

Higher education as a driver of competitiveness

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Traditional higher education

- Based on medieval concept of scholarship
- Somewhat detached from the workplace and the market
- Main emphasis on the humanities and mathematics
- Somewhat elitist in social terms
- Little or no emphasis on transferable skills, although small numbers facilitated good personal training



Drivers of change

- Dramatic demand for new labour
- Growth of skills requirements
- Need to bring economically inactive people into the labour force
- Need for greater alignment between education/training and labour market needs
- Changes in technology
- Emergence of the 'triple helix'
- Globalisation



The tasks for HE

- Take education much more off the campus (incl internships)
- Prioritise interdisciplinarity
- Develop bespoke programmes for relevant groups
- Make education much more technology friendly
- Create economic value through research and its commercialisation
- Help to create the 'new employee' and the 'new entrepreneur'
more educated, flexible, assertive/flexible, technology-aware
- Promote access and inclusion



Questions and dilemmas

- What is the optimum level of participation in HE?
- How 'vocational' can we let educational programmes become?
- What is the role of the humanities?
- How can we nurture entrepreneurial skills?
- To what extent should universities become enterprises in their own right?
- How do we pay for it all?

