Leading for the Future

Leading for the Future

By

Steve Lambert

CAMBRIDGE
SCHOLARS
PUBLISHING

Leading for the Future,
by Steve Lambert

This book first published 2014

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

12 Back Chapman Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2XX, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN (10): 1-4438-5492-1, ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-5492-4

To Zedina and Ella without whom none of this would have been possible.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Introduction to this book

This book is based on the premise that there is a perceived and impending shortage of individuals wanting to become principals of further education colleges. Fearson's (2003) statistics show that in 1997, 23.6% of college "leaders" were aged fifty plus, rising to 42.7% in 2002, whilst Clancy (2005) suggests that by the end of 2010 60% of college principals would have retired. Both the Centre of Excellence in Leadership (2005) and Clancy (2005) suggest that there are shortages of appropriately skilled individuals progressing to become principals. The Centre of Excellence in Leadership suggests that this turnover of principals may be as a result of the "baby boomers" approaching retirement, going on to state that the age profile of leaders and managers within colleges makes this an institution-wide issue, which is more acute at senior levels.

With this impending shortage, coupled with a lack of suitably skilled individuals to step into principalship roles, governing corporations of colleges will have to identify strategies for dealing with the increasing likelihood of not being able to fill these positions.

The aforementioned reports have highlighted issues surrounding those leaving principalship but, in order to get a complete picture, one needs to consider whether this is offset by a similar number pursuing principalship. In order to do this, the recruitment trends associated with advertised principals' posts need to be examined. This would determine whether there are shortages of applicants applying for principalship.

If the reports are to be believed and there is a shortage of individuals pursuing principalship, then there is a need to develop effective leadership from within colleges to ensure the stability of institutions is maintained. If individuals who are currently in management positions are empowered as leaders, then the strategic aims of the organisation would continue to be enacted in the absence of a principal. Part of this process will be capacity building amongst those individuals which will provide the experiences and skills necessary to seek higher office. In doing so, principals need to understand their role and how it is perceived by others within the college if there is to be success in developing future leaders.

This book will therefore focus on principals and middle curriculum managers of general further education colleges and consider whether there is a shortage of suitably qualified individuals pursuing principalship. The book will also explore whether current literature on sustainable leadership is sufficiently developed and appropriate to meet the needs of the further education sector and, at the same time, will enable colleges to continue to implement their strategic plan in the absence of a principal.

The main question which this book seeks to address is "What are the challenges and resolutions in moving middle curriculum managers in further education colleges onto principalship?" In order to answer this question, a number of subsidiary questions also need to be answered:

(1) What is the current context of leadership in further education colleges?

(2) Can models of sustainable leadership be used to support capacity building within further education?

(3) What are the views of further education leaders with respect to the role of the principal and what are the implications for further education?

(4) What are the views of middle curriculum managers with respect to the role of the principal, the implications for the sector and the resolutions which need to be put in place?

Structure of this Book

The following section provides a summary of the structure of this book as well as an outline of the contents of each chapter.

Chapter One—Introduction

Chapter Two—The Challenges of Leadership and Management

Chapter Three—Sustainable Leadership

Chapter Four—Leadership in Further Education

Chapter Five—A Multi-Dimensional Approach to Principalship

Chapter Six—A way Forward for Middle Leaders

Chapter Seven—Do Education Leaders need Management Qualifications?

After this introductory chapter, chapter two will be the first of three chapters focusing on the current context of leadership in further education colleges. It looks at the national policy drivers which are impacting on general further education colleges and contextualises this through the curriculum, finance and funding and performance management.

Chapter three looks at the idea of sustainable leadership in education and considers existing models such as those of Hargreaves & Fink (2005), Davies (2009) and Lambert (2011) and their suitability for application to further education colleges.

Chapter four looks at the structure of further education and particularly how it is governed and regulated. This links back to chapter two which considered the policy landscape for further education.

Chapter five puts forward a case that the role of the principal has changed significantly since incorporation and involves business functions which previously weren't part of the job. The chapter looks at a tripartite model of defining the role of the principal and how those who aspire to principalship can be developed from within the organisation.

Chapter six draws together the threads of this book and presents a number of recommendations as a way forward for the further education sector.

The final chapter considers, based on the notions of sustainable leadership and how middle leaders can be provided with the skills and aspirations to pursue senior leadership, whether management qualifications are indeed needed.

However, to begin this process of understanding the challenges middle curriculum managers face, we need to first understand what further education actually is.

What is further education?

Prior to trying to understand the leadership challenges facing further education, it is worthwhile establishing what is meant by post-compulsory education and where further education fits into this broader category.

Jameson (2006) defines post-compulsory education as the field of education which is sometimes referred to as "Lifelong Learning" and is concerned with the non-compulsory phase of education. The statutory age range is from sixteen, with no upper limit. The United Kingdom Labour government proposed, through the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act (2009), that the compulsory age of education be raised from sixteen to eighteen from 2015. The coalition government, in their Education Bill (DfE 2010), committed to the plan of increasing the age of participation. What the act of parliament does not state is that young people should stay in school until they are eighteen, instead preferring them to remain in formal training, either through participation at college, apprenticeships or employer accredited training. Regardless of age, post-compulsory education focuses on qualifications starting at entry level through to level 3 on the qualification and credit framework, as shown in Fig. 1.1 below. Jameson & Hillier (2003) sum up post-compulsory education as: "… educational provision for post-compulsory age learners at sub-degree level in a range of post-16, adult and extra-mural education and training institutions …."

There is a fuzziness surrounding post-compulsory education in that whilst higher education is post-compulsory, it is separated to form a category of its own. Post-compulsory education is large and diverse with total funding being just over £10bn in 2009/10 (LSC 2008b); however, as Baker (2010) points out, this represents only 11% of the total education budget in 2009/10. Within this general category of post-compulsory education there are specific groups of institutions:

- Further education colleges
- Independent Specialist Providers (ISPs)
- Learndirect/University for Industry (UfI)
- School Sixth Forms
- Providers of personal and community development learning (PCDL) —usually local authorities
- Providers of learning and skills for offenders
- Providers in the voluntary and community sector
- Work-based learning providers
- Employers holding contracts for public funding directly through the National Employer Service.

The groups of providers listed above are diverse and cover institutions which deliver apprenticeships, those which hold contracts to deliver education to those in custody, online learning through the Learndirect brand, and those that provide specialist education for young people with special educational needs which cannot be accommodated in mainstream schools. The further education category can be additionally sub-divided into:

- General Further Education Colleges
- Sixth Form Colleges
- Tertiary Colleges
- Agricultural Colleges
- Specialist Designated Institutions
- Art, Design and Performing Arts Institutions.

These categories of further education are defined specifically in the Further and Higher Education Act (1992) and the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act (2009), and as such are not open to interpretation regarding whether an institution is in one or another category. It is possible, however, for an institution to change designation. The creation of Sixth Form Colleges, as a specific category through the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act (2009), saw a number of colleges, previously designated as general further education institutions, re-designate if they met the criteria laid down in the legislation.

What this demonstrates is that post-compulsory education is an umbrella term which has a diverse range of institutions providing a range of different types of education and training.

When colleges were incorporated out of local authority control in 1992, following the Further and Higher Education Act (1992), 492 colleges were listed. By the time Payne (2008) was published, the number had reduced to 377. KPMG (2009) notes that much of this reduction was as a result of mergers rather than closure without replacement. Fig. 1.1 below provides details of the number of colleges under the different categories based on the 2008 DIUS data.

Fig. 1.1. Summary of college numbers based on Payne (2008) from a total of 377.

Designation	**%**	**Number**
General Further education	51%	192
Sixth Form Colleges	26%	98
Tertiary Colleges	13%	49
Agriculture Colleges	5%	19
Specialist Designated Institutions	4%	15
Arts based institutions	1%	4

As a result of the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Skills Act (2009), sixth form colleges were given their own category of designation. Previously they were, officially, a subset of general further education colleges. The new categorisation changed some of the numbers as colleges moved between designations. This resulted in a reduction in the general further education category as institutions moved into the newly created sixth form category.

As already mentioned, the definitions of the categories of further education institutions, such as those listed in Fig. 1.1, are defined by legislation. Jameson & Hillier (2003) and Jameson (2006) all provide their own meaning for what further education is, but within this book I believe that further education is about providing meaningful and appropriate education for those learners who are beyond the compulsory phase of education. It would be possible to debate what meaningful and appropriate actually mean and, indeed, Wolf (2011) does so, but people often attend further education colleges to learn skills so that they can gain employment. This means that colleges need to have, central to their mission, the ideology that the curriculum they offer does lead to meaningful employment.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CHALLENGES OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the challenges of leadership and management in further education colleges. In doing so, the variations in understanding of the term globalisation and the way in which they influence national policies will be looked at. The chapter will then examine a selection of key pieces of national policy and how these have impacted on leadership in further education.

This chapter sets the context for the rest of the book and puts forward the argument that leadership within the further education sector is becoming increasingly complex, exacerbated by the impact of national policy directives as informed by global drivers.

During the process of writing this book there has been a change of government and it is considered prudent to clarify and discuss any new changes made by the coalition government which impact on this study. In order to avoid any possible confusion about the policies and which political party they relate to, the term Labour will be used throughout this book to refer to the Labour government between 1997 and 2010, and the coalition government will be referred to as the current government, which came into office in May 2010. At the time of writing this book, the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) was the government organisation responsible for funding education for individuals aged 16–18. As a result of the Education Act 2011, the YPLA was replaced with the Education Funding Agency whose prime role remains the funding of education for 16–18 year olds, but also includes the funding of academies. Any reference to sources from the YPLA remains accurate, but may not reflect current government policy.

Defining globalisation

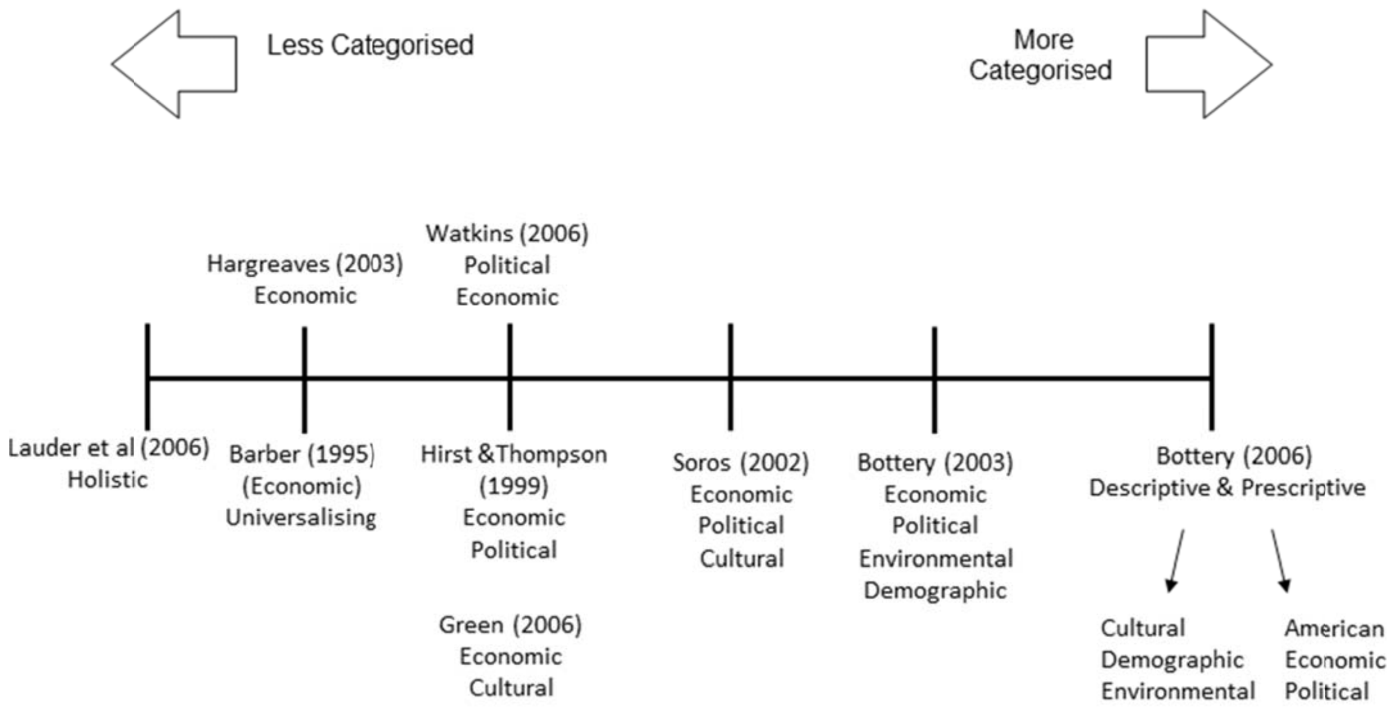
Prior to looking at the way in which global drivers influence national thinking, it is necessary to spend some time considering what is meant by globalisation. This section will therefore consider the work of a number of commentators, critically reviewing their views on globalisation and examining whether there is any synergy between these definitions.

Literature demonstrates that there are considerable variations when trying to define what is meant by the term globalisation, with many of these views changing over time. In order to illustrate this, the views of a number of commentators can be plotted on a continuum, from the holistic approach taken by Lauder et al. (2006) to the highly categorised approach taken by Bottery (2006). Fig. 2.1 plots this continuum.

On the left of the continuum Lauder et al. (2006) suggest that globalisation is holistic and cannot be categorised by defined themes, but by the spatial transformation of organisations in terms of their social relations, particularly transnationally. Contrary to this, Barber (1995) considers globalisation as economics which encompass everything, a view shared by Hargreaves (2003). However, Steger (2009) argues that Barber (1995) is promoting a simplistic view of globalisation that is nothing more than universalising. This is a view which is shared by Scholte (2002), who describes the notion of globalisation as merely a rebranding of historically used terms, such as internationalisation, or Westernisation.

Hirst & Thompson (1999) consider that there is only one principal form of globalisation which is economic, although they also acknowledge the importance of political globalisation. Watkins (2006) acknowledges Hirst & Thompson's (1999) view of globalisation encompassing economic and political forms, but goes on to say that globalisation is more than just encompassing forms, although he does not define exactly what, instead promoting a more holistic view akin to that of Lauder et al. (2006). Green (2006) agrees with the importance of economic globalisation but also suggests that this brings with it cultural globalisation through the resulting increase in global trade and transnational organisations. This links in with the spatial transformation of organisations and their social relations advocated by Lauder et al. (2006). Soros (2002), like others, acknowledges the importance of economic globalisation, but also highlights the key role which political and cultural globalisation play. What Soros does do is place a caveat particularly around the impact of economic globalisation, warning against the negative impact on developing countries, especially when it widens the gap between rich and poor nations.

Figure 2.1. Continuum of globalisation



At the opposite end to Lauder et al. (2006), Bottery (2006) introduces two principal categories of globalisation. The first category is descriptive, being based on measurable data such as cultural, demographic and environmental and noting that these forms will continue to happen regardless of whether nations recognise them or not. The second category is Prescriptive, being value-based, in that they are linked to the ideologies of an individual or group of individuals which includes political, economic and American philosophies.

What has been provided is a snapshot of definitions by various commentators at a particular time and which will continue to evolve. While Lauder et al. (2006) and Bottery (2006) are at opposite ends of the continuum, both acknowledge the decline in geographical boundaries, particularly when considering the influence of supra-national organisations such as the European Union, the United Nations, or the World Trade Organisation.

While it is evident that there is a range of ways of categorising globalisation, they are not of equal standing. Economic, political and demographic forms of globalisation are discussed more than others. The continuum described in Fig. 2.1 demonstrates that these three forms of globalisation appear more frequently than any other form of globalisation. This is possibly because it is easier to witness their impact on individuals, groups or nations and, in the case of this book, have a more noticeable effect on the leadership of further education colleges. Therefore, any changes in the economic environment are likely to inform political thinking, for example, the Leitch Review (2006) was informed by the need for the UK to have a workforce which enables the country to maintain its global economic competitiveness. Both the previous Labour and current coalition government see economic globalisation as key to the continued economic performance and, as a result, this will be carried forward to the next section.

Likewise, changes in global movement of the population will see a resulting change in the demographics of a college; for example the next group of countries to join the European Union will be in 2011, and will potentially result in an increase of students from these countries into the UK. Currently, there is no evidence that this will happen. However, if previous trends are repeated, then this increase is likely (Institute for Public Policy Research 2010). Koser (2007) states that this is not migration, as many of these individuals are coming to the UK not to settle permanently but to work for a number of years before either returning to their home country or moving on to another country.

Of course, this is not to dismiss the other forms of globalisation, such as environmental, and although the impact is not immediately so obvious it has a longer term effect.

What will not be considered is political globalisation. The rationale for this is that global politics impact less on the work of further education colleges. However, it is important to define what is meant by political globalisation and illustrate how national drivers are a theme running through the forthcoming analysis.

The argument around political globalisation is not that it does not impact on leadership in further education, only that it impacts less than economic and demographic globalisation. Bottery (2004) suggests that political globalisation was initially conceptualised through the relocation of political power outside of the nation state, for example through the European Union (EU). Bottery further proposes that political globalisation be presented in the form of an interconnectedness of interests and ideas alongside the development of international rules which inform political governance within nation states. Some elements of political globalisation might impact on leadership in further education colleges, but this would be as a result of political globalisation informing national policy. For example, the introduction of new employment legislation originating from the EU might, through changes to national legislation, impact on recruitment procedures in a college. What this illustrates is the way in which political globalisation informs national policy. However, successive governments continue to pursue ideologies and policies aimed at ensuring the UK remains economically competitive in global economies. This suggests the effects of economic globalisation have a greater impact on society than those of political globalisation.

National Policy and the Role of the State

Despite the prominence given to globalisation in the previous section it does not directly impact on the leadership and management of further education colleges; rather, it informs national thinking and policy which does affect colleges. This section looks at the policy context of further education and the way in which globalisation has informed national policy directives.

It is not surprising that the state has an interest in education as it is one of main ways in which the government can intervene in family life and the life of individuals. While education does not rely on the state, because it can happen informally at home, between friends or indeed in independent schools, the state does rely on education. Ward & Eden (2009) suggest that governments will define themselves and sustain their cultural identity, promoting their beliefs, ideas and knowledge from generation to generation, through the state control of education, and therefore suggest that education has become a political tool which transcends different political parties.

This has been evident over the past twenty years with changes to the further education sector. Pre-1992 further education was part of local authorities, and so were schools, working collaboratively to deliver an appropriate curriculum to the young people in the local authority area. The Conservative government of the time, through the Further and Higher Education Act (1992), incorporated further education colleges out of local authority control. At the same time, the act also created the Further Education Funding Council, a centralised non-public departmental body (a quango) where its role was to implement a centrally controlled system of funding and performance management. What this meant was that control had been taken away from local government and moved to central government. As such, the Further and Higher Education Act (1992) focused on the freedoms which colleges gained as a result of incorporation out of local authority control rather than the shift in power from local to central government.

Part of the idea behind the incorporation of further education colleges out of local authority control, and a theme of the Thatcher government at the time (Jenkins 2007), was for the government to stimulate the market in which colleges operated. By freeing them of local authority control it was believed that colleges would be able to compete for students alongside schools, other colleges and an emerging number of private training providers. Ward & Eden (2009) call this form of competition, which is internal to the state, the "internal market," whereas Ball (2008) describes this as "endogenous competition." Colleges entered the consumer era whereby they were selling education as a commodity, and only those colleges whose curriculum matched the needs of their consumers would survive. Observers of the Thatcher government had already seen public services privatised, such as the prison services, elements of the health service and the rail infrastructure, so it should have been no surprise that post-compulsory education would go this way.

While there was a move to create a free market for further education which freed colleges from local authority control, at the same time the Conservative government was looking to centralise its control and power over further education colleges through the introduction of a national body with responsibility for the implementation of government policy consistently across all further education colleges.

Fukuyama (1992, 124) describes this as market orientated authoritarianism where there is a high degree of “discipline” with just enough freedom to encourage innovation. The theory was that by bringing education into a free market system a number of things would happen. Firstly, it was hoped that the education system would bring about efficiencies in the way it operated and in turn ensure value for money for taxpayers. Secondly, just as competition in the manufacturing sector often drives down prices and pushes up quality, the quality of education would be “driven up” in the same way. Finally, Bash & Coulby (1991) argue that the idea of empowering colleges was less about freedom as autonomous organisations and more about reducing the power of local authorities, particularly the Inner London Education Authority. Based on this idea it is easier to understand why, when Labour came to power in 1997, they did not abolish the ideas of centralised control. To New Labour, Fukuyama’s idea of market orientated authoritarianism was simply a way of achieving the best from the further education system. Instead, under Tony Blair’s leadership, there was an increase in centralised regulation, particularly around inspection and participation targets for young people. It was not surprising that Labour, under Tony Blair, did not undertake a U-turn on previous Conservative policy. Jenkins (2007) remarks that Blair’s formative years were influenced by Thatcher’s conservative government and, as a young MP, he backed various policies including those on employment law and the role of trade unions. Blair also undertook to change the view of the Labour party on areas such as the renationalisation of public services previously privatised by the Conservatives. This started to provide an insight into his values such as having centralised power accessible only to a small and closed group. Blair’s ideologies of centralising power to Westminster and eroding the autonomy of local authorities are not dissimilar to the ideologies of the Conservatives. One of Labour’s first major publications was entitled Excellence for All (DfES 1997), which set the tone for the direction of New Labour’s education policy. The aim of the policy was to increase the quality and standards and to create an education system which provided a workforce, enabling the UK to compete in the global marketplace.

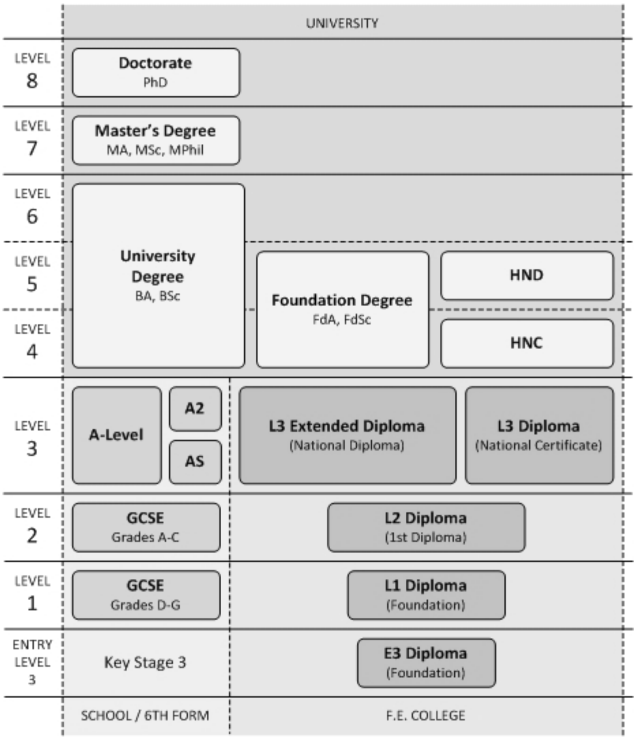
What Blair was doing was nothing new. Fukuyama (1992, 123) stated that “free market capitalism seemed to be the only game in town.” Ward & Eden (2009) remind us that the Labour government introduced greater legislation and regulation in a quest to drive up quality and standards. Many of these pieces of legislation were implemented by an increasing number of quangos and agencies, and Ainsley (2004) calls the development of quangos under Labour a “Quango State.” This move allowed for the outsourcing of key education targets whilst keeping an element of control over the delivery on such targets. Bobbitt (2002) suggests that this exonerates the government if targets are not met, effectively reducing their [government's] responsibility.

When Brown came into power in 2007 he continued the state's intervention in education, particularly within the compulsory sector, introducing initiatives such as the National Challenge (DCSF 2008) for those schools not achieving 30% GCSE grades A*-C of their year 11 cohort. Further education was not exempt from the increase in initiatives under Brown, and minimum levels of performance were introduced for underperforming colleges (LSC 2007). They also committed to ensuring that all sixteen year olds had an offer of a suitable place of learning in the September after they left school. This put a particular strain on the further education system and agencies such as Connexions who had to track all young people leaving the compulsory sector.

At the end of 2009, the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act (2009) gained royal assent. This piece of legislation has had a significant impact on further education colleges, and reversed Conservative policy implemented under Thatcher. The act gave statutory responsibility back to local authorities for education up to the age of nineteen. This meant that local authorities had responsibility for further education colleges, which included working with colleges to determine an appropriate curriculum to meet the needs of the local market, and also the funding of colleges. The act also created two new agencies, the Skills Funding Agency, which is part of the department of Business, Innovation and Skills, and has responsibility for post-19 education and training. The second agency created was a quango, the Young People's Learning Agency, whose remit was funding the newly created academies and supporting local authorities in discharging their duties in relation to 16–19 education.

The new coalition government of Conservatives and Liberal Democrats came into power in May 2010 and quickly returned to their centralisation agenda, moving the allocation of money and the paying of further education colleges to the Young People's Learning Agency. At the same time, further education colleges are having to deal with three organisations as a result of the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act (2009)—local authorities, the Young People's Learning Agency and the Skills Funding Agency, the latter two being centralised organisations. This might appear to be a minor shift in responsibilities but, as in 1992, this is an erosion of local authority power as the perceived power, associated with money, has shifted to the Young People's Learning Agency.

Fig. 2.2: Qualifications and credit framework



What has been a consistent theme through government, since Callaghan in 1976, is the notion that the education system needs to produce individuals which enable the UK to remain economically competitive. So concerned was the Labour government about the rise of the pan-Asian economies that they commissioned Leitch (2006) to undertake a review of the workforce skills needed to ensure economic competitiveness is maintained. The outcome of the report, which was adopted by the government, was that education was key to economic prosperity and therefore the workforce needed to be skilled to at least a level three according to the Qualifications and Credit Framework (Fig. 2.2). The result of this report was that the Learning and Skills Council, the agency responsible for post-16 education and training prior to the creation of the Young People's Learning Agency and the Skills Funding Agency, was charged with ensuring that the workforce was up-skilled. Further education colleges were seen as a principal mechanism by which this could be achieved. As a result of changes in global economies, national initiatives such as Train to Gain (LSC 2008) were developed as the primary method of up-skilling the workforce.

The Leitch report (2006) has recently been criticised by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (2010) which indicated that there is still a significant number of jobs which require a level 2 qualification and that the need for higher level skills, level 3 and above, is not as great as Leitch (2006) predicted. This is not to negate the work which further education colleges have already done in up-skilling the workforce. Wolf (2004) notes that whilst there is a link between qualifications and economic productivity, it is not a linear assumption, and that the social benefits of a higher skilled workforce should not be overlooked.

How has Demographic Globalisation contributed to the Leadership Challenges facing Further Education Colleges?

So far, this chapter has demonstrated that economic globalisation informs national thinking and in turn affects the way in which further education colleges operate. There is, however, another consequence of globalisation which, to some extent, impacts directly on further education colleges, and that is the effect of demographic globalisation. Shigeyuki et al. (2002) define demographic globalisation in terms of fertility, mortality and migration. Bottery (2004) suggests that it is widely recognised that an increasing number of people are living longer which has a consequence on the welfare state system, and this is further compounded by a declining birth rate. The final element of Shigeyuki et al.'s (2002) definition is migration; however, it is worth clarifying that when discussing the impact of demographic globalisation this section will not look at immigration, as defined by Senker (2008), which is where individuals permanently move to a new area, either internally or to a different country. Rather than immigration, this section will concentrate on short-term migration because it includes those individuals who come to the UK for a short period of time, for example three to five years, either to study or as a result of seeking employment.

College leaders are facing an increasing number of challenges resulting from changes in global population movement, the result of which has impacted on the demographics of further education colleges, the curriculum which they offer and the nature of the support services available to students.

Further education colleges have seen an influx of both European Union and non-European Union students entering their institutions. Some of this is as a result of strategic planning and the targeting of non-European Union students who are charged the full international fee, which is higher than the government's subsidised rate for UK students. The other is the result of the continued influx of migrant workers entering the UK, with estimates from Rowthorn (2007) predicting that extrapolating forward numbers are expected to increase to twenty million by 2050. Sumpton & Sommerville (2010) suggest that the introduction of a points-based system has limited the number of migrants entering the UK. New migrants need to have skills which will contribute to the economy before entry can be granted. Sumpton & Sommerville go on to suggest that the points-based entry criteria was a result of the 2004 group of countries gaining membership to the European Union which saw an influx of 1.5 million people to the UK in one year.

The coalition government made a pledge to reduce the numbers of migrants entering the UK despite the contribution which they make to the economy (The Select Committee on Economic Affairs 2008), and, as a result, from April 2011 imposed both limits on the number of non-European Union students colleges can recruit and the types of curriculum on which they can be recruited (UK Border Agency 2011). This will potentially disadvantage many colleges which are now only allowed to recruit 76% of the total number of non-European students they recruited the previous year.

Despite the government's commitment to reduce the number of migrants entering the country, internal population movement as well as population movement between European Union countries have contributed to the increasing pressure which further education colleges face. Samuelowicz (1987) points out that as the demography of a college changes so does the nature of the support services needed, with overseas students increasingly requiring higher levels of language and study skill support.

This has caused a particular challenge to colleges as often they cannot offset the cost associated with providing this support by charging international fees. Students coming from European Union countries pay the same tuition fees as those from the United Kingdom. UKCISA (2008) has benchmarked the way in which colleges have responded to the challenges of an increasingly diverse and international student population and suggests that while there is consistency in the types of support services offered to students, further work is needed in order to increase the quality of such services.

Colleges will continue to be challenged by the issues of demographic change if the economy remains strong and migrant workers remain in the UK; however, a decline in the economy compounded by the decreasing value of sterling has made it less attractive to work in the UK. In addition, countries are responding to the exodus of workers by improving pay and conditions and therefore making it attractive for potential migrant workers to stay in their own countries (Webb 2008; Taylor 2008). It is currently too early to establish whether the decline in migrant workers along with restrictions on the number of non-European Union students allowed to enter the UK will mitigate the challenges colleges face in catering for an increasingly international student cohort.

This section of the chapter has explored two ideas, firstly, that economic globalisation does not directly impact on further education colleges rather it informs national thinking and policies. Secondly, the effect of demographic globalisation on colleges is more observable, and brings about challenges for college leadership teams of how best to support an increasingly diverse student population.

The final section of this chapter looks in more detail at the way in which national policy is affecting leadership and management of further education colleges. This will be done by considering what are believed to be the most significant pieces of legalisation in chronological order.

The Impact of National Policy on Leadership in Further Education

Further education has changed significantly over the past twenty years from a local authority controlled system to one which has been managed centrally by the state. It has also evolved from what was traditionally considered to be “craft” type provision, typically construction and engineering, into one which today delivers the curriculum in fifteen different subject areas and at different levels (Fig. 2.2) In line with this, the leadership of further education organisations has had to transform to accommodate the constantly changing landscape and the impact of this transformation is considered in this section.

Pre-1992 Further Education

Prior to 1992, further education colleges came under the auspices of the local authority, and they provided support for finance, human resources, estates and premises, as well as quality improvement. The principal of a further education college was the chief academic officer whose main function was to ensure that teaching and learning were taking place and that academic standards were maintained. They had limited involvement in the business aspects of the college leaving much of this to the local authority. The Further and Higher Education Act (1992) changed all of this; it incorporated further education colleges out of local authority control into autonomous organisations, no longer reliant on local authorities to provide strategic direction in relation to the curriculum and support with business functions, which meant that college principals became chief executives of multi-million pound businesses responsible for the management of both curriculum and support services. Although this provided autonomy to colleges, Bash & Coulby (1991) suggest that the Conservative government were to use this act as a means of eroding the power of local authorities and centralising it through the creation of the Further Education Funding Council. This organisation was a national body accountable to parliament whose role was to administer a national funding scheme for all post-compulsory education in England.

The impact of the Further and Higher Education Act (1992) meant that the landscape of further education had changed forever and colleges had to quickly appoint staff with the specialist skills needed to manage a centrally imposed, formula-led funding methodology.

Post-1992 Further Education

Following the 1992 Act, there has been a piece of primary legislation relating to the education sector every year with the exception of 1995, 1999, 2001 and 2003. While not all of these applied to further education, there were many elements which impacted on the role of leadership in further education colleges. The pieces of legalisation which will be focused on in this section are:

The Teaching and Higher Education Act (1998) which introduced tuition fees for the first time for students undertaking higher education courses regardless of whether this was in a further education colleges or higher education institutions, thus introducing competition and market forces into student recruitment.

The Learning and Skills Act (2000) which created a new centralised planning and funding body to oversee further education and impose a nationally consistent funding formula.

Further Education and Training Act (2007) extended the powers of intervention of the Learning and Skills Council as well as introduced Foundation Degrees as an alternative vocational-based route into higher education.

Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act (2009) fundamentally changed the further education landscape by dissolving the Learning and Skills Council and in its place created two new organisations, both with the responsibility for funding further education.

All of these pieces of legalisation changed the context in which further education colleges operate and, as a consequence of this, the government had greater control over the curriculum than the local authority areas which the colleges serve. This section will explore some of the key elements of these pieces of legislation and how they have impacted on the leadership of further education colleges.

The Teaching and Higher Education Act (1998) introduced a number of changes such as granting charitable status to colleges as well as the introduction of higher education tuition fees.

Granting charitable status ensured that colleges did not make a significant profit, although legislation never defined what "significant" meant and any profits had to be reinvested back into the college. This was designed to maintain the status of college as providing for the "public good" rather than for profit. Goddard-Patel & Whitehead (2000) highlighted some cases where colleges invested in businesses not related to their core mission of providing education and training.

The second change that the 1998 act introduced also had an impact on the leadership of further education colleges because it meant that for the first time students commencing higher education programmes had to pay tuition fees regardless of whether they were being undertaken in further or higher education institutions. This posed a particular challenge for college leaders as they had to carefully consider their unique selling point when it came to marketing higher education courses to not price themselves out of the market. What this did was to push post-compulsory education further into a consumer-based market where students made a choice and where they had to pay for higher education. Colleges quickly established strategic relationships with various universities in order to deliver higher education provision under the universities' names, hoping that the reputation and "brand" would be enough to attract and retain students.

The impact of this upon the leadership of colleges was that they had to establish their position in the market, ensuring that they had a unique