

Professor Chris Birch

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From Cottage Industry to Curriculum and Classroom: Re-conceiving the concept of Knowledge Transfer

Abstract

Early in the Labour Administration, 1997-2010, it was recognised that increasingly, in a knowledge based economy, that the effective interface between Universities and wealth creators was likely to be important. The Lambert Review of 2003 provided a clear rationale. They encourage and stimulate sustainable commercial collaborations, interventionist funding has been made available in the shape of Herobac, HEIF (4 iterations) and Strategic Development funds. Much work has been done to assess the impact of these investments, and the results are very promising. The first REF impact studies will capture and make tangible some of the success stories. This presentation will reflect on the relatively short journey of formalising business interaction from cottage industry to core curriculum and classroom.

Biography

For the past ten years, Professor Chris Birch has worked at executive level in two universities, including Pro and Deputy Vice-Chancellor roles. Currently, he is Director of Enterprise & Innovation at the University of Greenwich Business School.

Professor Birch is committed to the principle of creating mutually value-adding partnerships, particularly when shared development of secondary functions lead to more resource being made available for the delivery of core business. He is clear that universities will now have to look very hard at all aspects of their work, and how they operate, as public funding becomes more constrained and contested and as the competitive global environment, underpinned by high speed and cheap communications infrastructure, increasingly challenges traditional university dominance in the provision of higher education services. Furthermore, the impact of forthcoming demographic change will have profound effects and impact on the fitness for purpose of current provider models, which are likely to necessitate systemic structural change.