Diversity in the sector – challenges and opportunities

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The Public Private Divide – Reality or Chimera

- The Media believe it – public good, private bad
- Many academics in the UK believe it
- The Unions condemn it
- The public don’t understand it
- The rest of the world is puzzled by our view
- The government don’t believe it – some public good – more, good, private better

Where does the funding come from?

- Government (the Taxpayer) - but only relatively recently
- UK and EU fees
- International student fees
- Commercial activities and patent exploitation
- Endowment funds
- Shareholders

Does the source of the funding matter or should we judge on other criteria?

By what should we measure the provision of Higher Education?

- Quality
- Meeting or Exceeding Benchmarks
- Access
- Student Experience
- Learning Outcomes
- Employability
- Research
- International Reputation
- Economic Contribution
- Sustainability
- Profit?

In reality there are two parallel strands, public and private, each of which can offer real benefits to students, employers and the UK economy but the real difference between institutions is not between but within the strands.

Publicly funded by 20% – 70%:	Privately funded
Low end FE Colleges and poor post ‘92s	Visa mills
Good FE providers and reasonable post 92s	Low cost private providers
Million + group universities	‘International Universities’
1994 group and high end post ‘92s	For Profit Providers with degree powers
Prestige specialist and conservatoire institutions	Private not for profit Providers with Degree Powers
Russell group	Elite providers with international reputation

REGENT'S COLLEGE

Regent’s College

A leading, independent, not-for-profit, Higher Education Institution

Regent’s College Brand Values

- Small
- High contact hours, low student/staff ratio
- Elite
- Boutique
- First class student experience
- International
- Intimate Single Campus
- Central location
- Secure and discrete
- Broad portfolio
- Teaching focussed but research informed

Regent’s College Profile

- C.3000 FTE students on degree programmes
- Selecting not recruiting
- Broad portfolio
- Strong language provision
- 70/30 undergraduate postgraduate split
- Diverse student base including c.50% non EU
- Top decile international fees for all
- High employability
- Excellent, well located, campus and facilities
- Bursary scheme for access
- >100 international partners for exchange
- Strong research programme

Regent’s College Dilemmas

- Criteria for selecting students
- Brand Values
- International student cap
- Growth – naturally or through collaboration, merger or acquisition
- Fee levels
- Public benefit
- Location

Royal Agricultural College

- a specialist institution since 1845
- in the public sector since (only) 2001
- a member of GuildHE

Royal Agricultural College

Diversity: some background

- Browne, CSR, Ministerial statement, White Paper …….
- …….much change and uncertainty ahead of the HE Bill
- removal of direct public funding for teaching certain courses
- restriction on publically funded student numbers
- direction of travel towards greater involvement of the private sector
- but preferably as partners rather than competitors?

Opportunities

- increased provision of HE
- diversity of provision
- partnerships
- private providers skill set - expertise in marketing, understanding the consumer
- shared services (outsourcing etc)

Some questions and challenges

- access to public funds through loans (and grants)?
- access to student numbers?
- quality assurance of UK HE provision?
- subject coverage?
- widening participation?
- private provision outside London?
- representation of private providers?
- is the distinction relevant any more?
- (profit v. not-for-profit?)

END