

A story - about innovation & change, context & culture

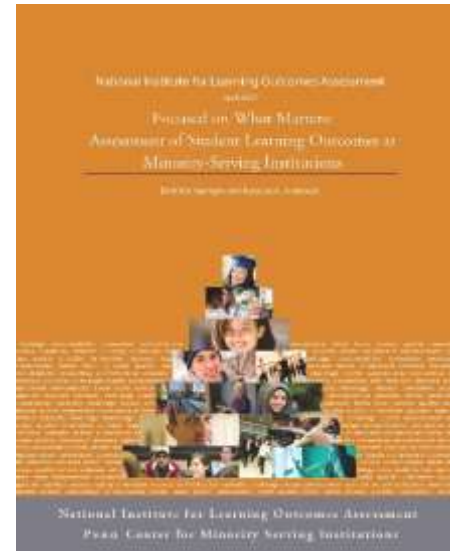
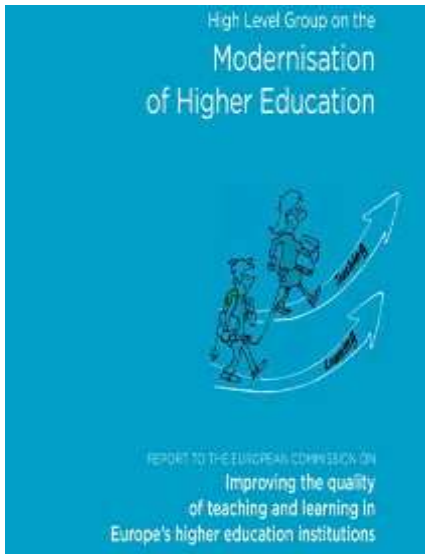


Robin Middlehurst

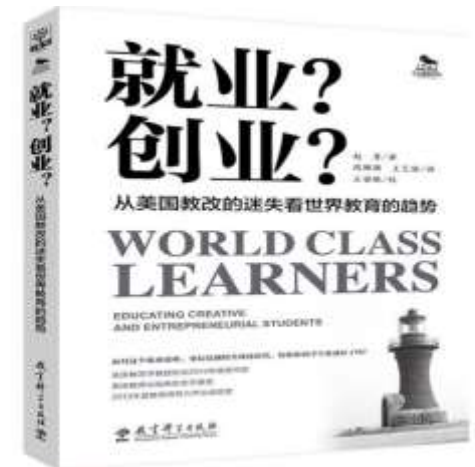
Outline

- Situating the story
 - Global, national & conceptual contexts
- Quality enhancement, innovation & change
- A national change programme
 - Start-up; creating momentum; gaining consent; into the system
- New national initiatives – spiral curriculum or re-cycling?
- 2015 QA proposals – the case for IR
- A final word on leadership...

Global contexts



Open education down under: Some national and institutional initiatives.



An expanding international 'industry'....

accreditation

benchmarking

assessment

guidelines



standards

1991 – 8 members
2015 – 250+ members

improvement

ranking

excellence

A UK story of national-level development & change

1994-1998

- How can we assure quality & broad comparability of academic standards in a diverse HE system?
- How can we define threshold standards for all HEIs?
- What does it mean to be a 'graduate' (outcomes, attributes)
- ...In different subjects, professions, work & life contexts?

2015 –

- How can we assure quality & broad comparability of academic standards in an *even more* diverse system?
- In a context of dynamic change?
- In the context of globalisation?
- How can we identify (& differentiate) excellence in learning, teaching & students' educational experiences across different providers & provision?

Conceptual



Jerome Bruner,
psychologist &
learning theorist
1915 -

- **Two modes of thought:**
 - paradigmatic or logico-scientific
 - narrative – ‘the richest learning experience comes from narrative’
- **Three modes of representation:**
 - Enactive representation (action-based)
 - Iconic representation (image-based)
 - Symbolic representation (language-based)

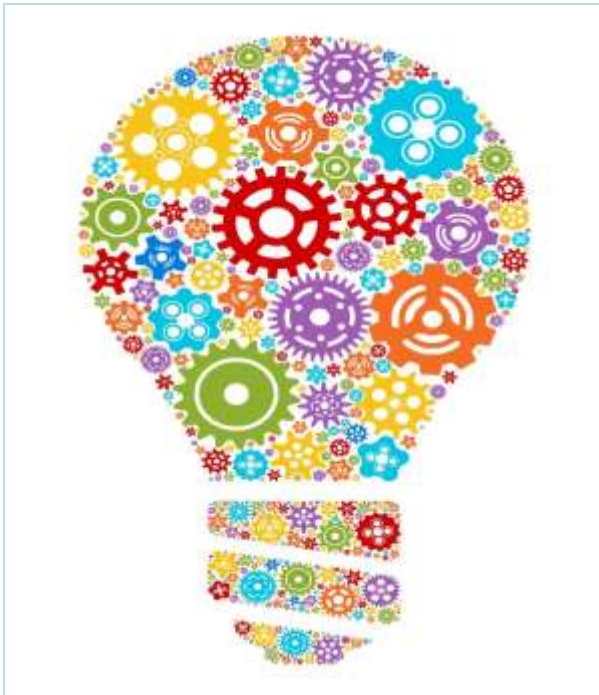
The intelligent mind creates from experience “generic coding systems that permit one to go beyond the data to new and possibly fruitful predictions.”

(Bruner, 1957, p234)

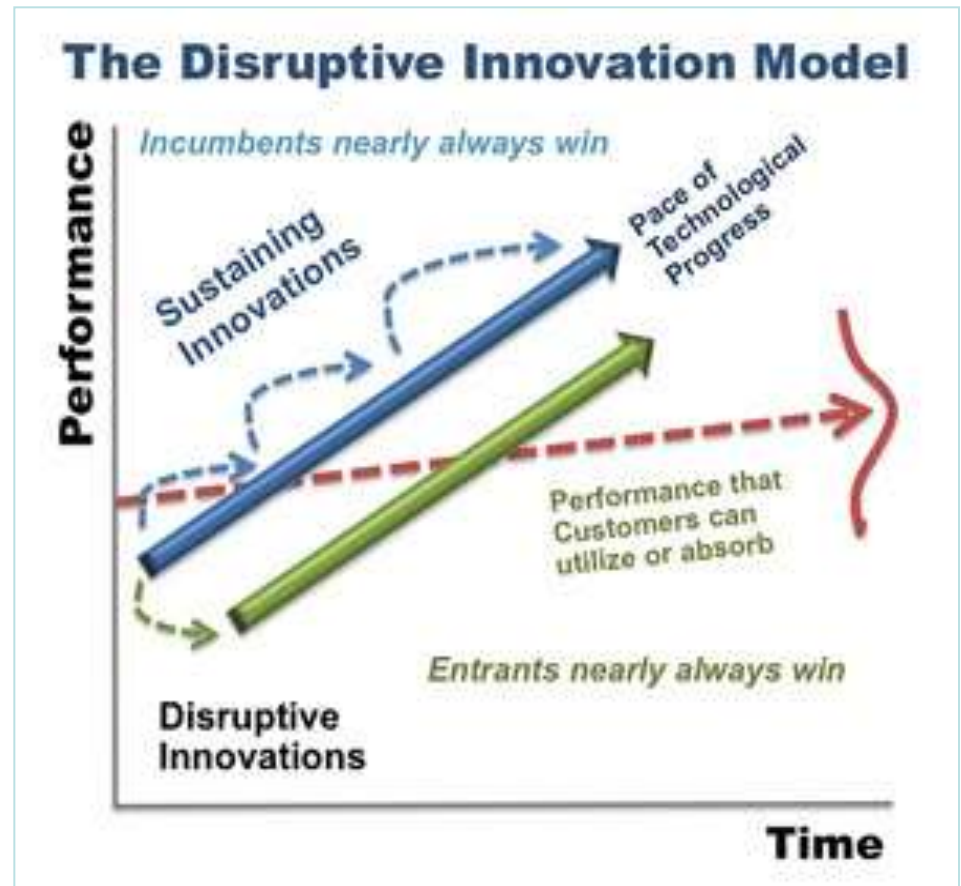
Quality enhancement & change

1 Do (action, explanation)	3 Do differently (experiment, innovate)
2 Do better (continuous, incremental improvement)	4 Do differently & better (step-change, transformation)

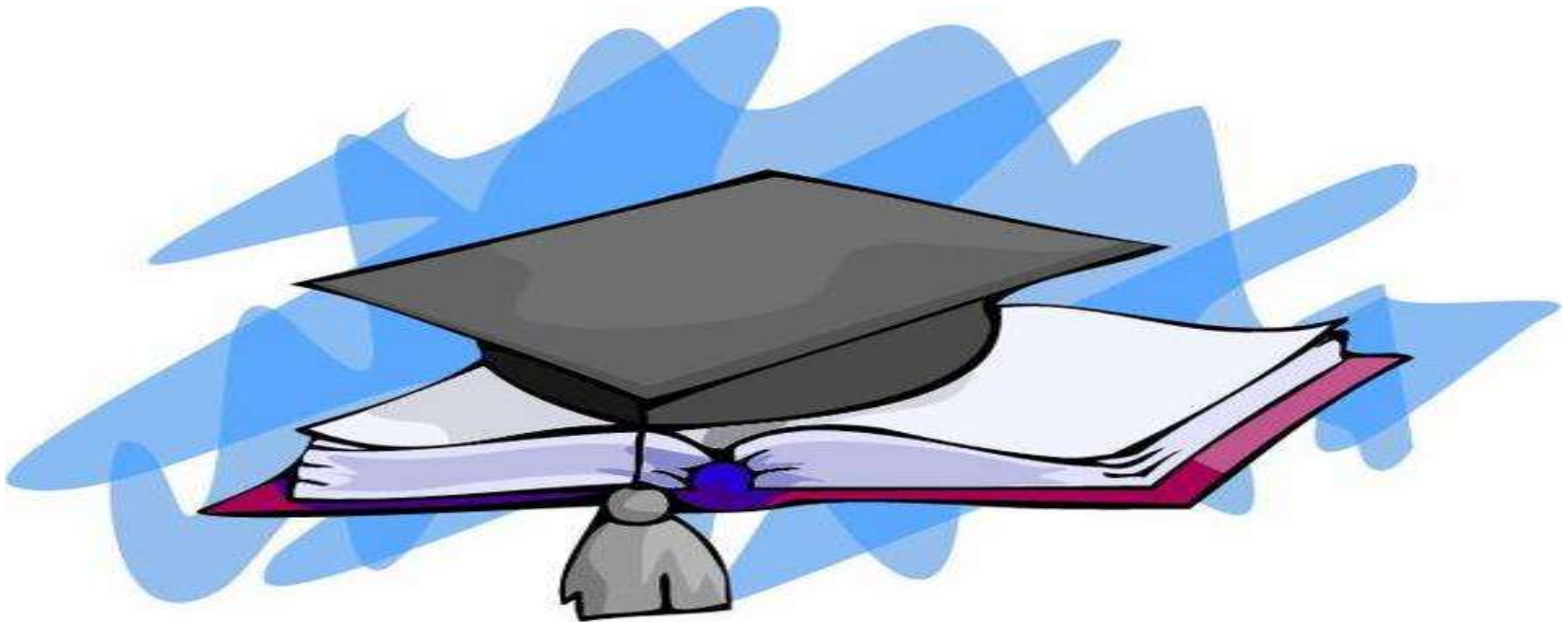
Innovation & change



Ideas, creativity, discovery



The 'Graduate Standards Programme' – a 3-year national research & development initiative



Start-up

- What's the *real* problem & where is it coming from? (substance v noise)
- Who's the audience (problem & solution)
- Analyse 'the problem': constituent elements & interests
- Map stakeholders (students, subjects/HoDs, unions, employers, PSRBs, HEIs, funders, government...)
- Start a national debate... "What is a graduate"?

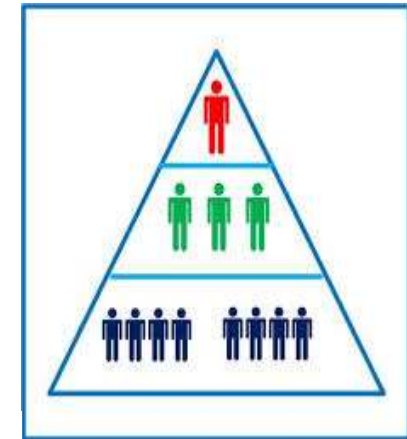
Creating momentum - feasibility

- Understanding culture
 - ‘rational argument’ – need for data and evidence
 - ‘academic tribes & territories’ – multiple perspectives
 - ‘collegiality’ – sense-making, engagement, identity, ownership within communities of practice
- Understanding context
 - what is technically possible?
 - what is desirable & proportionate?
 - what is politically acceptable?

Creating momentum - development

- Discussion, critique, debate, exploration
 - Projects addressing each element of academic standards & each set of interests
 - Publications
 - Workshops, seminars, conferences (all audiences)
 - 3rd party interest – media, OECD
 - International pilot programmes

Gaining consent



STAY OUT
OF MY
TERRITORY



Into the system



A UK story of national-level development & change

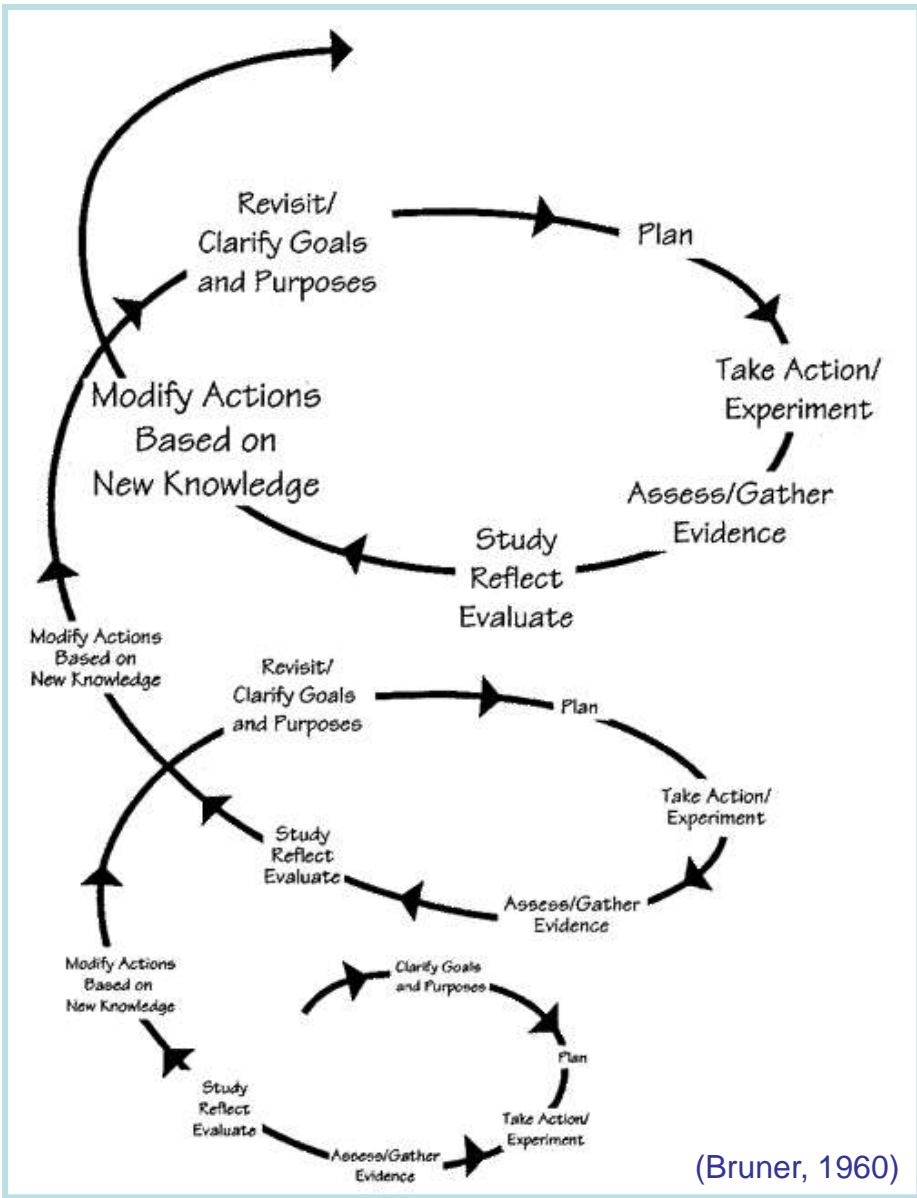
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2015 -

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Are we learning constructively?



Are we 'future-proofing' quality?



...or just
putting old wine
in new bottles?

2015 QA Proposals – The case for IR...

- Identify 'baseline for students' academic experience'
- Routinely use student outcome data for continuous improvement with meaningful external input (employers, alumni, national & international peers)
- HEP (through governance system) to give reliable assurances about continuing quality of provision
- Periodic internal & external review based on outcome data
- Annual accountability statement – signing-off action plan - including trend data
- UK-wide indicators on student outcomes published to support (internal QE) & (external) performance assessment....

How to ensure these data tell an accurate, rich and useful story?

Leadership as a team effort...

