Understanding Higher Education in Further Education Colleges

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BIS one-year research study (2011-12)

To investigate four claims using evidence from:

- analysis of literature + administrative data
- interviews with colleges + partner universities
- survey of undergraduate students (N=2523)
- Interviews with employers (N=101)

http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/higher-education/docs/u/12-905-understanding-higher-education-in-further-education-colleges.pdf

Claim and conclusions [1]

Expanding provision √

- past flat, future modest
- significant growth in some individual FECs
- complementary rather than competitive

<u>but</u>

- dependent on policy + economy

Claim and conclusions [2]

Widening participation√√√

- older, more PT, broader entry, larger LPN
- local = accessible
- smaller classes = personal pedagogy

<u>but</u>

- narrow (vocational) progression

Claim and conclusions [3]

Promoting flexibility √√

- pressure to meet changing demands
- need to satisfy external requirements
- wide range of higher education ‘products’

<u>but</u>

- at expense of coherence and strategy

Claim and conclusions [4]

Encouraging cost-effectiveness √√

- lower teaching and infrastructure costs
- flatter management
- some costs displaced to HEIs

<u>but</u>

- fewer economies of scale