh Clegg, and others, running big lectures. They ran about three or four

lectures, with little discussion. It was an all-boy and all-girls place. When I got on to the BUIRA Executive, it was suggested that we should change the format, and so from then on, they started these mini-groups at the Annual Conferences, and other groups started in different parts of the country, like the London group. So what started in London was quite a useful thing for industrial relations generally. What's pleased me is how, when you start things, you never know what's going to happen. It brought tutors in from all over the place, and I had a running brief with the London School of Economics to tell me about anyone interesting around.

Were our activities very national? Mainly, but there were many international sessions. One of our series in 1981 or 1982 was an international one, with seven seminars on comparative industrial relations including topics like industrial relations in West Europe and the Far East, the USA and the Soviet Union, the development of the Solidarity Union in Poland, the 35-week dispute in West Germany, labour law in Mauritius [and much else besides].

Books

I was on a BBC Committee with the Managing Director of Hutchinson's Publishers. He'd heard of some radio programmes I'd done on shop stewards and said, 'Look, do you think there's any book in this?' I said, 'It's wide open for books for shop stewards!' So Michael Barratt Brown and I, from the SIT, met at Hutchinson's and fleshed out a scheme, which produced 14 books for shop stewards, called *Trade Union Industrial Studies*. These sold in thousands. We sold them through the shop stewards, of course. We sold about 250,000 altogether over the next four years. The first ones were published at 60p or 90p. They're striking enough to get your attention; there was a sport or sporting motif on each one, and they were small enough to fit into the back pocket of a shop steward.

They were written by various people. We had a book on strikes by a chap who ran strikes. Paul Higgins wrote the one on workers' rights. Bob Holden did one on the organised worker . . . Ed Croker and I wrote what we called support books. We did one which went with every four books. Tony Benn wrote an article in one of those. They went very well. You used to take these in to classes - they just disappeared. Shop stewards generally didn't read books. They read newspapers and periodicals, and something which was about 100 pages and cost 60p or 90p, they were prepared to live with. So they'd buy the lot!

I wrote quite a number of industrial relations books, of one kind or another . . . *Work is Hell* was the first one that came out, which was turning upside down most of the thoughts about industrial relations. 'Shop

stewards, saints or sinners?' was one thing. If you didn't have shop stewards, employers would have to invent them. Then the British strike record, at this time, the highest number of strikes were in America and Japan, because they were automating and British work wasn't bad at all.

Networking

We became well known in trade union and industrial relations circles. One T&G [Transport and General Workers' Union] General Secretary was a shop steward at Ford's when we did our early courses. And various people, like Ray Buckton at ASLEF [Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Footplatemen], and the NUR [National Union of Railwaymen] General Secretary came along to our courses and developed from there. At Cirencester, I knew the T&G people. I had a good network of contacts. People talk about networking now - my whole career was networking I suppose, in one way or another. I'd get to know a lot of people through the seminar of course.

I mentioned Michael Foot already [*Post-16 Educator* 48, p23]. He was well known to Michael Barratt Brown of the SIT. That's how we got that interview. We wanted money to do research on industrial relations and the links between schools and industry, and we got nowhere with the Ministry of Education, until I remembered that the then Minister played goal for the Cambridge football team when I was left-half . . .! So I wrote in and we got a grant from the Ministry for our research work!

Television and radio

I was then also sitting, representing tutors, on the BBC's Further Education Advisory Committee, which went through likely useful courses. There were lots of courses at the BBC, but none on ITV, so we wrote to ITV about the need for courses on health and safety and all sorts of things, and got nowhere at all, until I remembered that the head of ITV was Lady Plowden. Now, Lady Plowden was Bridget Richmond, the daughter of the Master of Downing College, who helped me get my wife [Anka, who was Slovenian] out of Europe in 1945/46. I had arranged the only dance ever in the Master's Lodge, because in 1946, 50 of us

were married, so we had a dance in the Master's Lodge, and I danced with Bridget Plowden. Her mother and father came to our wedding when we were married in Cambridge. So I wrote, 'Dear Bridget, you will remember . . . By the way, would it be possible to get one or two industrial relations programmes on ITV?' We got three programmes on ITV.

In 1978 the BBC asked me to do an eight-programme series on industrial democracy. On the seventh programme, the White Paper on Industrial Democracy came out. I did a television series in the '60s called *The Wealth of the Nation*, which was ten programmes with Roger Opie. He was the specialist and I was the person who could talk in ordinary language! I did quite a lot of radio work too.

I did a series called *It Takes All Sorts* for Radio 4. I interviewed the wives of shift workers to find out what effect it had on their life, for example, how they designed a non-identifiable meal. Then I did a series called *Facts in Focus*. This was five minutes at 5.25 till 5.29.30 in the evening, talking about the Trade union Congress (TUC) in 4.5 minutes, shop stewards in 4.5 minutes, restrictive practices in 4.5 minutes. I was doing a shop stewards course somewhere, which ran from 5.00 till 7.00. During the course, at 5.25, I'd say, 'Just be quiet a minute', and I switched the wireless on, and it said, 'This is Geoffrey Stuttard talking about shop stewards' to a shop stewards course. That pleased me, just to do that.

Notes:

The Society of Industrial Tutors (SIT) was formed in 1968, and held its inaugural annual conference in London in September 1969. It published a journal, *The Industrial Tutor*, from 1970 to 1993. Geoffrey held a variety of positions within the SIT, including journal editor, development officer and vice-chairman.

Association of Scientific, Technical and Managerial Staffs (ASTMS) was a union created in 1969 from a merger. It later merged again to form Amicus, and yet again to form Unite, the Union.

The British Universities Industrial Relations Association (BUIRA) was formed in 1950 to support the research and teaching of industrial relations specialists.

Robert Owen (1771-1858) was a philanthropist, socialist and pioneer of the co-operative movement.

Hugh Clegg (1920-95) was appointed founding professor of industrial relations at the University of Warwick in 1967.

Industrial Democracy was a White Paper published by the Labour government in 1978. It proposed union representation on the boards of large companies.

**POST-16
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