The Results

The results of the first TEF assessment were published in June 2017. This first round was always recognized as a trial year, after which the panel would review the exercise and the criticisms. This has not stopped media headlines about some distinguished Russell Group universities only being awarded Bronze, and a number of post-1992 universities taking out double-page spreads in national newspapers to celebrate their Golds. (In fact, 33 percent of universities received Gold and 82 percent Gold or Silver). The minister has even taken the opportunity to couple the award of a Bronze mark to a Russell Group university with the (high) salary of its vice-chancellor and use it as a basis for criticizing vice-chancellors' salaries in general.

A cornerstone of the Tory government's higher education policy has been the belief that the introduction of market forces and greater competition will raise quality.

The significant questions that the review panel will need to address, apart from the flaky nature of some of the data, include that the TEF does not actually assess teaching but only the imperfectly recorded reactions to it. From the point of view of informing the market, it conveys only an institutional view and not an assessment of the actual degree program (or even the department) in which a candidate wishes to study. The selection of Gold, Silver, and Bronze awards can only be described as crude, populist, and pandering to media exploitation, especially when some of the most selective institutions and some of the most access-orientated may be disadvantaged by the benchmarking methodology. Some possible future refinements are even more questionable: the introduction of metrics based on contact hours or the incorporation of actual graduate salaries after five years to be acquired from the tax authorities.

However unsatisfactory, it seems that the TEF is here to stay—at least while a Tory government is in power—and that it will continue to remain controversial. We can also confidently assume that some of the best minds in institutions will be devoted to "gaming" the data to ensure that their institutions are positioned to protect their brand, and to thrive in the market that has been created, as well as to be able to raise their tuition fee levels when the government gives them leave. ■

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Reenvisioning Welsh Post-compulsory Education

Ellen Hazelkorn

Ellen Hazelkorn is professor emerita and director of the Higher Education Policy Research Unit (HEPRU), and education policy consultant, BH Associates, Ireland. E-mails: ellen.hazelkorn@dit.ie and info@bhassociates.eu.

Like most countries and regions around the world, Wales is facing rapid social and economic change. As a nation within the United Kingdom, its future is being shaped as much by its own decisions as by the outcome of the current Brexit negotiations. The decision to leave the European Union, known as Brexit, passed by a slim majority in Wales (52.5 percent to 47.4 percent). Today, there is little indication that attitudes have changed since the referendum, despite ongoing uncertainty about what Brexit will mean in practice.

If the ongoing confusion surrounding the United Kingdom's future relationship with Europe was not enough, Wales faces its own share of demographic, labor market, and economic challenges. By 2039, the Welsh population is projected to increase by 6.1 percent to 3.38 million. Of particular significance, and concern, is the decline in Welsh-domiciled undergraduate entrants studying in Wales, and limited (funded) opportunities to pursue advanced/postgraduate qualifications, in contrast to the number of Welsh-domiciled young people entering further education and vocational training. These education trends compound deeper structural problems in the economy.

Wales is primarily a micro, small, and medium-sized enterprise economy, comprised of low-level manufacturing and large dependency on the public sector. There are few large employers. The city of Cardiff, which is integrated into the UK economy, is an exception. Despite some economic revival since the onset of the Great Recession in 2008, Wales continues to have the lowest economic growth (measured by gross value added or GVA) of any region within the United Kingdom.

The situation presents stark challenges. How best should the educational system be organized to maximize student learning opportunities and quality, as well as research excellence? How best can educational institutions help shape the future of Welsh society and economy? How effective are the current governance arrangements, and what needs to change?

Postcompulsory Education in Wales

Over the years, the Welsh government had identified ongoing challenges for its education system stemming from the

complexity of the postsecondary landscape and governance arrangements, continuous changes to public funding structures, and requirements to broaden its range of the services to meet the needs of citizens and society in the twenty-first century. Different parts of the system had responded in distinct ways to these challenges, resulting in "different arrangements for, different degrees of engagement with, and different levels of effectiveness in the delivery of the key functions." Responsibilities were shared across a mix of Welsh government and Welsh government-sponsored bodies.

A review was commissioned. It involved interviews with key stakeholders across the educational system, with employers, academic staff and students, and different government agencies. A study of international practice was also undertaken, with respect to: regulatory and governance arrangements with reference to the role of intermediary organisations; the postsecondary landscape and issues of mission and educational diversity and differentiation; and mechanisms of coordination, including performance agreements, compacts, and profiling.

Wales is primarily a micro, small, and medium-sized enterprise economy, comprised of low-level manufacturing and large dependency on the public sector.

The review found that to make Wales more attractive to postsecondary students, graduates and other professionals, as well as to businesses, more attention would need to be placed on developing a strong middle tier of Welsh-domiciled companies, based around closer linkages between economic needs and educational institutions. To underpin these objectives, forward planning and system coordination was necessary. This meant having a macroview of demographic and geographic patterns as well as social, economic, and labor market changes, within the context of a competitive national and global perspective, and with a centralized capacity and capability to nudge or steer institutions to actually meet those needs.

Recommendations

Towards 2030: A Framework for Building a World-Class Post-Compulsory Education System for Wales set out an ambitious pathway. It proposed a new governance model for postcompulsory education based on more effective coordination among public institutions and with Welsh societal goals in mind.

Six key principles underpinned the case for reform and recommendations. These included taking a system view, emphasizing the importance of creating a coherent educational ecosystem comprised of competitive and diverse institutions, which worked collaboratively and responsibly to build excellence and critical mass. As people live longer and healthier, democratic society depends upon active, engaged, responsible citizens who are able to access education throughout their lifetime. Thus, a strong message was the role and contribution that education makes to society and the economy through its graduates, new knowledge, and innovation. These are concepts often spoken about but too often overshadowed by institutional self-interest and reputation seeking. Thus, the report stressed the importance of putting the needs of learners of all ages, genders, and talents at the center of the educational system, enabling and facilitating changing opportunities and life circumstances over time. While emphasizing the importance of "system" and "society," institutional autonomy, strengthened by institutional governance, responsibility, and accountability, was also fundamental.

The main recommendation was the proposal to establish a single regulatory, oversight, and coordinating authority to be called the *Tertiary Education Authority*. This organization would replace the myriad organizations catering for different components of postcompulsory education. The aim is to encourage better long-term and joined-up thinking about educational needs and requirements, now and into the future.

Response and Subsequent Actions

After the review was submitted in March 2016, the Welsh government moved quickly to accept and implement the key recommendations. The report was discussed in the Welsh Assembly, the parliamentary chamber of Wales, and widely endorsed by all political parties. A wide-ranging consultation process was initiated.

In January 2017, a new single regulatory, oversight, and coordinating authority for postcompulsory education was announced. It would have responsibility for the provision of funding for all levels of postcompulsory education, for research, and for ensuring quality. To be known as the Tertiary Education and Research Commission, the new agency is tasked with bringing stronger coherence to the education system, with learners and society at its heart.

Towards 2030 makes a significant contribution to envisaging education and its role in and for society in the twenty-first century. It places strong emphasis on anchoring and underpinning regional, social, cultural, and economic development, and on institutional collaboration to boost institutional and national capacity, capability, and competi-

tiveness. Above all, it stresses the need for flexible learning pathways that enable all students, from all backgrounds and ages, to move through the educational system throughout their lifetimes. Accepting that educational providers, public and private, are part of a "coordinated system," rather than individualistic self-serving institutions, is in itself an important statement. Finally, by its swift endorsement of the report's principles and recommendations, the Welsh government conspicuously diverged from the market–demand driven approach adopted by the UK government for England. ■

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English-medium Instruction and the Information Technology Parallel in Japanese Higher Education

ANNETTE BRADFORD AND HOWARD BROWN

Annette Bradford is associate professor, School of Business Administration, Meiji University, Tokyo, Japan. E-mail: bradford@meiji.ac.jp. Howard Brown is associate professor, Faculty of International Studies and Regional Development, University of Niigata Prefecture, Niigata, Japan. E-mail: brown@unii.ac.jp.

In Japan, as in much of the world, English-medium instruction (EMI) is part of an effort to internationalize the higher education sector, attract international students, and foster global competencies among students. It is receiving significant government investment and attention, and consequently assuming, perhaps not a central, but a meaningful role in higher education. However, the growth of EMI has not been without challenges and these are not unique to current internationalization efforts. It may be that we are seeing the most recent manifestation of longstanding structural issues in the Japanese higher education sector. When information technology (IT) was promoted in education in the 1990s, bureaucratic procedures, lack of technical support, and resistance to emerging pedagogies were found to be impediments to effective implementation. For anyone involved in current EMI implementation, these obstacles ring familiar. The parallels are striking and, by looking at the example of IT, we may catch a glimpse of where EMI is heading and learn where structural changes could be made.

Striking Parallels

The first parallel is related to the context of implementation. During the IT revolution, innovation was driven by a sense of crisis, a feeling that Japan had fallen behind in the race to adopt IT and urgently needed to catch up. There was a demand from potential employers for graduates with IT skills who possessed originality, individuality, creativity, initiative, and leadership abilities. Today Japan faces challenges from a globalizing society, a stagnant economy, and demographic changes; the rhetoric of crisis is again clear. The demand from business now is for more globally competent human resources: young people who have strong communication skills, understand different cultures and values, work creatively, take independent action, and can become global leaders.

Another aspect is seen in how implementation is approached at the national level. When IT was introduced, competitive grants funded initial large-scale implementation, with most resources going to elite universities. Less prestigious universities adopted IT later and on a smaller scale, without a clear mandate or coordinated strategy. The same is seen today with the national Global 30 and Top Global funding schemes supporting EMI initiatives at a small number of prestigious universities, while most EMI programs develop without government support or a central plan.

A third parallel emerges at the institutional level. Early IT initiatives were largely volunteer based and faculty led. Administrators assigned to IT projects were mainly generalists; there was a serious lack of skilled IT personnel. With this limited support, faculty leaders had to transform themselves into IT specialists. The same dynamics can be seen today. Internationalization activities and EMI programs are supported by nonspecialist administrators, many assigned to the EMI program for a limited term. Most of the leadership for EMI is coming from faculty members who, until they began working on EMI implementation, had no experience with, and limited knowledge of, EMI. Over the last 10 years, they have trained themselves to become specialists.

A fourth element concerns a focus on implementation rather than integration. In the case of IT, at the institutional level it was much more important to ensure the availability of a certain number of computers than to consider how those computers would be used to facilitate learning and teaching. Even now, a full two decades after the rush to implement IT, the infrastructure is in place, but Japan lags behind other countries in the actual educational adoption of IT. Equipment and software are widely available in universities, but little attention has been given to training or the development of pedagogy to support its usage. Similarly, much EMI implementation is characterized by decision-