The Future of Learning

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The Flexible Learning Advisory Group

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It is an almost sina que non of policies for learning that policy development processes espouse a learning-for-policy approach.

- The engagement of all classes of stakeholders in an interactive policy discussion, has a strong impact on the effectiveness and relevance of policies derived.
The Learner Centred Focus

- Learner empowerment - the personalisation of education
- The impact of science on our understanding of learning
- The Knowledge Economy and learning
- The interrelationship between the learner and new technology
- The impact on educational systems and structures
- The new roles and responsibilities of education and learning professionals
Learner Empowerment

- “Personalised scale is coming to education. Economies of scale will enable self-paced learning material to be produced at affordable prices, and kept up to date”
- “Learning which, in the past, has been packaged and managed within institutions such as schools and universities, will become more diffuse, informal and user-driven.”
Four Key Issues

• Re-engineering the learning process must focus on the individual learner’s needs;
• need to develop an individual learner-focussed culture within organisations, business and government;
• need to ensure access to all;
• need to make advances in teaching and learning through innovation.
The Impact of Science on our understanding of learning

- Emerging impact of neuroscience on our understanding of learning, especially in areas of language acquisition and special needs
- The challenge is that of knowledge transformation - how to convert knowledge about learning into effective practices of educators and trainers or of integrated learning systems.
The Knowledge Economy & Learning

• “The knowledge undergoing most rapid change and commanding highest premium, is mostly highly technical or tacit in nature. Unfortunately, this is also precisely where our present-day education, training and learning institutions fail us most. Adaptation to this change - an essential form of learning - is an imperative for all actors”.
The interrelationship between learner and new technology

- New technology not only allows students to learn in entirely new ways, it released them from constraints over where and when learning takes place. This will strengthen the need to re-engineer many aspects of teaching and learning support over the next twenty years. They key will be to establish what should be achieved at each stage of the education and learning experience.
The impact on educational systems and structures - more clicks, fewer bricks?
The new roles and responsibilities of education and learning professionals

Threat – Automation

- University of Phoenix estimates the entire US higher education system could be served by 250k course assistants and 1k ‘stars’ versus 750k professors
• The Promise - A learner-centred perspective in the delivery of education does not imply the absence of all physical intermediaries.

• We will move towards a broader description of human resources that support the learner. These resources will comprise a range or group of individuals, such as designers and other specialists, rather than a single individual or ‘teacher’ with a multiplicity of roles.

• Teaching professions will increasingly operate in areas of higher added value.
Knowledge Nation?

- Investment in knowledge down from 87% ('85) to 75% ('98) of OECD

- Education
  - Pre-school - 25% of OECD average
  - Post-compulsory participation - down to 70%
  - University student/staff ratio increased 50%

- R&D - 55% OECD average in ’85
  - 85% in ’95
  - 60% in ‘00
Knowledge Nation?

- **VET**
  - Government expenditure per course hour down 17% (‘90-’97)
  - 1997-9
    - Public source income -2.2%
    - Student numbers +11.9%
    - Teaching hours +9.6%
“There is a shift from applying knowledge in a relatively stable environment to using and creating knowledge to comprehend and transform a rapidly changing environment” (Ron Johnston)
Knowledge Workers

- combine analysis with intuition
- recognise patterns
- work collaboratively
- communicate ‘deeply’
- are highly flexible
- are self-directed
- need high discretion
- work to a logic of improvisation
Preparing the Knowledge Worker

- Lifelong learning
- learner-directed learning
- learning to learn
- contextualised learning
- customised learning
- transformative learning
- collaborative/cooperative learning
- just-in-time learning
ANTA Focus on the Future Opportunities and Challenges

- From sector to network organisation
  - Seamless learning
  - From structure to relationship
  - Structural barriers
- Navigation through learning and work
  - From supplier to consumer-driven
- Access to learning
  - Location independent
  - Regional learning hubs

Australian Centre for Innovation & International Competitiveness
Stratified learning opportunities
- Role of learning in social change
- Need for pluralism
- Need for public funding

Information Technology
- Unimagined impacts
- Coherent approach to develop capability, alliances
- Flexible learning

Efficiency and effectiveness in learning
- Diffusion of good practice
- Programs and targets
Learning as a universal cultural value
- Progressive removal of barriers

Resources for learning
- Distinction between public and private good blurring

Quality management – new approaches

Demographic change

Changing nature of work
- Casual contractor versus knowledge asset