What happened later: the British road to mass HE

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Conference on “shaping higher education fifty years after Robbins”
London School of Economics
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Outline

• Dimensions of mass higher education
• Legislative hyper-activity
• Fees and funding
• Institutional diversity
• Facing the future
Mass HE

In theory (Martin Trow):
• Below 15% - elite
• 15-40% - mass
• 40% (later 50%) + - universal.

In practice (BIS 2012):
• GB - 49%
• Scotland – 55%
• Men – 45%
• Women – 55%
Total higher education student numbers, UK, 1960/61 – 2010/11

Source: DES 1969; HESA 1999, 2002; HEPI 2003

Robbins (1963)
Dearing (1997)
Chart 3.5 – Higher education Age Participation Index (API) – GB Institutions

The number of young (under 21) home initial entrants expressed as a percentage of the average 18-19 population

Year

Notes: Initial entrants are those entering a course of full-time higher education for the first time. 1961 figure estimated using Robbins Report App.2A, Table 3 (Percentage of the population of each age receiving higher education GB Oct 1961).
Due to minor change in definition, the years 1961 to 1970 inclusive are not strictly comparable with later years.
Due to minor change in definition, years from 1980 onwards are not strictly comparable with earlier years.

Source: DfEE
Number of HE students by mode of study and level of course, 1979-2011

## UK unit public funding, 1979-2003

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>HEFCE</th>
<th>Polytechnic</th>
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Chart 3.14 – Public expenditure on higher education in the UK (1995-96 prices)

Notes: Includes recurrent and capital grants to institutions, publicly funded tuition fees, funding from Research Councils, expenditure on students maintenance grants and net expenditure on student loans.

Source: DfE
UK Government HE initiatives since 1963: twelve “frameworks”

1. 1963: the Robbins report – creation of “new” universities, “ability to benefit.”
2. 1965: the Woolwich speech – creation of the Polytechnics
5. 1985: the National Advisory Body for Public Sector HE (NAB), “capping the pool,” centralisation of local authority HE
6. 1988: the Great Education Reform Act – incorporation of the Polytechnics, Central Institutions and large Colleges
7. 1992: Further & Higher Education Act – ending of the binary line, Funding Councils for devolved administrations, creation of the “new new” universities
11. 2010: the Browne Review – higher undergraduate fees, new student contribution system
12. 2011: Students at the Heart of the System
UK HE policy: “mood swings”

- Con 1 (1979-1985) – contraction and differentiation
- Con 2 (1985-97) – expansion and equality
- New Labour 2 (2004-2010) – return to two tiers, co-payment
- The Coalition (2010 - ) - contraction and radical co-payment
UK “types” of university (after Scott, 1995)

1. Oxford and Cambridge
2. University of London
3. Victorian/Edwardian Civics
4. Redbricks
5. Isolates: e.g. Durham and Keele
6. Technological (ex CAT)
7. Open University
8. Specialised/monotechnic
9. Old new (1960s)
12. Mixed economy (HE in FE)
13. Private: Buckingham
14. For profit
The modern university: key types

1. The international research university
2. The professional formation university
3. The ‘curriculum innovation” university
4. The distance/open learning university
5. The College
6. The specialised/single subject HEI
7. The “for profit” corporation
Enrolments of international (non-EU) domiciled students, 2008/09
Income from international (non-EU) student fees as a percentage of total income, 2008/09
Percentage of UK-domiciled first year students from minority ethnic groups, 2008/09
Percentage of young full-time first degree entrants from national statistics socio-economic classification classes 4, 5, 6 and 7, 2008/09
Percentage of first- and upper second-class degrees awarded, 2008/09, by interest groups
Funding of research through the dual support system as a percentage of total income, 2008/09, by interest groups
Research grants and contracts as a percentage of funding council research grants, 2008/09

Sector
Russell
1994
Million+
Million+
GuildHE
Alliance
Days ratio of net liquidity to total expenditure, 2008/09
Surplus/deficit as a percentage of income, 2008/09
Percentage ratio of total long-term borrowings to total income, 2008/09
The security index, 2008/09, by interest groups
Stage 1: Complex Transitions

Each horizontal line plots the trajectory of an individual in and out of different statuses between the ages of 16 and 23.

Source: Furlong 2008
Discussion
Shaping higher education fifty years after Robbins

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