LEARNING LIVES CONFERENCE 26 March 2014 QUESTIONS FROM DELEGATES
AN EMERGENT RESEARCH AGENDA

Questions/comments raised by delegates on their index cards are listed below. Those questions that are addressed to specific speakers will be forwarded to the speaker for comment.

Themes and Big Questions

I have grouped the questions under broad themes and also drawn out of these a set of questions which seem to underlie all the other questions. We propose to use these questions as the basis for a research agenda and over the next few months we will invite you to offer your views on some of the big question. We will compile responses into a set of Working Papers and in this way we hope to progress our collective understandings of the issues and challenges associated with lifewide learning and the means by which it can be supported and recognised in Universities and Colleges. If you like to actively participate in this process please let me know.

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BIG QUESTIONS

Q1 Is lifewide learning an agenda for the university sector?

Q2 Is it the role of universities to encourage self-authorship (or lifewide learning) or is this a step too far, bordering on intrusion into students' personal lives?

Q3 How can university programmes for the 21st century address academic, vocational and personal development in an appropriately balanced measure?

Q4 What are the ethical issues relating to lifewide learning and to award schemes that seek to recognise lifewide learning and personal development?

Q5 What strategies can be adopted to overcome the practical and financial implications of scaling up student award schemes?

Q6 Who should be responsible for designing and managing student award schemes or lifewide learning and personal development more generally?

Q7 How do we persuade students and colleagues that self-reflection is an essential complement to academic study?

Q8 Is self-directed learning a realistic proposal for undergraduate programmes of study?

Q9 What is the relationship, if any, between lifewide learning and open learning? How do we encourage university colleagues and students to engage with open learning?

Q10 How can lifewide learning be harnessed to enhance personal development 'from cradle to grave'?

QUESTIONS FROM THE CONFERENCE

QUESTION/COMMENT
Encouraging engagement and appreciation of value
How do we go about breaking down hostility from the students and colleagues who only know and respect informational learning and would be suspicious of self-authorship?
How can we get colleagues to look beyond their own course and engage in open and shared learning?
What can be done to persuade academics that they benefit both directly and indirectly from lifewide learning undertaken by their tutees?
How can you help students to see the value of reflection for example when engaging in skills awards etc?
Where do students see their learning for wide/long lives taking place? Do students want their academic programme to do more?
I am interested in how the agenda for 'student engagement' could be reconceptualised through the framework of lifewide learning – as it seems to me that self-authorship/reflexion/reflection can/does lead to increased engagement.
How far does lifewide education, and particularly self authorship, necessitate <u>challenging</u> students and staff – perhaps towards a perspective that 'the more we learn, the less we realise we know'?
How to reach the students who are rather diffident about exploring/revealing/engaging?

QUESTION/COMMENT
Verification and validation and award administration
What ways and means have colleagues found to streamline the messy process of verifying and validating evidence required to reach QA standards for accreditation?
Can you give any examples of how to make an award scaleable with limited resources
Cost of initiatives (LeedsforLife) hard to measure but management now want to see return on investment so how can we measure the value of these awards (or demonstrate value)?
The Student Union movement has a history of developing students/student skills. Now it is being coordinated/professionalised. What is the role of Student Unions/NUS in lifelong learning?
Are personal tutors the key or the problem when it comes to lifewide learning, or both?
Do universities need to consider a consistent approach to describe awards? Extra-curricular, skills, employability awards very confusing for all stakeholders – student, staff and employers.
How do I ensure <u>all</u> our students get some <u>meaningful</u> learning by doing work experience/work based learning when there are so many of them? And how do we support them all? Next year 250 students doing 20 credits in their final year as core curriculum learning.
How have student award schemes been evaluated in respect of their usefulness beyond higher education?

What happened to 'pastoral' care? Used to be part of an academic job….
What is the relationship of uni support of lifewide engagement and the NSS? Does uni strategy support some and not other activities? If that is the case, any national policy?

QUESTION/COMMENT
Inclusivity
Extra-curricular activities advantage the already advantaged. How can those who are carers, need to work FT and/or have other commitments and constraints be credited for those experiences? Choices in the future are shaped by past experiences and skills, knowledge and confidence – this should promote equality of opportunity to and of learning but the opposite seems more lively as the day has progressed
What research evidence do we have of the accessibility of participation in award schemes for equality groupings(i.e. students from 'non-traditional backgrounds' and those covered under the 2010 Equality Act).
How can we ensure that these students are supported to become lifewide learners?
Process not award
Lifewide NOT Award Wide – learning to learn. Why have we got stuck inn awards and employability rather than the joy of learning of and for itself? Transformation of people rather than feeding the capitalist machine – HE has allowed itself to be sucked into the right wing agenda of education to generate profit
How can recognition of lifewide learning help students and learners to step outside the system and create a real change in approaches to learning and to change in society
Please explore other modes for validation of lifewide learning
What is the risk of stifling creativity by making co-curricular activities assessed and/or accredited?
Does this raise the question: what is the purpose of a university today?
Are Awards stuck in the HE past by their need to clothe themselves in the academic language of credits, regulations, assessment?
How might we integrate the learning in co-curricular lifewide informal processes with the formalised credit-bearing curriculum?
What is the role of university student charters in supporting students to develop their personal goals, voice and narrative whilst studying in HE?

QUESTION/COMMENT
Self-directed learning
MOOCs etc. Is there any risk in people learning only what they want to learn? Google gives you the info it thinks you want but can narrow a person's understanding of the world – does self-directed learning carry this same risk? If it is a risk!
How do we help people to be sufficiently confident and goal oriented to develop and sustain a learning narrative?
We talked a lot about lifewide learning for students. How about staff? Is there an opportunity or need to see lifewide learning more holistically. For all, for

personal and collective and self-authorship. Could/would this then mean that we all become and are co-learners and what changes would this trigger for learning and teaching?
Developing the capacity for self-authorship. I have been developing a behavioural approach to developing this capacity in students. Do you know of others taking this approach?
Do you see lifewide learning taking full-time/centre stage in the informal/non-formal education sector soon? If so, how?
Should we be worried if first/second year students don't exhibit much 'self-authorship'/'self-awareness'? Isn't this something that develops over different timescales in different people – and this may take some years. Do not most people get there anyway – sooner or later?
Do learning ecologies have the potential to improve the attainment, retention and employability of particular groups? (BME, disabled) In other words, can lifewide learning act as a carrot to wider strategic issues in institutions?
Do students continue to build their learning ecologies using the mechanisms provided on these schemes?

QUESTION/COMMENT
Transferable learning
Content Based Information dependent learning limits the capacity for transferable learning and applications. How should schools and unis address this from a social and developmental learning perspective?
What needs to be done/when will policy change within school educational processes to allow the development of next generations to really meet the needs they will be faced with? B4 they get to Uni!
Given the complexity of education to employment transition, how do we better scaffold learning experiences that embrace the vocational, academic and work-based models of lifewide learning?
Other
Are we using technology to best effect in supporting student self-authorship/personal and professional development? Where are good examples and where are the gaps? Is there a need to share practice?
PhD thesis on: The application of lifewide learning to establish a theoretical framework for Network Based Learning for the Humanitarian Community, with the incorporation of pracademics was well as the exploration of the mentor/protégée relationship
Is the agenda here not somewhat intrusive? ('surveillance society')i.e. inviting/encouraging students to reveal what has been private and personal aspects of their being?
For Christine Redecker
Where is the place of older workers in the workplace in this new world of learning? I'm talking of 55+ - given we're all working until the age of 70 across EU.
Open learning- a point was raised that 90% of participants drop out – how do we perhaps take account of learner anxiety towards information technology(ies) as they engage and share and draw upon their lifewide experiences and embark on a potential self-authorship journey? I am thinking in particular about mature students/adult learners who are nervous around using IT platforms and opening up online

QUESTION/COMMENT
For Sarah Campbell
Your university has chosen NOT to offer an award for co/extra-curricular development and achievement. (a) Has there been any sense amongst students that they are missing out on what other universities offer? (b) Why/how else do they get co/extra-curricular development and demonstrate it?
For Aberdeen STAR award
If students don't do STAR award, how is their achievement of the Aberdeen graduate attributes assessed? Do all students have to demonstrate achievement of attributes to graduate? If so, how else can student develop employability attributes?
For Marcia Baxter Magolda
Marcia offered a model of challenge and support for a learning partnership. This requires a human relationship, like that between a coach and a client/coachee (or between a leader and a developing leader). (1) Who has benefited from such a relationship? How? (As the one challenged and supported or vie versa?) (2) How does technology fit in with the human side?

JW

09 April 2014