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Meeting the demand for flexible and blended learning

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the brighter choice

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Context: the HE landscape 2012

- Impact of new funding arrangements.
  - Active participation in learning
  - Value for money
  - Completion and ‘time taken’
- Access to SLC loans for part-time students
- Accelerated provision – full-time and part-time (and funding implications)
- Economic climate – employer focus

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What is ‘the demand’?

- Support:
  - Direct learning activities
  - Supported learning
  - Advice and Guidance
  - Personal support and advocacy
  - Feedback
  - Access to resources

And what are the challenges?

- Balancing the needs of all learners
  - When to deliver, how to deliver, where to deliver?
- Resource implications:
  - Designing learning materials
  - 24/7 access
  - Managed support frameworks
  - Learning materials

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‘Virtual’ and ‘blended’ learning

- Learning or support?
  - Support activities
  - Tutor or peer?
- Is the VLE dead?
- Platform or device?
- Support for support …
- Feedback

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What are we all doing about it?

- Frameworks for learning
  - Credit structures and funding
- Multi-mode delivery
- ‘Bite size’ and ‘block’
- Augmented learning
- Blended support
- Expectation management

And the future?

- Clarify the nature of delivery – not necessarily targeted on learning styles
- Focus on the development of the learner as a critical entity – self-confidence and peer support
- Lobby BIS to focus on self-managed pathways and differential experience
- Meet the delivery and reporting challenges!

How will this change us?

- Better appreciation of all forms of experiential learning
- Flexible course structures – change pace, change mode, step on, step off
- Blended support replaces ‘office hours’ – managed networks, pro-active advice and guidance
- Less reliance on credit structures and more on levels of achievement – progression points and award standards