



**bill Birkbeck Institute
for Lifelong Learning**
Researching education across the lifespan

Conference Announcement

REGISTER FOR A FREE PLACE BY 7 MAY. EMAIL bill@soced.bbk.ac.uk or complete attached registration form.

Re-positioning part-time study in higher education

**Friday May 14, 9.30 am - 5.00 pm
Birkbeck, University of London**

Compared with full-time study, part-time study in higher education has for a long time been under-researched as well as underfunded. Yet it continues to be an attractive, and indeed the only practical way of studying for many adults, and a crucial part of the map of lifelong learning. This conference will explore the many facets of part-time higher education: Is this form of study the answer to the economic and demographic challenges facing universities and society at large? What is part-time study in practice, and what are the disadvantages and benefits of this way of studying? Do part-time learners present different pedagogical challenges? What is the role of the state, the employers and the individuals themselves in meeting the costs of part-time study?

The conference aims to bring together practitioners, researchers, students, and policy makers to explore these issues and the politics, policies and pedagogic challenges of and for part-time learners in higher education

Conference themes:

- ◆ Historical and comparative perspectives
- ◆ Student experiences and identities
- ◆ Community education
- ◆ Employer roles
- ◆ Retention
- ◆ Flexible learning / modularisation / fragmentation of learning
- ◆ Policies and stakeholders in HE developments and funding
- ◆ Pedagogies and practices

Programme:

9.30 Coffee and registration

10.00 Welcome and introduction: Professor Sue Jackson

10.15 **Keynote lectures:**

Professor Malcolm Tight: *The development of part-time higher education in the UK (and elsewhere)*

Anne Jamieson: *Part-time learners: social and personal costs and benefits*

11.45 **Workshops / paper sessions**

1.00 Lunch

2.00 **Workshops / paper sessions**

3.15 **Keynote lectures:**

Geoff Mason: *Employer support for part-time study in higher education: pushing at an open door?*

Professor Claire Callender: *The funding of part-time students: the challenges ahead*

4.45 **Conclusions:** Professor Sue Jackson

5.00 **Close and depart**

ABSTRACTS FROM KEY NOTE SPEAKERS

Professor Malcolm Tight
Professor of Higher Education
Lancaster University

The Development of Part-time Higher Education in the United Kingdom (and elsewhere)

Part-time higher education has been around for as long as higher education itself, but has consistently received far less in the way of policy and research attention than full-time provision. Indeed, in many countries, while part-time higher education exists, it has no official recognition. Though part-time provision represents an effective response to market demands, its concentration in lower status institutions and disciplines accords it a somewhat secret status. Yet, throughout recent history, around 40% of all UK students have studied part-time, and the part-time alternative has consistently offered an option where funding for full-time higher education has been constrained or students have had other responsibilities in their lives. This presentation will explore the development of part-time higher education in the United Kingdom, with reference to experience in other systems internationally.

Anne Jamieson
Reader in Education and Life Course Studies
Birkbeck, University of London

Part-time students: social and personal costs and benefits.

This paper builds on a large scale, multi-method longitudinal study of graduates from Birkbeck and the Open University, the two largest providers of part-time study in the UK. The study yielded both quantitative and qualitative evidence of the benefits as well as the social and personal costs of being a part-time student. The presentation will focus on questions such as: how far is it possible to distinguish between economic/employment related benefits and wider social and personal benefits? Are ELQ students really just 'leisure learners', as seems to be implied in government policies. Using data from the 3-year follow-up study we then ask whether benefits accumulate or decline over time. On the cost side of the equation we explore some of the reported effects of the study process on family and other social relations as well as personal health and wellbeing. Finally, we raise the question of the impact of fees on students' attitude to their study experience.

Geoff Mason
Senior Research Fellow
National Institute of Economic and Social Research, London

Employer support for part-time study in higher education: pushing at an open door?

Available evidence on employer support for employees studying part-time in HE points to a positive logic on both sides. Students typically find that gaining new skills, knowledge and qualifications through part-time study enhances their career prospects. while employers benefit from the fact that the new skills are gained outside normal working hours. This encourages some employers to support employees studying part-time by paying course fees

and other costs of study. The paper addresses two key questions relating to this kind of employer support: Why is it not more widespread? What changes in government policy might encourage more employer support of this kind? The paper draws on recent theorising about employer support for general skills training and analysis of Labour Force Survey data and a recent survey of UK employers of part-time students.

Prof Claire Callender
Professor of Higher Education
Birkbeck, University of London

The funding of part-time students: the challenges ahead

This paper will critically analyse why student support for part-time students 'is not sufficient' and discuss some of the challenges facing the Browne Review. It will explore the scale of financial support for part-timers and who benefits and who loses, calling on the findings of a recent national study of 3,700 part-time students. The paper will assess the effectiveness of this student support in promoting greater participation, or in exacerbating existing social inequalities and injustices in the treatment of part-time students relative to full-time students. Finally, it will examine some of the options for reforming the current system of support for part-time students.

see over to register

Registration: *Re-positioning part-time study in higher education*
Friday May 14 2010, 9.30 am - 5.00 pm at Birkbeck, University of London

Title:

Surname:

First name:

Job Title:

Course (if student):

Organisation:

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..... Postcode:.....

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Please indicate whether you are willing for your email address to be listed alongside your name in the delegate pack YES / NO

Please indicate any access or other requirements:

There is no charge for this conference

For more information please contact bill@soced.bbk.ac.uk

For information about BILL (incl. membership) see <http://www.bbk.ac.uk/bill>

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