

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.

An invitation to engage in a discussion and debate:

The Role and Future of Trade Union Education

Saturday 27th March, Ruskin College (Walton Street site), Oxford (For travel information please email Ian Manborde on imanborde@ruskin.ac.uk)

In 1909, Ruskin College students and their supporters formed an organisation called the Plebs League to fight so-called 'reforms' which threatened the independent and working-class nature of their education. Over a hundred years later the relevance of their arguments remains with us. A new campaign for independent working-class education (IWCE) has convened this event to discuss the future of trade union education as a feature of working-class organisation and politics, and to examine the challenges which now confront us.

Programme:

10.30 - 11.30 Tea and coffee available

11.30 Welcome and opening comments
Sheila Cohen (NUJ, author of Ramparts of Resistance)

11.45 Independent working-class education - historical background

Colin Waugh (author of 'Plebs': the Lost Legacy of Independent Working-Class Education)

12.15 Key themes of the focus on TU Education and IWCE

Ian Manborde (Ruskin College)

12.45 Lessons from activist education in the US

Kim Moody (Labor Notes)

1.15 Lunch - not provided but plenty of places to buy lunch nearby

2.30 Session for practitioners:

What is TU education for ?

The post-election scenario?

The role of TU educators - an established profession?

A need for a labour educators' network?

3.30 Proposals for further activity

4.30 End

Recollections of an ex-TUC tutor

Dave Welsh*

I got into TUC education in the early 1990s. Like many other tutors, I was a refugee from industrial work, in this case on the railways. Most of the tutors I met at that time had come, at one point or another, from the shop floor. This meant that they had either been sacked, victimised or simply lost their job due to redundancy in the 1980s - a common enough event in that decade. This seemed to me to be one of the great strengths of trade union teaching: its tutors came from the shop-floor not from some 'academy' or academic background. It gave them two things: a familiarity with the day-to-day world of the workplace that TU representatives (their students) were coming from, and secondly, they usually had a political outlook which had been honed over years of struggle. In other words, they had a firm view of what unions and reps should be doing in the workplace.

I had never done any trade union courses myself because I was never around at the right time or place to get onto them and I confess that I was arrogant enough to believe that I knew it all anyway - what could a TUC course tell me that I didn't already know? I had worked in enough places to have a knowledge of what shop stewards/reps did and I had been for many years in NUPE, NALGO, ASLE&F and the NUR. But I was persuaded to do a two-year course on trade union/labour relations at Middlesex Poly in north London (who remembers that course?) and I was stunned by how much I didn't know about things like labour law. More importantly, I realised how useful it was to distance myself from day-to-day struggles (I was on British Rail at Stratford depot in London) and to have time to reflect. I gave my grudging respect to the tutors and found the students to be (mostly) staunch rank and file activists - needless to say many hours were spent in the bar discussing the issues of the day.

This was not, however, a TUC course, and it was only some years later that I 'discovered' these courses during my teacher training for FE. On my

teaching practice, I wanted to combine teaching in an FE college (Tower Hamlets) with some trade union teaching at South Bank Poly, where they did many TUC ten-week and shorter courses for reps. This split practice caused chaos at my teaching course and a lot of running around but it gave me an entry into both the FE sector just being 'incorporated' by the Tories and the mainstream TUC teaching I had never personally experienced. So I went to teach part-time in a number of FE colleges until I got a fractional post, and on TUC ten-week courses, mainly for railway reps who were branch officers or Local Departmental Committee (LDC) reps on British Rail.

Traffic lights

The TUC Stage One railway courses were dominated by the machinery of negotiation, the British Rail conciliation system that had existed since the early 20th century. They were delivered, like all TUC ten-week courses, through the 'traffic light' books: the red, green and blue manuals that all tutors had to use. The students were from the NUR, ASLE&F and TSSA (I later taught tube reps from the same unions for the WEA). As a tutor, I didn't feel the gap between tutor and student that was often present in FE, and this was because the reps were older and more engaged with the course. It was more like Access teaching. It was all about skills: recruitment, grievance and disciplinary procedures, local negotiation: skills that most of the reps needed just as they needed the opportunity to meet other reps and compare notes - the number of reps who made lasting contacts must be one of the best things to come out of these courses. There was also an emphasis on group work in the classroom - something that was still not fully accepted in FE colleges. Participation was key, and most students needed little encouragement to take part.

The TUC courses (and there are many non-TUC courses run by individual unions themselves) had, I discovered, been developed with state funding after 1964, a period of union growth and confidence, although there had been TUC provision as far back as the 1940s. There was a lot of writing about unions from the 1960s, for example Tony Lane's *The Union Makes Us Strong*, the Marxist work of Richard Hyman on industrial relations, and Huw Beynon's *Working for Ford*. Many TUC tutors of that period were thoroughly schooled in these texts and must have brought a sophisticated understanding of labour relations to their teaching. By the time I started teaching, the amount of accessible new writing on unions was virtually zero and 'labour' correspondents on national daily papers had disappeared. This meant that tutors had to fall back on their experience and ideas in order to augment the traffic lights! I can remember typing out endless worksheets aimed at widening our classroom discussions. Tutors tried to focus on the issues facing the unions and how reps could build durable and effective organisation in the workplace. Inevitably, this raised politics, a reminder of the tension between the shop steward as a 'lubricant' or an 'irritant' in industrial relations as highlighted by the Bullock Report. That report had suggested the steward was more of a lubricant, but most tutors hoped they were an irritant.

There were other frustrations. I was astonished that there was no course content about economics or the structure of the rail industry. There was no organising agenda and no sense of building on relevant issues. The machinery of negotiation had become a millstone, with LDC reps who were complacent and utterly unaccountable to their local union branches. This, of course, was before privatisation destroyed the whole structure and the unions had to develop a strategy within each rail company. This was reflected on the TUC courses, which were all about *taking part* in the industrial relations machinery rather than developing a counterweight to it. The course content was entirely skills-based and prescriptive: it was a standing joke amongst tutors that you could go into any classroom, on any day, at any time, and the students would be doing exactly the same page in the traffic light books. One tutor went out and bought some comics to use in class as he claimed they were more useful. Group work could easily become a fetish, conveniently steering away from any 'controversial' input by the tutor.

It was difficult to bring any trade union history into these courses. I managed to find an old Inner London Education Authority (ILEA) trade union history slide show (with old-fashioned slides) which I used for one afternoon of the course. I was

observed by a TUC officer who seemed utterly bemused. I was told that a tutor who took her class to the TUC Library was asked what this had to do with TUC teaching! TUC courses were quite separate from the mainstream curriculum even when they were based in FE colleges. As I taught across the whole curriculum this seemed odd. TUC courses were becoming more integrated due to accreditation, but this was a bureaucratic change. Trade union centres were frequently under attack from vicious college managements in the 90s, with Manchester College of Arts and Technology (MANCAT)'s course being abolished. But such courses were rarely discussed at college union meetings and most tutors were part-time.

Isolation

This isolation from the mainstream was also clear in relation to the wider trade union movement. For most students the courses were the only contact they had ever had with the TUC. Such courses were advertised at local trades council meetings but rarely discussed. There was no forum for discussion for tutors, thus limiting debate about TU education; the only material I found was by Raymond Williams, who had himself been a WEA tutor. The debate around the Plebs League/Labour Colleges/WEA was dead as far as tutors were concerned, because most tutors knew nothing about it. But the old hands of the Plebs League would have been turning in their graves had they known of the depoliticisation of these courses.

I left TUC teaching in 2004. The ten years of teaching on TUC courses were spent side by side with battles to defend jobs, conditions and the quality of teaching in FE and adult colleges. I hope that these personal recollections will contribute to a discussion of trade union courses as well as trade union studies as a whole (including archiving, resources and links to the wider movement). With the inherent dangers of a future Tory government out of sympathy with trade union education, we are likely to be defending the current provision in the near future. In defending the provision we will also be defending jobs in FE and the WEA and, in doing so, giving support to tutors. For most of the students who attend, these courses are often their only link with post-16 education, and their experiences and learning must surely be a key link in any rebuilding of the trade union movement.

*** This article has benefitted from discussions with Roger Kline and Jan Pollock**

Rediscovering independent working-class education

Colin Waugh *discusses some ideas behind the 27th March meeting (see p3)*

The meeting at Ruskin College on 27th March is essentially about how independent working-class education (IWCE) could be developed within trade union education. The impulse for this stems partly from the pamphlet *'Plebs': the Lost Legacy of Independent Working-Class Education*, produced last year by PSE to mark the centenary of the 1909 Ruskin College 'strike'.

What happened in and around that 'strike' is important now because it is the main example available to us of working-class people setting up on their own initiative a system of adult education - the Labour College movement - that was independent of the employing class and its state.

Of course the workers concerned drew on the expertise of traditional intellectuals, for example of the US socialist Daniel De Leon, who was initially an academic, of the sociologist Lester Ward, and of the Ruskin principal Dennis Hird, formerly an Anglican priest. But they took these ideas and made something of their own with them.

The miners, railway-workers, and other union-sponsored students at Ruskin in 1909 had their own views on education. First, they had an analysis of mainstream adult and higher education - they called this 'orthodox' education and saw it as enslaving. Secondly, they had a vision of what the content of education for trade union activists should be - namely Marxist economics, 'industrial history', and philosophy (by which they meant dialectical reasoning as developed by the German tanner, Josef Dietzgen). Thirdly, they also had a teaching and learning method - participatory small group discussion of texts, integrated with public speaking, based on practice in the Socialist Labour Party in Scotland. In short, they evolved and implemented their own, independent, model of education.

Any scheme for rebuilding IWCE now would have to do the same. That is, it would have to put forward a coherent critique of mainstream provision and develop from this a positive view of the provision it intends to bring about, including a conception of content, and a teaching and learning method.

The importance of this is not confined to TU education. Only working-class people - people who in order to live must exchange for wages their capacity to work, and including therefore teachers and lecturers - can remodel the global social order on a valid basis. No other group can initiate this process or carry it through to the end. And workers can only do this consciously - that is, if they know that this is what they are trying to do. But consciousness, in turn, has as its necessary condition education.

The powers-that-be literally cannot provide to working-class people the education needed for this purpose. Only workers themselves - again including teachers, lecturers and researchers - can provide this for one another. But they cannot do this in isolation from the training and miseducation which is what the powers-that-be do provide, on an increasingly massive and pervasive scale. They must do it in either internal or external opposition to, on the one hand, the technical or, on the other hand, the ideological preparation of a labour force which the employers' state provides in the form of, respectively, vocational or academic 'education'. The issue then is how to recreate independent working-class education both as an idea and a practice within the working-class movement, including both rank and file groups in unions and leftwing political groups, and within mainstream provision, including both schools, colleges and universities and official TU education. In the end, neither of these projects can advance very far without the other, but a start can be made at either end.

The Ruskin 'strike' made headlines at the time and never has been entirely 'hidden from history'. Our pamphlet tries to make readers aware of what was at stake and really happened then - in short, to set the record straight. The research for this revealed, however, that the Ruskin strikers knew more about earlier moves by workers to create their own education than do most activists now. We need to alter this situation, otherwise we shall repeat past

mistakes rather than move forward from a recognition of them.

As in the *Plebs* pamphlet, then, we need to dig out and make accessible to present-day activists the reality of other events and ideas in the history of working class collective self education. One such area may be the teaching and learning method developed in the 1790s by the London Corresponding Society. Another is the struggle conducted in the 1820s by Thomas Hodgskin and supporters in relation to economics lectures at the London Mechanics Institute. A third is the Chartists' struggle for 'really useful knowledge' in the 1840s. A fourth is the activity of SDF members in school boards around 1900. To these must be added the formation of the Syndicalist Education League shortly after the Ruskin 'strike', the movement for a Scottish Labour College centred round John Maclean's lectures on economics during World War 1, the Proletarian University initiated by the Scottish shoemaker John Keracher in Michigan around 1920, and the development of the Labour College movement itself from 1909 up to and beyond its suppression by the TUC in 1964. In putting such material into circulation we need also to make clear the extent to which mainstream HE and adult education has been, among other things, a series of attempts to neutralise working-class initiatives, often by asset-stripping their features; school boards, for example, introduced by the state from 1870, were part of the Chartist programme.

As indicated earlier, the Ruskin strike and 'Plebs' movement offer us a set of criteria for evaluating these other initiatives. For each one, then, we can ask, first: did those involved have a critique of mainstream provision (ie as opposed to merely reacting against it); in other words, did they have a vision of what education for working class adults should be. Secondly, did they have a conception of content or at least, of how content should be generated. And thirdly: did they have a distinctive teaching and learning method?

On top of this, there is also a history of ideas and provision initiated by people from other classes who have thrown in their lot with working-class movements, rather than by workers themselves. Ruskin College itself was founded by two such people. The role played by the clergyman and, for a time at least, revolutionary socialist, A.J. Muste in the development of Brookwood College in New York State in the 1920s is another example. Then there is Rosa Luxemburg's work as an economics lecturer in the SPD's party school in Germany. Again, the importance attached by Lenin to educational initiatives in the Russian revolution stemmed from his involvement in setting up workers' study circles under czarism, and in turn made possible

the body of theory and practice brought into being by the psychologist Lev Vygotsky and the psychologist/anthropologist A.L. Luria. Yet another such development is the practice fostered by Antonio Gramsci within the editorial board of *L'Ordine Nuovo* during the period which included the April 1920 general strike in Turin and the September factory occupations, and the theory that he generated from this, as expressed for example in his essay on 'Some aspects of the Southern Question' and in the sections of his prison notebooks where he criticised Bukharin's *Historical Materialism*.

In addition, there is at least one major initiative which is relevant to this discussion but not an example of working-class education as such. This is the work of Paulo Freire, which developed from the interaction with poor peasants, initially in the North East of Brazil and then more widely, of people inspired by Liberation Theology.

Lastly, any sustainable model of revived IWCE would need to address the area which the Ruskin students addressed via Dietzgen - that is, to take into account the tradition of reasoning that lies behind the thought of most of the individuals mentioned here. The roots of this tradition - that of Hegel's 'logic' - lie almost certainly in ideas worked out by radical sects during the Reformation.

The argument in the end is basically this. The powers-that-be cannot avoid affording to workers within mainstream post-compulsory education - teachers, lecturers and facilitators - a degree of discretion, a space in which those workers exercise a limited degree of control over their work. These workers always have the potential, then, especially within the general education elements of vocational and quasi-vocational courses, to use this space to develop the beginnings of a valid practice. But to carry this beyond a basic stage they need access to a reviving tradition of working-class educational self organisation. Whatever left groups may or may not do towards this, by far the best field in which such a revival can take place, compromised though this field is by state control, is trade union education, as provided both by the TUC and individual unions. The existence of a movement to this end in TU education, then, would make a key difference to what can be done within mainstream FE colleges and universities. None of this can happen unless we develop simultaneously a body of theory which takes account of earlier initiatives. The development of this body of theory, of course in close connection with practical organisation, is therefore a key step which we can, should and must try to take.

News update: December 2009 - February 2010

Week beginning 14/12/09

HE Funding Council for England (HEFCE) chief executive officer (CEO) Sir Alan Langlands writes to London Metropolitan University board chairperson Peter Anwyl calling for all board members who were on London Met's audit committee while funding was over-claimed to stand down 'immediately', or HEFCE will withdraw its contribution altogether. Langlands' letter also hints that HEFCE may sue former vice-chancellor Brian Roper in an attempt to recover some of the money.

London Met governors meet on 15/12/10 and agree to stand down (Anwyl by the end of March 2010, all others who were in post in the period up to 31/8/08 by 31/8/10).

On 17/12, HEFCE and the London Met governors issue a joint statement announcing an investigation into the role of senior staff as criticised in previous reports.

Week beginning 21/12/09

In the grant letter to the HE Funding Council for England

(HEFCE), Lord Mandelson announces a £135m cut in HEFCE's 2010-11 settlement, alongside the £180m in 'efficiency savings' announced in the 2009 budget.

Week beginning 28/12/09

In a message to staff, London Met interim vice-chancellor Alfred Morris maintains that: 'The prospects for the new year are now looking much brighter'.

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) writes to HE institutions confirming that the £135m cut announced last week by Lord Mandelson is additional to the £600m cut to HE and science funding announced in the pre-Budget report, which is to be implemented between 2011 and 2013, thereby constituting in total a reduction of £915m over three years.

As to the effect of these measures, Paul Marshall, chief executive officer (CEO) of the 1994 Group (of small, 'research-intensive' universities) claims that the Government is cutting HEFCE's annual budget from £7.291bn in 2010-11 to £6.376bn in 2012-13, equating to a

12.5 per cent cut in annual funding. Commenting on these and other developments set out by Mandelson, Sir David Watson, professor of HE management at London University Institute of Education says: 'The big picture is that this Government has given up on pursuing social and economic development through the expansion of higher education'.

Points in a *Times HE (THE)* article on Cardiff University include: 'hundreds' of hourly paid lecturers (HPLs) there are working without written contracts, which were due to be issued to 600 such staff in September 2009; UCU branch president Todd Bailey claims that at least three HPLs have not been paid at all since September.

HEFCE has withdrawn altogether its £40m old and historic buildings fund, from which Oxford University has up to now received £5.1m and Cambridge University £4.2m a year. HEFCE is also scrapping a funding stream that helps support taught masters degrees, and is cutting the £24m pool which supports foundation degrees.

The GMB and Unite unions have now accepted the Universities and

Colleges Employers Association's (UCEA's) 0.5 per cent pay offer, which has already been accepted by Unison and which UCU 'will not oppose'.

Week beginning 4/1/10

In its submission to the review of postgraduate funding led by BIS director general of research Adrian Smith, the 1994 Group proposes that state funding for PhDs be restricted to universities reaching a 'quality threshold' - ie to Russell Group (representing the 20 or so poshest universities) and 1994 Group institutions.

Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) Joint Review Group (JRG) chairperson Sir Andrew Cubie has told a meeting of participating institutions, held in London, that the Group is considering changes which would entail winding up the final-salary pensions scheme. (The USS is open to academic, professional and managerial staff in all pre-1992 universities. The decision about changes must be taken by its Joint Negotiating Committee [JNC] which comprises five reps nominated by UCU, five by Universities UK [ie the vice-chancellors] and its chairperson [a position also held by Cubie].) Cubie added that any changes will be agreed by April 2010, for implementation in October.

Simply Learning, a report published by the Policy Exchange thinktank, maintains that: Train to Gain should be scrapped; the Leitch report's qualification targets for 2020 should be abandoned; a body similar to the former FE Funding Council (FEFC) should be reintroduced; companies should be given incentives to provide their own training in-house; rather than Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) as favoured by the Government, Sector Skills Councils should plan training strategy; learning accounts should be introduced, allowing colleges to be

more responsive to employers' requirements. (These proposals correspond more or less to those of the Conservative Party.)

Leeds University management issues to all staff a 30-page booklet, produced by its 'communication team', on how to write. This includes the contention that: 'Words are our most powerful tool. What's more, they're free, available and ready to use', and the advice to 'think about what you are trying to say' and 'divide your work into manageable paragraphs'.

A UCU survey of university professors finds that, with regard to the HEFCE proposal to allocate 25 per cent of research funding under the forthcoming research excellence framework (REF) to 'impact' (ie the direct utility of research), 34.5 per cent (200 respondents) say they would consider moving abroad to escape this, and 400 say they are against it. (The survey was sent to all UCU members known to be professors, of whom 589 responded.)

Manchester University UCU branch is opposing a management move to have staff 'research profiles' drawn up by faculty assessment panels (ie separately from existing appraisal processes).

Week beginning 11/1/10

The 'Newcastle College Group', assembled by union-bashing Newcastle principal Jackie Fisher, now includes four 'divisions': Newcastle College itself; Skelmersdale and Ormskirk College, taken over in 2007; Intraining (ie the former Carter and Carter private training company, acquired in 2008); and 'recruitment and training company' TWL.

Fair Funding for All, a report on HE fees produced for the Million+ organisation (which represents 28 post-1992 universities) and based on modelling by the consultants London Economics, maintains

that, rather than lift the fees cap, the Government could raise an additional £1bn by: abolishing the option to defer student-loan repayments; writing off student loans after 35 rather than 25 years; increasing to 2 per cent the rate of interest on loans. The report also opposes the idea of exempting from tuition fees students who live with their parent(s).

Figures made public through a parliamentary question put by shadow skills secretary David Willetts reveal that fewer than 2.5 per cent of almost 240,000 apprenticeships started in 2008-09 resulted from the activities of the National Apprenticeship Service's matching service, a web portal which costs £15.7m a year and which spent £3m on a TV advertising campaign featuring Alan Sugar.

In further submissions to the BIS review of postgraduate provision, the Russell Group, representing 20 or so large, posh universities, argues for still more concentration of research funding on its own members. In contrast, Malcolm McCrae, chairperson of the UK Council for Graduate Education (UKCGE), argues that this would: 'diminish national capacity to provide skilled and highly trained manpower to fuel the knowledge economy in the short to medium term', arguing instead for the diversion of funds from undergraduate teaching to support for PhD students.

National Institute for Adult Continuing Education (NIACE) acting CEO Peter Lavender claims NIACE has since March 2009 used £20m made available through the Government's *Learning Revolution* White Paper to start over 300 adult education projects, including the Workers' Educational Association's 'learning revolutionaries' scheme. (The White Paper was an attempt to camouflage the axing of 1.5m adult education places, and NIACE was put in charge of the money.)

In a *Guardian* article, Russell Group chairperson (and Leeds University vice-chancellor) Michael Arthur and director general Wendy Piatt maintain that the Government is overseeing a potential £2.5bn cut in HE funding, that: 'Reports suggest that as many as 30 universities may not survive in their current form if even minimal funding cuts are introduced', and that: 'This is a defining moment. If politicians don't act now, they will be faced with meltdown in a sector that is vital to our national prosperity'.

Steve Smith, president of Universities UK (ie the body speaking for vice-chancellors) maintains that hundreds of HE courses could close as a result of government cuts.

In a *Guardian* interview, Durham University vice-chancellor Chris Higgins argues for research funding to be concentrated still more on 'the top 20-30 universities' [which] 'are the only universities where PhDs should be educated', adding that: 'there are some universities that are not doing anything very well. They should be allowed to close. . .' (Durham University belongs to the 1994 Group.)

Over the last two years there has been a 669 per cent rise in entries for the OCR awarding body's National Level 2 in ICT, introduced in 2004. In summer 2009, 242,878 people were registered for this, making it the third most popular qualification at its level, after AQA's English and English Literature GCSE and Edexcel's maths GCSE.

Both UCU and Bristol University philosophy professor James Ladyman, organiser of a well-supported online petition against the use of 'impact' as a criterion for the allocation of research funding, welcome a statement made to the *THE* by David Willetts, in which he says an incoming Tory government

would postpone the introduction of the REF for 'up to' two years (ie from 2013 to 2015) to 'establish whether a sound and widely accepted measure of impact exists'.

Bridgwater College, Lakes College (in Workington) and Blackpool and the Fylde College are three FE institutions looking to expand their FE and HE engineering and related provision in the wake of the Government's commitment to building new nuclear reactors.

City University UCU expresses concern that the consultants Egon Zehnder International, who prepared the report on the basis of which, on 13/7/09, the governors of City University sought the resignation of vice-chancellor Malcolm Gillies, have also been hired to select his replacement. (Gillies has since been appointed vice-chancellor of London Met University; Zehnder's report cost City £40,000; they are charging £9,500 for each replacement candidate they assess.)

A UCU ballot of FE members over strike action on pay, in which slightly more than 7,000 voted, rejects action by 132 votes, with the result that the AOC's offer of 1.5 per cent is virtually certain to be accepted. (It emerges that 'college leaders' received an average 6.5 percent increase in 2007-08.)

There is strong evidence that management in all types of university is preparing to ditch final salary pension arrangements for support staff, thereby penalising many thousands of lower-paid, mainly female workers.

A survey by the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference (HMC) of private schools, to which 127 responded, finds that: only 10 per cent are running the Cambridge 'Pre-U' qualifications; 20 are offering the International Baccalaureate; two thirds are offering the IGCSE; the proportion

offering Pre-U may rise if problems arise around changes to the grading of A-levels.. (Across both the private and state sectors, about 90 schools altogether currently run the Pre-U.)

HE Statistics Agency (HESA) data suggests that the number of full-time academic staff employed by UK universities rose by 14 per cent between 2003-04 and 2007-08, reaching about 141,000.

Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) figures for level 3 qualifications show that the average UCAS tariff achieved by students in FE colleges in 2009 was 584, as against 581 in 2008 and about 578 in 2006.

The Government publishes its 16-19 'Statement of Priorities and Investment Strategy'. Features of this include: funding base rates for 2010-11 will be frozen at 2009-10 levels; increases of 0.9 per cent in these levels in both 2011-12 and 2012-13 will be accompanied by demands for greater 'efficiency'; the intention to channel all learning and training through the National Qualifications Framework or Qualifications and Credit Framework will lead, as expected, to over 1,000 qualifications ceasing to be fundable.

More details of the Investment Strategy include: the 16-19 budget is to total £8.5bn (up 5.7 per cent), comprising £4bn (up 6.6 per cent) for FE places, £2.4bn (up 3.2 per cent) for school 6th form places, £677m (up 0.9 per cent) for EMAs and learner support, £270m (up 26.8 per cent) for capital projects, and £267m (up 12.7 per cent) for people with learning difficulties/disabilities. In return, FE is expected to provide an extra 10,000 16-19 places and the number of apprentices in this age group is to rise by 21,000, to 223,000.

The Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) reluctantly agrees to the UCEA's 0.5 per cent HE pay offer, clearing the way for institu-

tions to pay this, backdated to 1st August 2009.

Week beginning 18/1/10

Finding Your Way Through FE, an NUS report based on focus groups and online interviews with about 200 FE students, identifies a tendency for colleges to push students with disabilities onto level 1 courses. It points out also that in 2005-06 there were 4,384 students with disabilities on level 1 and entry level qualifications in sixth form colleges, but 2,749 at most were receiving Additional Learning Support (ALS).

In a *Guardian* article titled 'University cuts: a few cost-saving ideas, Peter Mandelson says that: 'Farsighted universities will use a small reduction in state funding to look at avoidable costs, reinforce diversification and focus minds on what they do best'.

Both English UK, the body speaking for language schools, and UUK express concern about the likely effects of government plans to raise the level of study for which students can enter the UK.

HEFCE is consulting universities on a change to the terms of the 'financial memorandum' - ie the funding agreement - between itself and each university, such that it could in effect require a governing body to replace (ie sack) their institution's 'accountable officer' (usually the vice chancellor) 'in exceptional circumstances' as determined by HEFCE. (This arises from the struggle between HEFCE and London Met. governors who initially supported former vice chancellor Brian Roper against HEFCE.)

A report on FE teaching, produced by the Centre for British Teachers (CFBT) charity jointly with the Campaign for Learning, uses evidence derived mainly from LSC research to claim that colleges are failing to involve students suffi-

ciently in decisions about teaching and learning methods, and argues for more emphasis on 'learning to learn'.

A 'businessman', Ian Benson, has complained to the Advertising Standards Authority about the 'branding strategy' of Plymouth University in which the latter calls itself 'the enterprise university'. Benson claims to have obtained under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act data showing that of 10,000 students graduating from Plymouth in 2008, only two went on to start any kind of business.

A Commons Public Accounts Committee report on Train to Gain notes that 50 per cent of employers say they would have paid in any case for the training provided through T2G, which has a £900m annual budget, and argues that the £112m per year brokerage system has not worked, with only one in five trainees recruited in this way.

Weathering the Storm: Coping with Financial Challenge in the Higher Education Sector, a study by the PricewaterhouseCoopers consultancy of universities' finances in the period 2005-08, finds that even in this period of rising incomes 41 institutions 'generated cumulative aggregate operating deficits'.

In a *Guardian* feature on a possible trend towards universities offering 'Liberal Arts' degrees, Winchester University professor Nigel Tubbs is quoted as arguing that: 'It's a complete con to say to 18-year olds that the intellect should not be trained for its own sake alongside other skills. I think we can and should make a case for the intellect in employability'. (UCL is expecting to introduce a 4 year Liberal Arts degree with about 100 students in 2011.)

The Sheffield College joins the 157 Group (of large colleges with good inspection results), bringing its membership to 28.

Points in Postgraduate Education in the United Kingdom, a study by the HE Policy Institute (HEPI) and the British Library, include: between 2002-03 and 2007-08, the total of postgraduate students rose over 12 per cent, from 249,117 to 278,272; within this, the number on taught masters programmes rose 27 per cent, from 122,402 to 155,704; in the same period, the number of 1st year postgraduates from UK backgrounds rose by 3 per cent, compared with 11 per cent for postgraduates from elsewhere in the EU, and 39 per cent for those from elsewhere.

Former Tottenham College NATFHE branch chairperson Martin Tolhurst is to retire as principal of Newham College on 19/4/10, to be replaced by Denise Brown-Sackey, who will become the second black FE principal in London.

Aspects of the situation at the University of Cumbria include: the vice-chancellor who started work in July 2009, Peter McCaffery, is conducting an internal review of senior management and is consulting on plans to remove a layer of middle management; HEFCE has seconded two managers to work there; finance director Peter Armer went on long-term sick leave in the spring of 2009 and has since left; managers there originally forecast a deficit of £3.8m for 2008-09 but have revised this up to £7.7m.

In a speech to a joint AOC and Association of [private] Learning Providers [ALP] conference, Tory skills shadow David Willetts claims that his party's plans to return to a single funding council for FE (ie to revive the FEFC which preceded the LSC and presided over widespread corruption) would mean more money reaching the front line. Asked by principals in the audience about whether a Tory government would level FE college funding up to that of 6th form colleges, Willetts makes no comment.

Colleges receive their funding statements from the LSC.

In a speech to a conference of the 100 Group (of 'leading' headteachers), held in East London, Magdalen College Oxford president David Clary says that a case like that of Laura Spence could happen again, because '... we simply can't offer a place to every bright pupil. I am sorry if that sounds elitist but that is how it has to be if we are to stay competitive on the world stage'. (In 2000, Laura Spence, a student at Monkseaton [comprehensive] High School in North Tyneside, was refused a place to study medicine at Magdalen, despite having 5 grade As at A-level. She proceeded instead to a biochemistry degree at Harvard.)

UCU members at Gloucestershire University take protest action against management's plan to make 16 compulsory redundancies as part of its attempt to tackle a £36m deficit.

Week beginning 25/1/10

The Institute for Learning (IFL - ie the body set up by the Government, to which FE lecturers are forced to 'belong') announces that the 70,000 or so FE teachers and training staff who have up to now not 'declared' their 'continuing professional development' (CPD) for 2009 as demanded by the IFL will not after all be punished with 'sanctions' but will have 'a black mark' [sic] placed on their records. Worse still, according to IFL CEO Toni Fazaeli: 'Next year that group of people will receive special attention, support and encouragement regarding their CPD'.

In a *Guardian* 'Comment' article, UUK president and Exeter University vice-chancellor Steve Smith says of the Government's £915m cut to HE funding: 'Difficult though this cut will be, it does mean that a drama need not become a crisis if

no further cuts are visited on the sector'.

Both the chairperson (Andrew Grant) and secretary (Geoff Lucas) of the HMC (ie the organisation representing the most prestigious private schools) go to the press to air their view that the introduction of new AS-level grades and the way Ofqual seems likely to deal with problems arising from this, as evidenced in the grading of last summer's AS-levels, is likely to lead to a repeat of the 2002 grade boundaries crisis. (In 2002, political pressure on awarding bodies and the then Qualifications and Curriculum Authority to avoid making it look as if exams were getting easier led to revised A-level grade boundaries, and some candidates from posh schools getting lower than expected grades.)

There are signs that Cambridge University may recognise UCU and Unite for local bargaining purposes.

Both shadow schools secretary Michael Gove and Lib Dem schools spokesperson David Laws welcome moves by the Edge 'vocational foundation' charity to lobby for vocational education routes starting at 14 and running through to HE. Edge CEO Andy Powell maintains that: 'Assembly-line education is ridiculous. The recession, and the need to change the way we do things, mean that it is vital that we lay the tracks for different pathways to success'.

Following high profile statements by Peter Mandelson and HE minister David Lammy, in which they reject the claim made last week by the Russell Group's chairperson and director general that government cuts to HE will 'bring the sector to its knees, the *THE* claims that 'some vice-chancellors' and 'some Russell Group members' also dissent from that claim.

LSC chairperson Chris Banks, who is also chairing the review of FE fees initiated by the Government in November 2009 and due to report in June 2010, says: 'The Government has made it clear to me that it's essential that we look in detail at how we can increase fee collection. We want to make sure that individuals and employers see a value in the training they're undertaking and, as a result, are willing to make an investment alongside the money that's available from the public purse'.

Trends in Young Participation in Higher Education: Core Results for England, a HEFCE study covering the period 1994-2010, finds that, although only 19 per cent of 18-19 year olds from deprived areas enter HE (as against 57 per cent from posh areas), the latter are 30 per cent whereas the former are only 5 per cent more likely to do this now than in 2005.

At a lobby of parliament, UCU launches its document *Education for the Future: UCU's Manifesto for Post-School Education*.

There are signs that University College London (UCL) is about to make compulsory redundancies, probably in its faculty of life sciences. At the same time, Imperial College has cut 21 academic and 27 non-academic posts in its faculty of medicine. (Both UCL and Imperial belong to the Russell Group and form part of the so-called golden triangle with Oxford and Cambridge.)

Responding to consultation on how people might achieve qualified teacher status (QTS - required for teaching in schools) without prolonged study, the Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) announces that it will not relax the requirement for those concerned to have a degree. This is seen as a setback for those campaigning for parity between FE lecturers and schoolteachers.

Management at Westminster University announces a plan to cut 285 jobs (equivalent to 156 full-time posts) by the end of July 2010, initially through a voluntary scheme.

Points in *TES* coverage of reaction to the LSC's FE college funding statements include: the LSC is understood to have a list of more than 100 colleges thought likely to carry out major restructuring up to and including merger; however, the LSC expects that a majority of the 353 colleges in England will be able to cope by making more limited changes to structure and provision; about 120 colleges are expecting cuts of up to 25 per cent in their funding for adult education and training; 157 Group executive director Lynne Sedgemore says cuts notified by members range between 10 and 25 per cent.

In a move described by UCU general secretary Sally Hunt as 'a hammer blow to offender learning throughout the country', the biggest prison education provider, The Manchester College, makes a deal with the LSC by which the college withdraws a threat to pull out of two prison education contracts but will instead make 250 full- and part-time prison education staff redundant, along with 50 other members of its staff. (Manchester employs 3,500 staff in prisons and 3,000 in mainstream FE.)

UCAS figures show that an extra 25,000 people started full-time undergraduate courses in autumn 2009, up 6 per cent on 2008. 75 per cent of the 639,860 applicants were accepted.

Acting principal Bill Grady has decided to keep open the threatened Ashford site of Brooklands College (in Surrey) while maintaining that redundancies are likely, because the college has, in his view, between 5 and 7 per cent more staff than comparable institutions, and this would allow a £1.3m 'saving'.

Points in HE Statistics Agency (HESA) figures for the situation in December 2008 show that: a total of 382,760 staff were working in the HE sector; 179,040 (46.6 per cent) of these were academics; 35.2 per cent of these academics were on fixed-term contracts.

LLUK CEO David Hunter is to stand down on health grounds. LLUK chairperson Sir David Melville, formerly CEO of the FE Funding Council, which presided over widespread corruption in the period between 1993 and the setting up of the LSC, appoints as Hunter's acting successor the former deputy CEO of the AOC, Sue Dutton, who in that period was among those who conspired with the corrupt College Employers' Forum CEO Roger Ward to set up the Education Lecturing Services agency in an attempt to break NATFHE opposition to new contracts.

Gordon Brown announces the extension of the 'young person's guarantee', by which every young person unemployed for six months will be offered work, training or an internship. From April 2010 they will be compelled to take up this offer. Government figures suggest that up to 470,000 people could be affected by this requirement over the next 15 months.

Camden NUT and Socialist Teachers Alliance (STA) activist Kevin Courtney is elected NUT deputy general secretary.

Work starts on Hartlepool College's £51m town centre site, one of the 13 schemes to receive LSC capital funding in the wake of last year's Building Colleges for the Future fiasco.

Provisional figures from BIS reportedly show that a record 239,900 people started apprenticeships in 2008-09.

Funding decisions for 2010-11 made by a HEFCE board meeting on 28/1/10 include: the HE sector

as a whole will receive £791,291m, down £518m from 2009-10 and £449m less than was anticipated; within this, there will be £4,727m in recurrent funding for teaching (down 1.6 in real terms), £1,603m for research (up £32m or 2 per cent), £562m in capital funding (down £142m or 14.9 per cent), £294m in special funding for national programmes and initiatives (down 7 per cent), and £150m for the HE Innovation Fund (up 11.9 per cent). The amount given for widening participation is cut by 0.75 per cent, to £144m.

A HEFCE study shows that there has since the mid 2000s been an 'unusually rapid' increase in HE entrants from amongst young people from the most disadvantaged areas.

Charles Clarke, Education Secretary in 2004, when the decision to introduce top-up fees was taken, tells the Browne review that interest rate subsidies on student loans should be scrapped. Written evidence from the Institute for Fiscal Studies claims that a £1,000 increase in fees would lead to a 4.4 per cent decrease in participation.

Week beginning 1/2/10

The LSC issues a report on FE provision for people with learning difficulties or disabilities (LDD) prepared by the Institute of Employment Studies on the basis of a survey carried out early in 2008 and referring to what happened in 2007. This report shows that in 2007, when the Government made massive cuts in adult education funding, one in five colleges cut courses for people with LDD. (This coincided with the 20-point plan, issued by the then FE minister Bill Rammell, offering a new 'entitlement to learning' for people with LDD.)

Following their December 2009 decision to spend £20m to buy the east wing of Somerset House,

plans announced by the management of King's College London include: cutting 205 jobs across 13 departments; within this, cutting 30 jobs in the Institute of Psychiatry and another 30 in the School of Physical Sciences and Engineering; changing the latter into a school of natural and mathematical sciences, and thereby destroying the world's first university school of engineering (founded 1838); in the School of Arts and Humanities declaring 'all academic roles . . . at risk of redundancy', thus jeopardising 22 jobs.

Cardiff University professor Ewart Keep and King's College London professor Alison Wolf claim that Gordon Brown and other prominent spokespersons, including Lord Leitch, have misrepresented the future of unskilled jobs. (They claim that an Institute for Public Policy Research projection, according to which there would in 2020 be only 585,000 adults without qualifications, has been used to imply that unskilled jobs would shrink to that figure, whereas in fact the projection for 2020 is 7.4m, ie much the same as now.

In a circular letter to vice-chancellors, HEFCE CEO Sir Alan Langlands sets out the cuts for 2010-11, explains how HEFCE will rejig the funding formula for quality-related research to favour elite institutions, and says: 'We have tentatively assumed in our budgeting that we would recover up to £10m from over-recruitment'.

Commenting on the above, and on the HEFCE study about disadvantaged-background entrants, Institute of Education HE management professor Sir David Watson says: 'Every time in the recent past when numbers have been restricted for economic reasons, it is the 'non-standard' participants who lose out disproportionately.'

Figures supplied by ministers show that in 2009 there was in the science, engineering and manu-

facturing industries a drop of 8,000 apprenticeship places for people under 18, and a drop of 5,400 for people between 18 and 25.

UCU claims that more than 40 HE institutions now have partnerships with private education companies, in most case for recruiting and teaching English to international students.

At its conference, held in Solihull, the Alliance of Sector Skills Councils launches a report, written by Jim Clifford, head of charity and education advisory services at the accountants Baker Tilly, claiming to show, on the basis of a study of four SSCs, that these organisations are worth an average of £105m each to the economy annually.

Figures released to the *THE* for the final projected cost of a move by several research councils to pool their back-office functions show that this has risen from the £120m cited by *Private Eye* in December 2009 to £125.5m plus £7m for contingencies.

The 157 Group publishes a policy paper, *Preparing Colleges for the Future*, in which Glynne Stanfield, a partner in the law firm Eversheds, argues that large FE colleges should be allowed to transform themselves from corporations to companies, enabling them to raise money via the Stock Exchange and take over other enterprises, including private trainers and failing universities. They could also set up subsidiary companies contracting to local authorities, and one way of doing all this could be via management buyouts.

Former HEFCE CEO, now Birmingham University vice-chancellor David Eastwood announces plans to 'rebalance' Birmingham's finances by raising an additional £10m through postgraduate recruitment and research grants, and 'save' £10m by 'address[ing] underperformance of the university

in some areas'. £16m is to be spent on a new, 450-seat auditorium.

In the wake of £200m of cuts to adult learner-responsive (ALR) budgets notified to colleges by the LSC, an AOC survey, based on returns from 147 colleges, indicates that: nearly a third expect a 25 per cent cut in their adult funding for 2010-11, another third expect cuts of 15-24 per cent, and 40 per cent expect cuts of 10-14 per cent. Only 3 institutions expect cuts under 10 per cent. (Colleges in Wales claim they face an overall 3 per cent cut.)

At the first inquiry into FE by the Commons BIS select committee, spokespersons for the AOC and Local Government Association (LGA), as well as Tory members of the committee, criticise the proposed arrangements by which the LSC will, from March 2010, be replaced by the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and Young People's Learning Agency plus LEAs.

Croydon College principal Marianne Cavalli is to succeed 157-Group founder Ioan Morgan as principal of Warwickshire College in September.

Week beginning 8/2/10

Conclusions of *How Much More Will Students Pay?*, a report written by Institute of Education professor Anna Vignoles and based on an Opinionpanel Research survey of 37,000 people in their first term at university in either 2006, 2007, 2008 or 2009, include: if fees were increased to £5,000, 65 per cent of Russell Group students, 60 per cent of 1994 Group students and 52 per cent of University Alliance and Million+ Group students would be willing to pay; if fees were increased to £10,000, the percentages would be 30 (Russell Group), 27 (1994 Group), 24 (Million+) and 23 (Alliance); Vignoles maintains that the main factor governing

willingness to pay is students' perception of the earnings to which their course offers access; from this she argues that 'there is a case for the introduction of variable tuition fees within each institution'.

Points in a *TES* article on the Learning and Skills Network (LSN - the quango set up by the Government in 2006) include: at the start, LSN received a lot of consultancy contracts from the Quality Improvement Agency (QIA) but this has now stopped; in 2008-09 the LSN 'produced' a surplus of nearly £10m; the LSN has on its books about 50 'former college leaders and managers'; CEO John Stone plans to make money by hiring these people out to colleges that are in difficulty because of the cuts; he also plans to offer colleges outsourced IT services, financial management and the like; LSN is to form with Oxford and Cherwell Valley College a joint company which will take on from Thames Valley University (TVU) the liabilities and assets of the latter's Reading site (ie the former Reading College of Technology which TVU took over in the hopes of running FE courses but which has failed).

UCAS figures up to 22/1/10 show that: there have been 570,556 applicants for full-time undergraduate places, up 106,389 or 23 per cent, on 2009; among 21-24 year olds, applications have risen 45 per cent, and amongst over 25s by 63 per cent; 46,012 of this year's applicants also applied in 2009, up 46 per cent from a year before. If applications continue to come in at this rate, it is likely (*Guardian*) that more than 200,000 applications will be unsuccessful.

A report by the National Skills Forum, based on a six month inquiry into FE provision for offenders and ex-offenders, people with disabilities, and black and minority ethnic people, concludes that the target-driven nature of existing FE, with its emphasis on

ticking boxes to obtain qualifications, is failing people in these groups, and there is, in particular, 'a lack of so-called 'soft' employability skills' as demanded by local employers.

Within 24 hours of UCU members at Leeds University voting to support industrial actions if talks on job cuts fail, the talks break down.

Aberystwyth University is to 'restructure' its Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences, with the loss of 70 jobs.

In an open letter to schools and colleges, Ofqual chairperson Kathleen Tattersall warns them about an anomaly arising from the introduction this summer of the new A-level A* grade, such that some may achieve this even though their overall grades are lower than those of candidates not entered for it.

Points in a *THE* article on the HE research funding allocations announced last week, based on modelling by Thomson Reuters subsidiary Evidence, include: Oxford and Cambridge will together gain an extra £5m over last year; UCL, Imperial College, the LSE and Manchester University will also receive 'big cash windfalls'; some other Russell Group universities - Newcastle, Liverpool and Birmingham - plus 1994 Group member Leicester, will each lose about £500,000; teaching-led universities will almost certainly lose out.

In Rutland, a tense situation is developing around sixth-form reorganisation, as the LEA, having led two of the three state secondaries, Catmose College and Uppingham community College, to think they were consulting on a joint sixth form centre with the third, Casterton Business and Enterprise College, suddenly reveals that the proposed new, 480-student development, will be run by Casterton alone.

An Association of Graduate Recruiters (AGR) survey of 214 businesses indicates that graduate starting salaries are likely to remain at around £25,000, while vacancy rates are expected to fall by a further 1.6 per cent on top of last year's 9 per cent drop.

A Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) select committee report says that: . . . teachers with QTLS status [ie FE lecturers. Ed.] should immediately be able to work as a qualified teacher in schools if they are teaching post-16, even post-14, pupils'.

It emerges that Exeter University Business School has 'for several years' required students doing modules in microeconomics and financial accounting to sit exams managed by two private companies, Apla and Accounting Lab. To do this, the students have also been forced either to buy textbooks which cost about £50 per module or spend £17.00 on an IT code. Last year for the first time it was decided that final module grades would depend on students doing these tests, for which the University has now apologised.

It emerges via a speech given by LSC national projector director David Hughes at a Westminster Education Forum conference, held to allow 'principals, college leaders, local authorities, banks and property experts' to 'consider how FE institutions could renew old buildings without public funding', that the Treasury is holding back £210m of FE capital funding pending the outcome of a legal claim filed by Grimsby Institute of FHE in relation to the Building Colleges for the Future fiasco. (If the claim is successful, the LSC might have to compensate colleges for costs they incurred in making bids for capital funding.) At the same conference, Barclays 'national head of education' Chris Hearn maintains that colleges are 'generally in a good position to take on debt' (*TES*).

Figures cited at the conference suggest that half of the total FE estate still needs to be refurbished or replaced, that this would cost about £8bn, and banks think colleges could borrow £1.5-2bn of this from them.

In *More Fees, Please*, a report by the Tory Party-linked Policy Exchange think-tank, education director Anna Fazackerley proposes that students from well-off backgrounds should be barred from a public loans scheme but have the option to pay their HE fees in advance using private loans secured against major assets such as their parents' houses. The less well-off would be excluded from this scheme.

A paper produced jointly by the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Association of Directors of Children's Services, in response to the Government's consultation on the National Commissioning Framework (which sets out new planning and funding systems for 16-19 education after the LSC is wound up) hints that local authorities may seek powers of veto that they or the YPLA could use to over-rule colleges when local 16-19 education and training plans are being implemented.

London South Bank University vice-chancellor Martin Earwicker announces that the institution will not pay the national 0.5 per cent pay increase.

Swansea College and Gorseinon College are to merge, forming the 16,000-student Gower College Swansea, which will be the second largest FE college in Wales.

HEFCE announces that students pursuing equivalent or lower-level qualifications (ELQs) deemed ineligible for public funding under the Government's 2007 ruling, will, along with NHS- and Agency for Schools-funded students, be excluded from the cap on admissions to HE that will operate from 2010-11.

Week beginning 15/2/10

Plymouth University vice-chancellor Wendy Purcell, who is also an adviser to the BIS review of postgraduate provision, tells a UK Council for Graduate Education (UKCGE) conference, held at the British Library, that in its submission to the review the 1994 Group used 'a very skewed data set' to support the case for restricting PhD funding to elite institutions).

Points in a *TES* article on Grimsby Institute of F&HE include: principal Daniel Khan resigned unexpectedly towards the beginning of February 'to pursue other professional interests'; two days after this, Khan's resignation from directorships of several companies controlled by the college was also announced; three governors and four members of staff, including acting deputy principal Gill Alton, also resigned directorships at the same time; the college has controlled 20 businesses; one of these, Propeller TV, connected to Sky TV's satellite service, was set up on the promise of £5.2m of public money from the Yorkshire Forward organisation in 2006, but in 2008 declared losses of £130,000, and in 2009 was taken over by Chinese investors; another, the McMenemy's function suite as Grimsby Town FC, was bought from the club in 2004 and sold back in 2005 with a £15,000 loss; in 2007 the college bought Laceby Manor golf club for £365,000, which by July 2008 had declared losses of over £147,000; altogether these 'enterprises' have cost the college at least £250,000. (The former vice principal of Grimsby, Marilyn Hawkins, is now principal of Barnet College, where she is trying to make a £5m cut.)

Answering questions after a speech at Nottingham University, Lord Mandelson attacks the standpoint voiced on behalf of the Russell Group by its chairperson Michael Arthur and director-

general Wendy Piatt, suggesting that some of those criticising his cuts to HE 'think university teachers and lecturers have a right to be set in aspic in what they do and how they work'. He maintains also that it would be a mistake to 'guarantee every applicant a full-time place'.

A 157 Group policy paper calls for the closure of small sixth forms and advocates a model in which a college becomes the 'hub' (eg providing 14-19 diploma students with access to its workshops) and surrounding schools the 'spokes'. It also argues against the replacement of existing vocational qualifications by diplomas.

A HEFCE database released to the *Guardian* by an FOI tribunal reveals that as recently as two years ago: over 90 per cent of HE institutions had at least 10 per cent of their buildings below the level judged by HEFCE surveyors to be 'sound and operationally safe'; 10 per cent had some buildings judged inoperable and at a serious risk of breakdown; 25 per cent had at least 10 per cent of their estate in a condition judged unsuitable for current use.

A National Skills Forum report, *Doing Things Differently: Step Changes in Skills and Inclusion*, highlights the disruptive effect on prison education of 'churn' (the transfer of short term inmates from one jail to another), citing National Audit Office (NAO) figures which show that a third of prison education courses are not completed, and half of these non-completions result directly from transfer, at a cost of £30m a year.

In an echo of an earlier episode involving the whistleblower Aubrey Blumsohn and Richard Eastell, now head of Sheffield University's Academic Unit of Bone Metabolism, Guirong Jiang, a research radiologist whose contract with Sheffield has been terminated after 13 years, faces a disciplinary hearing over the allegation that

she submitted a paper to a symposium to be held by the European Calcified Tissue Society (to be held in Glasgow in June) without the approval of the pharmaceutical manufacturer Sanofi-Aventis. Jiang claims the research was done in 2002, when the contract was with Procter and Gamble, ie the company implicated in the attempt to sack Blumsohn.

A UCU analysis, based on figures from the 30 largest FE colleges, indicates that between 2006 and 2008 the number of staff earning more than £50,000 a year grew by a third, while the number of ordinary teaching staff grew by only 2.8 per cent.

Figures drawn by the *THE* from HE institutions' own published accounts for 2007-08 and 2008-09 (excluding staff paid partly by the NHS) show that in nearly all institutions the number of people earning over £100,000 rose. Examples include King's College London (currently cutting up to 205 jobs) where in 2008-09 44 non-clinical staff (and 202 staff altogether) earned at least £100,000, up from 188 the year before. At Oxford and Cambridge the equivalent increases were from 88 to 135 and from 89 to 122 respectively. 8 such staff at Oxford and 19 at Cambridge earned more than £150,000.

An Association of Learning Providers (ALP) policy paper, *Pre-employment Provision for Unemployed 16/17-year-olds*, maintains that the decision to subsume Entry to Employment (e2e) provision within Foundation Learning indicates that 'the state is not committed to the prospect of 16- and 17-year olds being in work', and calls for better financial support for unemployed people in this age group.

Released in response to a parliamentary question by Tory education shadow Michael Gove, figures about the 2006-07 destinations of

the 81,000 15-year olds receiving free school meals in 2002-03, show that: only 189 achieved three grade As at A-level; only 45 won places at Oxford or Cambridge; only 1 per cent went on to any Russell Group university. In contrast, 175 students at Eton College achieved 3 As at A-level in 2007, and 82 students from Westminster (private) School went to Oxford or Cambridge.

Essex County Council has given South East Essex Sixth Form College (SEEVIC), based in Benfleet, £6.5m towards the costs of building a campus for up to 350 vocational students on Canvey Island. (SEEVIC is thought to be the only 6th form college which is continuing in the FE sector.)

'Psychosocial Hazards in UK Universities: Adopting a Risk Assessment Approach', an article in *Higher Education Quarterly* by Bedfordshire University professor Gail Kinman, based on a survey, conducted with UCU support, of 10,000 people in academic and academic support jobs in mid 2008, reveals universities are failing to meet 'the majority of health and safety standards for managing work-related stress'.

Derby College of FE takes over South East Derbyshire College.

More than 1,000 members of staff and 885 students at Oxford University responded to a survey on 'race-equality' concluding in May 2009. Of 450 responding in detail, more than 75 per cent of whom were white, the majority of staff thought that nothing needed to be done, whereas significant proportions of both undergraduate and postgraduate students claimed to have experienced racism at Oxford.

Week beginning 22/2/10

Points in a *TES* feature on 14-19 provision in London from 1/4/10 include: the Regional Planning

Group (RPG) comprises the leaders of the 32 borough councils plus employers and 'other key stakeholders'; its director is Mary Vine-Morris; the RPG must conform to the requirements of the National Commissioning Framework (NCF); according to the LSC, about 600,000 people in London have no qualifications at all, and 55 per cent of these, in common with one third of London's overall population, are unemployed; almost 50 per cent of jobs in London are filled by graduates; in 2009-10 the LSC allocated nearly £940m to 16-19 provision in London, just under £497m for FE and £371m for school sixth forms; in 2007-08 97,825 people under 19 were FE students in London, 7,369 others were in work-based learning, and 63,441 were in school 6th forms; nearly 50 per cent of students attend institutions in boroughs other than those in which they live; 9 out of 10 16-18 year olds in London are in some form of 'learning', the highest proportion in any English region; the LSC estimates that in 2008-09 there were about 5,000 unfilled places at level 3 in colleges and schools in London.

A HEFCE report, *The Higher Education Workforce Framework 2010*, maintains that the post-1992 academic contract is 'creating inflexibility within institutional pay systems and interfering with their ability to control costs'.

Points in a *Guardian* article on the situation from 1/4/10 include: since 2008, 55 schools have been given the go-ahead to open 6th forms, as against 27 in the preceding nine years; from 1/4/10, 6th form colleges will have their performance managed by local authorities and will be eligible to compete for capital funding under the Building Schools for the Future programme; the principal of Henley (tertiary) College in Oxfordshire has written to schools secretary Ed Balls asking to be redesignated as a 6th form college; all but one of the existing 94 6th form colleges

are thought to have reconfirmed their status (the exception is SEEVIC).

Leaked to an independent student newspaper at Queen's University Belfast, a confidential report commissioned by Northern Ireland's Department for Employment and Learning reveals that the NI fees review panel, chaired by NI Institute of Directors head Joanne Stuart, will recommend that the cap on HE fees there should not be lifted.

In a *TES* interview, Sir Mike Tomlinson says the 'academic' 14-19 diplomas (in science, humanities and languages) are 'much less likely' to 'become the qualification of choice' than the vocational ones (ie because people will prefer A-levels). (The Blair government initiated diplomas when it rejected more far-reaching changes to curricula as recommended by Tomlinson.)

The UK's four HE funding councils have informed the HE Academy (HEA) - ie the body which funds 24 local centres intended to support the development of teaching and learning methods in different disciplines - that it should plan for a reduction of about 30 per cent in its core funding by 2012-13. (The £315m spent by HEFCE on funding 74 Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETLs) will also come to an end after five years in March 2010.)

The Skills Commission inquiry, headed by Sir Mike Tomlinson, recommends a single teaching qualification for school teachers and vocational staff in FE and the merger of the IFL with the General Teaching Council. The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) rejects the first of these findings, and IFL CEO Toni Fazaeli the second.

Northumbria University has opened a campus (for its school of design) in Islington. The University of East Anglia (UEA, in Norwich))

opened in January a study centre in the City of London, a joint venture with INTO, the outsourcing contractor that provides English for Academic Purposes. Glasgow Caledonian University plans to open a London campus (in September 2010 for 300 students) while Coventry University plans to open one in October, restricted to international students.

Science and Mathematics Education for the 21st Century, a report commissioned by the Government from the Science and Learning Expert Advisory Group, recommends that science A-levels test candidates' in-depth problem-solving skills and understanding of scientific concepts.

It emerges that a report from PA consulting, commissioned by the council of London University's Institute of Education and presented to them in December, has recommended that management ensure that members of staff in the Educational Foundations and Policy Studies Department are engaged in 'sufficient income-generating activity', and should consider compulsory redundancy for 'highly under-utilised staff' there. In 2008-09, this department lost £1.3m on a £2.2m revenue, despite being the Institute's strongest research department.

In its submission to the inquiry into young people not in education, employment or training, the AOC cites figures indicating that about 83,000 14 and 15 year olds currently spend some time in colleges, and that 4,500 are in FE full-time. It calls for everybody in this age group to be given the choice to go to college rather than school.

Up to 100 jobs are at risk as Aberystwyth University restructures its Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences.

An AOC survey based on returns from about a third of colleges

suggests that the funding per student in 2010-11 will be down by an average of 0.5 per cent across the country.

In a letter to universities, the HE Funding Council for Wales confirms that recurrent grant funding for 2010-11 is to be cut by 3.25 per cent in order to release £4m for Welsh Assembly HE priorities.

Figures circulated by the Conservative Party allegedly show that in 2009 32.6 per cent of those who took A-levels from private schools achieved three grade As, as against 8.1 per cent of those who took them from comprehensive schools. The equivalent figures for 1998 were 16.9 and 4.7 per cent respectively.

The Government has given Bradford College and Hull College Accredited Provider Status, which will allow them to run up to two schools each. Barnfield College (in Luton) which is already running two local academies, is authorised to run three or more.

The Macfarlane Report thirty years on

Robin Simmons *examines the effects of a key government decision not to back tertiary colleges*

Introduction

In England, education and training has always been related to social class - and as FE colleges have traditionally focused upon teaching the skills and knowledge for everyday occupations, this perhaps goes some way towards explaining their description as the 'Cinderella' of the education system. However, there was a moment, thirty years ago, when a rather different future for FE seemed possible, the now largely forgotten Macfarlane Report of 1980. This article argues that the rejection of the proposal made in Macfarlane's first draft - that a national system of tertiary colleges be established - represents a key lost moment for FE. Had the Report's initial recommendations been accepted, potentially, post-16 education in England could have been transformed.

Following the 1944 Education Act a statutory duty was placed upon local education authorities (LEAs) to provide 'adequate facilities' for further education in England. However, the way in which this responsibility was discharged depended, to some extent, upon local circumstances. Some LEAs created general FE colleges whilst other authorities provided separate technical colleges and adult education services. Elsewhere, others maintained separate mono-tech institutions catering for subject such as art and design, technology or construction. Cantor and Roberts (1972, 3) likened these arrangements to a patchwork quilt - due both to its varied and uneven pattern and the rather 'make do and mend' attitude that existed across the FE sector generally. From the early 1970s onwards, a combination of factors brought increasing pressure for change. The economic crisis following the OPEC oil boycott of 1973 and the ensuing collapse of many of the UK's traditional industries had significant consequences for FE; the supply of 'day-release' students that had traditionally provided colleges with the majority of their learners began to dry up. In response, FE started to embrace new

types of students, and many colleges began offering a broader range of vocational, pre-vocational and academic courses.

Falling school rolls complicated matters and this, in combination with reductions in funding, led many LEAs to reorganise their provision. As part of this process some authorities decided to concentrate sixth-form studies in certain secondary schools, leaving others to concentrate on 11-16 year-olds. Other authorities encouraged neighbouring schools to form sixth-form consortia, sharing staff, students and facilities; however, most of these rather complicated arrangements were fraught with logistical problems and were generally unsuccessful. Some LEAs chose to close all their school sixth-forms and create separate sixth-form colleges as an alternative. This model offered greater clarity of structure and sixth-form colleges were able to offer a broader range of courses than school sixth-forms. However, there was another option - going tertiary . . .

Going tertiary

Under a truly tertiary structure young people of all abilities progress from local schools to a single organisation providing a broad, inclusive curriculum. Tertiary colleges also serve the needs of adult students and provide a wide range of education and training opportunities to the community more generally. Full-time and part-time courses, vocational, pre-vocational and academic education all take place within one institution: traditionally divergent streams of education and training are united. In their purest form, tertiary colleges are the sole providers of publicly-funded post-16 education in any given area, except that located in establishments of higher education.

Research undertaken by the Responsive College Unit (RCU 2003) provides compelling evidence about the educational advantages offered by tertiary colleges. Drawing comparisons between tertiary,

general FE and sixth-form colleges, the RCU found tertiary colleges to have higher achievement rates at almost all levels of study. In addition, tertiary colleges have significantly better retention rates than general FE colleges, with levels almost as high as those of sixth-form colleges - despite a far wider curriculum and a more inclusive ethos. The RCU's research also found that a genuinely tertiary structure helps to increase overall participation rates, especially for those students from relatively deprived backgrounds.

England's first tertiary college was established in 1970 when Devon LEA abolished school sixth-forms in Exeter and created a single post-16 college in their place. Some other authorities followed suit and by the end of the decade there were fifteen such institutions across England. One significant advantage offered by tertiary re-organisation was cost-effectiveness: 'going tertiary' offered a pragmatic option as the public purse tightened. Somewhat ironically, given their ideological hostility towards the principles of comprehensive education, Conservative-controlled LEAs, particularly those in rural LEAs with small, unviable sixth-forms and under-used FE colleges, were amongst the first to establish tertiary colleges. In contrast, tertiary re-organisation made less progress in the large, mainly Labour-controlled urban authorities. Many Labour councillors believed that allowing comprehensive schools to have their own sixth-forms would provide an equitable system in place of grammar schools. Some schoolteachers argued there would be a drop in standards in schools without sixth-forms. Often parents worried about the 'freedoms' offered by the more mature environment found outside schools (Allen and Ainley, 53).

The Macfarlane Report

In 1979 the incoming Conservative government set up a post-16 working party under the chairmanship of the Under-Secretary of State for Education, Neil Macfarlane. The group's terms of reference included: a survey of work already carried out by local authorities in rationalising post-16 education; an assessment of future demand for various types of education and training; an examination of the relationship between schools and FE colleges; and a consideration of the cost-effectiveness of existing provision. The Macfarlane Committee found a range of evidence in favour of tertiary re-organisation. This included the ability of tertiary colleges to offer a wider programme of full-time and part-time courses than is possible through other arrangements; potential cost savings through the

rationalisation of existing provision; and the opportunity for young people to select, without bias, the courses best suited to their needs (Macfarlane 1980, 31). Consequently, Macfarlane initially recommended, for both educational and cost reasons, that a national system of tertiary colleges should be created. This was a radical proposal with potentially far-reaching consequences and, if implemented, it would have meant the dissolution of school sixth-forms and sixth-form colleges across England. Schools would have lost their most prized work to FE and the balance of power between the two sectors would have altered significantly. The 'Cinderella service' would, for the first time, have been brought into the mainstream of state education and the ethos of comprehensive education would have been extended to the post-compulsory level.

Senior figures in the Conservative Party were alarmed at Macfarlane's proposals and, following the intervention of Lady Young on behalf of the Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, Macfarlane was forced to climb down (David 1981, 764). Consequently, although the final draft of the Macfarlane Report recognised both the significant advantages offered by tertiary colleges and the drawbacks of alternative arrangements, it recommended only that LEAs consider tertiary re-organisation in light of their own local circumstances. A national tertiary policy was thought impracticable because of 'the realities of existing investment', 'local preferences' and the claimed 'success of many 'all through' schools' (Macfarlane, 1980, 36). Under strong pressure from above, effectively Macfarlane fudged the issue of tertiary re-organisation (Ainley 1999).

Nevertheless, some local authorities pressed on with tertiary reorganisation and by the early 1990s almost 70 tertiary colleges had been established. However, few of these new institutions could be regarded as tertiary in a pure sense. Often school sixth-forms and sometimes sixth-form colleges were allowed to exist alongside so-called tertiary colleges. Furthermore, the lack of a national policy meant that, even in the few areas where a fully tertiary model was implemented, competition for students with institutions in neighbouring authorities undermined the tertiary principle. The 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) made tertiary reorganisation considerably more difficult. One provision of the ERA was the creation of Grant Maintained (GM) status, which allowed some schools to opt out of local authority control. GM schools were empowered to set up sixth-forms when previously LEA control may have prevented this. The threat of leaving LEA control could also be used by schools as a defence against the prospect of any future tertiary reorganisation. Later, following the 1992 F

and HE Act, LEAs lost virtually all responsibility for further education and the possibility of future tertiary reorganisation was effectively extinguished.

Conclusion

Unequal possession of economic, social and cultural capital gives unequal access to different forms of education. Political decisions since the 1980s have ensured that those holding more of the various forms of capital have experienced continued advantage in gaining access to privileged forms of education. Institutional competition and 'consumer' choice inherently advantage those most able to use market powers in their favour. However, had Macfarlane's initial recommendation been implemented this would have helped to create a more coherent, transparent institutional framework for post-compulsory education. Rather than promoting competition and duplication between providers, national tertiary reorganisation would have encouraged institutional cooperation. The effects of commercialisation and marketisation that have been experienced so keenly over the past two decades could have been diluted. The potential to extend opportunities normally reserved for the privileged would have been increased through a broad, comprehensive system of tertiary colleges. Students would have been given access to a wider range of courses and greater flexibility in both the number and type of subjects available to them. The potential to begin to break down, or at least reduce, the barriers between academic education and applied training would have been possible. The creation of a national system of tertiary colleges may have gone some way towards reducing the inherent inequalities that characterise the English educational system.

Perhaps the Macfarlane report represents a key moment for FE that has been lost forever. The economic and political climate of the last thirty years has certainly been hostile to the ideals of comprehensive education. However, the future may still offer a glimmer of opportunity for the tertiary ideal. From April 2010, English local authorities will resume responsibility for planning and funding education and training for 16-18 year-olds. This, in combination with the severe reduction in public spending again taking place, could mean that tertiary reorganisation may yet return to the agenda. However, as we have seen, for the tertiary movement to succeed, a national policy of reorganisation is necessary. Despite the demonstrable educational and cost advantages offered by tertiary colleges, this would require a sea-change not only in educa-

tion policy but in dominant social and political ideology more broadly.

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Responsible recruiting

Tim Kearns *looks at the role of information, advice and guidance in the Sixth Form interview*

On 27th February, the Institute of Career Guidance (ICG) was reported as having warned that the Government's focus on NEETs (young people not in employment, education or training) had left a huge gap in provision for mainstream pupils. Careers advice across the UK was criticised for being 'patchy and inconsistent'; but this is by no means a new problem. We were warned four years ago that 'Despite being part of the statutory curriculum, careers education is still in a relatively weak position in the school curriculum' (Andrews, 2006).

Inconsistencies in information, advice and guidance (IAG) for young people approaching school leaving age have a well documented history. In 1973, the phasing in of trained careers teachers was 'often poor and patchy' (Ward, 1983, p121). The launch of the National Curriculum in 1988 made no reference to careers education, only months after the government had placed this at the centre of a well planned curriculum (Harris, 1992, p165). Even four years after the 1997 Education Act made it a requirement that all schools should provide a minimum programme of careers education and provide access to impartial careers information, it was reported that its impact was seen as comparatively insignificant by careers service staff (Morris, Rickinson and Davis, 2001, p7). Right now the ICG is campaigning for the realisation of everyone's potential 'through universal, targeted and high quality careers provision with consistent standards across the UK' as part of its CREATE campaign (see website).

It is telling that the majority of complaints about careers education are coming from the careers service providers themselves. Understandably, many find their work frustrating, complicated by schools' more urgent priorities crowding out the place of education for careers (ibid., Andrews 2006). In such a climate, the single event careers

interview cannot provide the breadth of information required by young people approaching school leaving age. If it could, there would be no problem, given that the Connexions Customer Information Service (CCIS) reports that 94 per cent of pupils in 2008 had received some kind of an intervention before they left compulsory education.

Information, advice and guidance, as conceived by the DCSF (2009, p10), 'helps young people make informed choices about the learning pathway that is right for them and the career opportunities they might pursue'. But the implementation of this has been devolved to local authorities, with Connexions at the delivery end of the chain. So even in the last year the DCSF has recognised that 'different models have been followed across local authorities' which 'share the *potential* for providing more coherent services' (ibid., p12 - my italics TK). So whilst the proportion of young people not in employment, education or training has continued to fall, mainstream careers information, advice and guidance remains sporadic.

It is for this reason that the teaching unions' response to the recent warnings causes concern. If, as they have reportedly suggested, their members should not be expected to be employment experts as well as teachers, where are our young people to turn for guidance in their final year of compulsory education?

I have recently finished interviewing a number of applicants for a new sixth form centre that is opening in my school in September this year. I have been impressed by the extent to which young people from a number of schools have a good idea of their progress and grade projections across a range of subjects. Less reassuring, however, is the fact that a significant number of interviewees are wholly uncertain about the combination of courses that will equip them for the careers they are looking to follow. Information, advice and guidance ought to

be a 'cumulative, active process, rather than passive or merely a single event', reflecting the way that 'people want to access information and advice' (Ibid., p14). 'Trusted individuals' are the first people to whom young people turn, and so it is crucial that all sixth form centres and colleges recognise the important role they play in preparing them for effective economic participation.

One of the reasons for the 'patchiness' of careers guidance over the last half-century has been the conflict between the demands of an 'individualist' ideology, (whereby careers guidance is aimed at the self-realisation of young people) and an 'economic ideology' (whereby careers guidance is aimed at fulfilling the needs of the labour market) (Ward, 1983, p123). In making offers to good sixth form applicants, it is easy to permit course combinations that enable students to study a range of subjects in which they are interested, which simultaneously fail completely to prepare them for economic participation on their own terms.

Applicants need to understand that the courses for which they are applying are already narrowing their options for higher education, and if they haven't set about choosing these courses with an end goal in mind, they run the risk of being disappointed later on. Our job is not to defer disappointment by allowing young people to study what they want now where this is clearly at odds with their aspirations. The sixth form interview enables teachers to ask the questions that will put young people on course for full economic participation, if only they are willing to plan for this.

Questions I ask every applicant create opportunities for discussion around the following areas:

Longer-term plans. Students need to be able to demonstrate how much they know about their chosen career path, and that they have already researched this and are aware of alternative careers they could pursue should their 'plan A' fail to be realised.

Corroborating judgements will have been sought from HE institutions or potential employers. Impressively, a number of students are already in a position to answer this question positively; but for those who are not, I'll often go online during the interview and look at a couple of university websites to show the student undergraduate admissions requirements. This may necessitate a change of course choices, and in some cases may have a real impact on the student's GCSE performance if he/she realises that some courses will look back as far as attainment at GCSE.

Enrichment plans. Because my sixth form is offering timetabled enrichment time once a week, I am able to encourage students to identify means by which they can demonstrate a commitment to a

subject or vocation other than through the courses they have studied. Some students will be steered towards a work placement, others to coaching awards. Some students will be advised that an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) will enable them to demonstrate commitment by studying something not available as a course choice. Students should go away from this discussion with something to do or find out to ensure that they are making informed choices about how their planned enrichment is rolled out.

By taking applicants through these issues, I am able to lead them to an understanding of the implications of their choices for their aspirations. Teachers should also be aware that the Connexions website (www.connexions-direct.com) and helpline (080 800 13 2 19) are excellent sources of information for students who feel they need more information.

The Tellus 3 survey conducted by Ofsted which reported in September 2008 asked young people in years 8 and 10 the question: 'What do you think of the information and help you get to plan your future?' 28 per cent said this was good enough, 42 per cent said they needed a little more information and advice, 20 per cent said they needed a lot more information and advice, and 10 per cent said they didn't know what information and advice there was.

The year eight students in question will be applying to colleges and sixth forms in the next academic year. If they remain unconvinced that the interventions they have received have helped them to plan their future, they will be relying on their interviewers to ensure that they have chosen the correct path for their respective aspirations. Whatever the teaching unions advise in regard to the expertise teachers can bring to careers conversations, we are all of us better off when young people are realising their ambitions whilst planning for full economic participation.

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Jane Andrews

Jane Andrews, who has died recently, came to Tottenham College of Technology (now CHENEL) in the mid 1970s, where she worked as a politics lecturer in the A-level section which was attached to the Science Department.

She was a member of the NATFHE branch committee during the 1978-79 'winter of discontent' when NUPE and G&M members in the London Borough of Haringey, including caretakers at the college, took strike action aimed at ending low pay. During this action, which lasted about six weeks and came under daily attack from the national media, the college was closed, although some exam-year students were taught in rented premises off-site. Branch support for the caretakers' action involved committee members in regular picketing at the college and elsewhere, as well as frequent meetings, in all of which Jane played a full part, as she did also in the concurrent struggle over the sacking of West Ham College branch chairperson John Regan for his role in the attempt to win merger of the two lowest lecturing pay scales.

Jane was heavily involved in the attempt to achieve a higher level of democracy in the Labour Party which began in this period and continued well into the 1980s, and also became an increasingly outspoken opponent of the oppression of women.

In the 1990s Jane left Tottenham, which by that time had become part of the College of NE London, to be vice principal of Tower Hamlets College. After this she worked for a time at Greenwich University, and then went to the University of East London as head of a newly formed FE teacher training section.

Although I was not in contact with Jane during the last years of her life, my understanding is that she faced her prolonged fatal illness with the same courage which she displayed as a union and political fighter in the 1970s and 80s.

Colin Waugh



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