The Evolution of Technical Higher Education

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Wiltshire College
& University Centre
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Wiltshire College and University Centre – Case Study

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The Drivers Behind Change

The UK is facing serious productivity and recruitment challenges

Weak productivity growth – caused by poor skills levels of younger workers amongst other things

“Supply shock” heading UK’s way due to decreased numbers of EU nationals

Increase in hard-to-fill vacancies, at all skills levels, across all sectors
The Higher Skills Agenda

- Government’s Industrial Strategy
- Employers developing a whole-workforce strategy centring on better skills development and progression for existing staff
- Apprenticeships and the Apprenticeship Levy
- Supporting SMEs to adopt new technologies and new business techniques with necessary skills training
- Getting more people into Higher Education in RELEVANT areas – be in Degrees, HNDs, Degree Apprenticeships, Levels 4-7 qualifications
- LEPs, Employers, Education and Training Providers, Local Authorities working together
Context for Technical HE

- Office for Students (OfS) very new/ FE registration
- Demographic dip resulting in more unconditional offers (HEIs) and incentives
- Financial pressures on both FE and HE
- Augar Review – interim report due February?
- Technical qualification reforms underway (progression)
- Apprenticeships a government priority
- Opportunities/challenges for college and university partnerships
- LEPs – Skills strategies including HE Strategies
- Colleges HE growth strategies in line with local economic priorities?
Technical Higher Education

• Business growth creating more professional jobs

• A large number of jobs in sectors that rely on vocational education and qualifications (levels 3 and 4)

• A mismatch between skill and qualifications needed by employers and those held by the workforce

• Successive government focus on expanding HE with little attention to vocational education or employer demand

• STEM shortages, Health and Social Care

• Careers Advice and Guidance will have a key role to play

• Employers need to engage in workforce skilling
Timeline of Policy Relating to Degree Apprenticeships in England

2011

2012
Richard Review of Apprenticeships. Situation in England is different from Europe, where apprenticeships are not regarded as poorer than university. Apprenticeships should be redefined.

2014
Degree apprenticeships announced by coalition government.

2015
Degree apprenticeships available from September 2015.
Conservative government pledges to create 3 million apprenticeships by 2020.
Apprenticeship Levy introduced.

2017
UK vs Europe

• Large majorities chose vocational training over academic higher education (*9000 citizens across eight countries 2014*)

• UK Employers train less and invest less in skills than most other EU countries (half the amount)

• England and Northern Ireland together rank in the bottom four OECD countries for literacy and numeracy among 16-24 year olds

• UK is sleepwalking into a low-value, low-skills economy post-Brexit (CIPD)
Wiltshire College and University Centre

Higher Education Strategy – a case study
The College & University Centre in 2018

• An Ofsted rated ‘good’ college in a financially challenged sector but in an economically buoyant county/LEP area
• A culture of high standards and expectations; staff well on the journey to outstanding
• An excellent reputation with stakeholders and seen as a key player in the region’s economy - schools, universities, council, SWLEP, employers, the military
• Curriculum developments in line with the local economic priorities eg Life Sciences, Engineering and at higher level
• Significant apprenticeship growth, preferred provider for priority sectors eg NHS
• Student destinations excellent
• £22m of LEP government funding awarded for capital investment
• Delivering a robust strategic plan
The campuses

- 4 main campuses
- Castle Combe – BSc Motorsport Engineering
- Geographical and logistical challenges!
Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership Economic Growth

SWLEP Growth Zones:
- Swindon/M4
- A350/M4
- A36/A303

Significant skills shortages
The SWLEP approach

- Skills at the heart of Swindon and Wiltshire LEP Strategic Plan
- Skills at the heart of the Local Industrial Strategy
- SWLEP Skills and Talent sub group/Skills Advisory Panel

The SWLEP Skills Strategy:

- Apprentices - all levels
- Higher Education – new higher level programmes in economic priority areas, STEM
- Careers – new Careers Hub investment
- Institute of Technology current bid, STEM
- Further Education and new higher level provision - infrastructure investment for life sciences and advanced engineering
Strategic Plan – launched 2015/16 (refreshed annually to ensure fit for purpose and aligned to the improvement trajectory)
Building the HE Strategy

Strategic Plan Refreshed Annually

QAA Higher Education Review

LEP Higher Education Strategy

Wiltshire College
Higher Education Strategy 2017-20

HE Student Engagement

Academic Partnership Review

Labour Market Information

Employer Engagement

Area Based Reviews

Delivering the Higher Education Strategy
HE Strategy

Growth:
The College will grow its Higher Education numbers by:

• Developing HE courses that meet local industry need and LEP priorities
• Removing courses that have no demand or relevance
• Developing appropriate HEI partnerships
• Offering courses in full and part time routes
• Developing higher and degree apprenticeships
• Ensuring programmes are developed to encourage wider participation from the community
• Mapping the student journey from level 3
• Ensuring multiple entry routes
Quality Provision

Our HE courses are validated by 5 universities and 1 awarding body:
Higher Level Courses at Wiltshire College & University Centre

- Degrees
- Foundation Degrees
- HNDs/HNCs
- Higher Apprenticeships
- Professional Qualifications
Our current Higher Level curriculum:

- AAT (accounting)
- Animal Science and Management
- Applied Computing
- Business and Management
- Certificate in Education
- Computing
- Computer Games Animation
- Computing & Systems
- Development
- Criminal Justice
- Early Childhood Studies
- Early Years Care & Education
- Electrical/Electronic Engineering
- Engineering
- Film & Cinematography
- Health & Social Care
- Human Resource Management
- Leadership and Management
- Motorsport Engineering
- Photography
- Psychotherapeutic counselling
- Social Work
- Sport
Curriculum in development:

- Life Sciences*
  - Applied Science
  - Applied Science (foundation year)
  - Biomedical Science
  - Environmental Science with Sustainability
  - Forensic Science
  - Health and Nutrition
  - Pharmaceuticals

- Agri-Tech
  - Agricultural Technology (Crop Science)
  - Agricultural Technology (Engineering)
  - Agricultural Technology (Livestock Science)
  - Agri-Business Management

- Advanced Engineering
- Cyber Technology
- Mathematics
- Food Skills
- Health routes

*Delivery from September 2019
Investing in the HE Strategy

Investment in estates and facilities in line with local growth priorities/higher level

Chippenham £21 million development opened for students November 2015

Salisbury and Lackham – capital funding totalling £22m aligned to higher level growth was awarded through the Swindon & Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership for delivery by 2020
Chippenham
Construction Skills Centre
Trowbridge
Lackham
Salisbury
In Summary

• Complex environment
• Shortage of technically trained workforce at higher level
• Demand for more flexible and accessible provision
• Technical Higher Education has to change or the UK will continue to lag behind the rest of the developed world
• Greater opportunity for collaborative working to deliver this through HEIs, FE colleges, LEPs and Local Authorities
• Colleges’ strategies need to be aligned to local economies
• What will the Augar Review say and will it be acted upon?
• The B word…
Questions?

amanda.burnside@wiltshire.ac.uk