CBHE Identities

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Abstract The chapter rejects the status of FE as a 'second chance' sector whilst asking what the implications of this label are for CBHE. It views how multiple identities of lecturers and students are understood, shaped and situated in flux. The chapter introduces a 'double shuffle' between marketisation and social justice and multiple identities within CBHE. The chapter asks how, and why, the notion of 'possible selves' may open up spaces for re-conceptualising identities within CBHE. Finally, the chapter reflects on how contemporary educational frameworks could be re-negotiated by consideration of 'dual' and 'triple' forms of professionalism in the sector.

Keywords Second chance sector • Multiple identities • Dual/triple professionalism • Marketisation • Social justice • Possible selves

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Chapter Overview

The chapter builds on the argument that the development of CBHE has been situated in diverse political, economic and social contexts which can be understood by analysing the material and institutional conditions that have shaped policies and practices. FE and CBHE have particular remits in the UK education 'system' but, rather than taking a single or fixed form, CBHE has a shifting not singular identity. Different forms of provision in the four countries and regions of the UK, within different institutions, with different levels of participation have implications for the multiple identities and practices of institutions, lecturers and students. These diverse forms of CBHE are reviewed and three key concepts introduced. First, there is an analysis of a 'double shuffle' (Hall 2005) between human capital and marketisation on the one hand and social justice on the other to show how different practices have been re-produced. Secondly, the chapter reviews the multiple identities of students, and lecturers, and asks how, and why, the notion of 'possible selves' (Markus and Nurius 1986; Rossiter 2007; Stevenson and Clegg 2013; Henderson 2018) opens up spaces for re-conceptualising identities within CBHE. Finally, the chapter reflects on how contemporary educational frameworks could be re-negotiated by arguing the multiple identities of lecturers may be re-constructed and negotiated through inter-plays between 'dual' and 'triple' forms of professionalism (Gannon 2014; Hodgson and Spours, 2019).

Context: Multiple and Diverse Forms of CBHE

CBHE is not a new sector nor does it have a single identity. Parry et al. (2012), Parry (2016), Orr (2016), Elliott (2018) and Hodgson and Spours (2019) each map the origins of Further Education Colleges (FECs) documenting how vocational and liberal arts education were intertwined. Elliott traces distinctive histories of CBHE from technical institutes and their vocational origins through to the growth of day-release courses (Simmons 2016), Non-Advanced Further Education (NAFE) and the emergence of Advanced Further Education (AFE) (see: Feather 2012; Parry 2016). Other dimensions of vocational higher education, including the development of Higher National Certificates (HNC) and Diplomas (HND), have shaped the contemporary landscape and introduction of Foundation Degrees in 2001.

Parry et al. (2012) and Parry (2016) also note several features and trends in the complex and shifting development of CBHE in England. For example, those students studying for HE and higher-level qualifications in England in FE are now taught in four main types of FE and other institutions:

- The majority study at a general FEC where most young and adult learners are studying other academic, vocational, general and basic levels
- A smaller proportion are taught at specialist FECs
- A smaller number are taught at specialist adult residential colleges
- Remainder are taught in some sixth form colleges (Parry et al. 2012: 44–45).

Elliott (2018) emphasises how these different forms of provision have provided opportunities designed to meet the diverse needs of communities and the economic needs of sub-regions and regions. CBHE in England has consistently been tasked by policymakers with addressing perceived local skills gaps, as well as enhancing social mobility (see: Orr 2016): a 'double shuffle' (Hall 2005) between human capital and social justice. The Kennedy Report (1997) 'Learning works: widening participation in further education', a key report on adult learning in further education, emphasised that:

> 'The ladders linking further education and higher education are extending all the time, and higher education will increasingly be delivered by the further education sector' (10).

Successive phases of policymaking, franchising and partnerships developed FE-HE connections and these took different forms. They included indirect funding and a sub-contracting of student numbers to partner colleges and direct funding for colleges from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) for HNCs and HNDs. The subsequent Dearing Report (NCIHE 1997), and prospectus published by HEFCE (2000) then led to the introduction of the first CBHE Foundation Degrees in 2001.

Hall (2005) argued that such policies were designed, and practices produced, that exemplified tensions or a 'double shuffle' between perceived economic benefits of human capital and competing demands of equity and

social justice (2005: 329)—but that economic imperatives were dominant. This metaphor of a 'shuffle' also provides a conceptual lens for understanding the struggles between marketisation and multiple identities and diverse possibilities of different forms of practice for CBHE in different settings. The Foundation Degree, by addressing both a 'perceived graduate level skills shortage' and the affordability of local forms of HE (see McKenzie and Schofield 2018: 315) exemplified this 'shuffle'. Policies were represented as clear and fixed rather than contested and in the 'flux' (see Ball 2017) of a recurring process of policy and practice. The neoliberal strands of 'human capital' and economic gain were in a dominant position while social democratic values were subordinate.

Jones (2004), in an earlier study of one of the first round of FD pilots, noted how the language of the prospectus for the new FD award defined students in terms of 'supply' and 'evidence of marketing opportunities' in which 'Bids must demonstrate that their programmes will meet employer and skill needs and show how they will develop students' employability' (HEFCE 2000: 19). Potential students were not represented as social actors but ascribed an abstract character in which their change, progression and development were determined (Jones 2004). As Fairclough argued, 'The absence of responsible agents further contributes to constructing change as inevitable' (2000: 26). For example, the language of HEFCE (2000) was promotional not dialogical, using lists and bullet points of the 'cascade of change' showing how the new degrees would meet employer and skill needs. This was presented as inevitable and conceived in a particular 'business-speak' form. One example of this was the first round of pilots (2001–2004) in which a University in North West England worked in partnership with five FE Colleges and their respective local authorities to design a FD in Community Governance producing a prospectus which framed 'outreach' not as an act towards the community but as meeting the needs of local business communities.

While new forms of provision were marketed, there has been a declining number of students on FD and HNC/Ds courses (between 2013 and 2017, CBHE FD-level study declined from 51,890 to 33,975; HNC/D-level study declined from 51,890 to 33,975 [HESA 2019]). This is in contrast to the numbers for undergraduate CBHE first degrees from 1,533,950 in 2013/14 to 1,621,725 in 2017/18. While it is estimated that the overall growth of CBHE went from 8% (Hodgson et al. 2015: 4) in 2012 to 11% (AoC 2016) of the total population of England's HE-level students, there were regional differences to these figures with the largest

amount of CBHE teaching in the North West of England and a larger proportion of part-time CBHE was taught in the North East and West Midlands regions (Saraswat et al. 2015). In 2012, 18% of all HE students in Scotland and Northern Ireland studied in FE Colleges but only 1.4% of FE students in Wales studied at HE level. Gallacher (2017) reported that by 2016, 22 % of all HE students in Scotland studied in its FE Colleges. However, in Wales in 2016–17, HE students in FE colleges were only 1% of all student enrolments (Stats Wales 2017).

The choice of provision varies too. Gallacher noted that 74% of HE-level students in colleges in Scotland are enrolled on HNC/Ds (and a further 11% are enrolled on other Higher National units), while only 2% are enrolled on first degrees (SFC 2016). Whereas, in their summary of FE provision in England, the AoC (2019: 9) report that 86% of colleges teach Foundation Degrees and colleges teach 59% of all Foundation Degrees in Scotland:

> Most HE courses in colleges are independent of the universities, in that they are based on Higher National Certificates (HNCs) and Higher National Diplomas (HNDs), which are not developed in co-operation with the universities, and are not validated by them. (Gallacher 2017: 713).

The latest 'College Key Facts 2018–19' (AoC 2019) summarises the contemporary scope and differences between colleges teaching CBHE in England. In February 2019, 204 out of 257 FECs in England provided undergraduate and postgraduate courses. In particular, 86% of colleges taught Foundation Degrees and colleges taught 82% of HNC/Ds and 59% of all FDs (AoC 2019: 9) but only seven colleges in England have foundation degree awarding powers and only two have taught degree awarding powers.

Diversity, Difference and 'Possible Selves': Multiple Identities of Institutions, Students and Lecturers in CBHE

Parry et al. (2012), Parry (2016) and Avis and Orr (2016) emphasise the diversity and differences between colleges providing HE, and the complexity of institutional identities within FECs, between HE and FE level provision within HE. For example, HE is taught in the majority of colleges but 52 of these taught 50% of CBHE students (Parry et al. 2012).

There are also significant regional differences with clusters where, in one example, Avis and Orr (2016) note 3,000 students went to three colleges while the majority of FECs have fewer than 100 students. Interpreting binaries between FE and HE are also complex. It may be tempting to see HE and FE in competition but, as Avis and Orr argue a binary plays down institutional differences within and between FE and HE. Not only are there dual-sector institutions (Bathmaker and Thomas 2009; Parry et al. 2012) but FE-in-HE will also be present in HE institutions—see, for example, the Level 3 Foundation Year.

These examples of complex and multiple identities have implications for institutions but also students and lecturers of college-based and other forms of HE. Parry et al. (2012) and Saraswat et al. (2015) reported that the majority were studying at under not post-graduate level. Of this cohort, just under a half were studying at FD level, nearly a quarter a Bachelor's Degree and another quarter either an HNC or HND. Within the overall CBHE undergraduate cohort, the ratio of part to full-time CBHE students varied. For example, 60% per cent of students on Bachelor's Degrees were on full-time programmes. By contrast, of another 64,000 students studying for higher-level qualifications (or credits) leading to a variety of vocational, technical and professional qualifications, most studied part-time. The majority of the remaining 5000 students taking taught postgraduate programmes were part-time students too. This intersects with a series of other characteristics embodying social class, age, gender and ethnicity. However, the overall decline in part-time CBHE, in all the regions of England, was evident in the data Saraswat et al. (2015) examined. Regional differences were reported too. A decline of 44% in the North East (calculated as difference between 2008/09 and 2012/13) compared with a 33% decline in London and 20% in the West Midlands and the East of England regions. Avis and Orr (2016) recognised the same trend. In their analysis of patterns of HE enrolments in England, between 2008 and 2012, they noted the number of entrants to part-time HE courses in England fell by 37%.

While Duckworth and Smith warn that the abstraction of 'the FE sector' reduces it through a process of simplification (2019) they also argue that participation and practices have been shaped in 'increasingly reductive and instrumentalist terms by successive governments' (2019: 9). For example, in earlier work, Parry et al. (2012) also emphasised that students in CBHE, compared with those in HE, are older. Sixty-Five per cent of students in CBHE were 23 years and over. However, Saraswat et al. (2015)

note a decline in students in the 25 and over band. Between 2008/09 and 2012/13 the number of students over 25 has fallen, those aged between 21 and 24 remained stable while those under 21 has risen (Saraswat et al. 2015: 68). Bathmaker (2016) and Jenkins (2017) have both analysed these patterns of participation. Jenkins (2017) placed these trends in CBHE in the wider context of changing patterns of part-time HE and the decline in the number of mature students. Between 2010/2011 and 2013/2014 the proportion of UK/other EU undergraduate entrants, to English HE institutions and FE colleges studying part-time, fell from 40% to 27% (HEFCE 2014). Bathmaker (2016) associated this with government austerity measures introduced by the Conservative/Liberal Democrat Coalition government (2010–2015) and Conservative government (2015-) that contributed to this change. First, between 2011 and 2012, there were cuts to HE spending of 7% and in FE spending was cut by 18%. In 2014–15, cuts to HE spending were 18%, while FE spending was cut by 7% in 2015–16 (2016: 22). Secondly, in England, policy has shifted responsibility from the state to an individual in meeting tuition fee costs. While there were fees of £3290 in 2011/12 from 2012/13 students had to pay £9000 through a student loan and then repayment after graduation. In addition to fees, in 2015, the Conservative government announced a further loan system to replace the maintenance grant for low income students. Jenkins (2017: 453) extended this analysis and emphasised that these reforms to student funding in higher education in England trebled the cost of HE study. Jenkins argued that while the expressed intention of extending loans to some part-time students was presented as a way of ensuring parity between the costs of full-time and part-time study, in practice increased fees, the introduction of loans, combined with evidence of debt-aversion among adult learners led to very substantial cuts in the number of part-time and mature students in HE (Callender 2014). Two further differences, beyond a measure of age, were highlighted by Parry et al. (2012). More women took all qualifications except for the HNC and HND. However, in terms of representations of ethnicity, the FE sector taught a lower proportion of BAME students. In data reported in 2012, White/White British students represented 83% of the total of students in CBHE compared with 68% of all HEIs.

Research on the identities and experiences of students within FE and HE provides other perspectives on patterns of participation by exploring the complexities and intersections of age, gender and class. Crozier et al. (2019) analyse experiences of working class and BAME students attending

elite universities. But their use of the concept of hybridity, and metaphor of mapping borders of identify, also opens up spaces for understanding the experiences of students within CBHE (Robinson 2012; Esmond 2015; Smith 2017). Crozier et al. argue that

> identity formations are processes of change, development and renewal…It is a fusion of experiences, values and 'cultures' (in the broadest sense); we conclude that these can be creative experiences but are often achieved through struggle (2019: 925).

For example, the tensions between dominant policy discourses of CBHE and the perceived value of the FD, and complexity of students' experiences and self-identities were reviewed by Robinson (2012). Students' ambitions were markedly different depending on their age, whether they were full- or part-time students and their gender. While younger students emphasised the vocational importance of the qualification, older part-time students recognised multiple values of the FD, beyond their current roles at work and roles as mothers (2012: 459), where relevant, by also highlighting intrinsic benefits of study. Esmond, in research (2015) with part-time FD students, also argued the dynamic of work and multiple identities were complex too. While students emphasised their identities in work, rather than as students, the relationship between work and study was often framed in terms of protection and the possible loss of a job—rather than the opportunity to expand opportunities (2015: 27). Similarly, the notion of a 'triple shift' (Smith 2017) between higher education, the workplace, and home—and the experiences of student-as parents—demonstrates the complex and shifting forms of struggle. These identify shifts combined protecting familial roles, identities as a foundation degree student and managing roles in the workplace (2017: 115). In parallel with the metaphor of mapping borders of identity (Crozier et al. 2019), Smith found that work-based learning tasks 'took place on the margins or in the shadows of the workplace' (2017: 118) and concluded this paralleled the experiences of those students who sought to maintain their identities as mothers. By contrast, Smith also reported student-fathers had defined 'ring-fenced' time, so they did not need to fit study around existing family responsibilities.

Stevenson and Clegg (2013) report little research exploring how learners orientated themselves towards their futures, after completing their degree, despite policy texts including Browne's (2010) which emphasised

individual financial gain from participating in HE and a trajectory of individual upward social mobility. But, the work of Markus and Nurius (1986) on 'possible selves' provides a framework for understanding different dimensions of self-knowledge and multiple identities and can be applied to CBHE. For example, by defining how this 'domain of possible selves' relates to

> how individuals think about their potential and about their future. Possible selves are the ideal selves that we would very much like to become. They are also the selves we could become, and the selves we are afraid of becoming (Markus and Nurius 1986: 954).

Rossiter (2007) extended this concept by applying it to adult learning and the means by which change, growth and goal achievement may occur. The 'present' is experienced and understood in relation to both the past but also the future. The notion of an 'elaborated future self' is one which helps to map specific strategies and activities. But, an individual's view of what is desirable/undesirable is framed by socioeconomic status, past academic experience, family, friends and peers—or what Fuller et al. (2011) term a 'network of intimacy'. Identities can be interpreted through interplays between particular sets of objective and subjective factors that generate particular forms of identity and practice. Stevenson and Clegg (2013: 27) emphasised that attention to 'possible selves,' and future possibilities, provides a more complex and nuanced narrative for understanding the diverse experiences of students in HE compared to how futures are embodied in policy texts; see, for example, HEFCE's (2000) assertion, that programmes *will meet* employer and skill needs *and develop* students' employability (emphasis added) and the assumptions of financial gain within the Browne Review (2010). Henderson (2018) extended this analysis of policy narratives by examining 20 institutional webpages and representations of CBHE students. Using an explorative sample, based on a range of colleges in England from London and four other regions, Henderson reported three recurring themes: CBHE was 'supportive,' 'real' and a 'low-cost alternative' 2018: 1112). 'Support' was embodied in smaller class sizes and these, in turn, were associated with widening participation because of the capacity of the institution to respond to students' needs (2018: 1113). However, Henderson also argues this example could be interpreted differently. Discourses may constitute, not only reflect, 'support.' In this instance, the 'possible self' is created as 'vulnerable'

within Archer's (2007) pathologised discourse of 'the widening participation student'. Henderson concludes that this suggests 'the paradoxical position of college-based HE, which must define itself *against* university-based HE, while *differentiating* itself from it' (Henderson, 2018: 1115. Emphasis added)—a further manifestation of the second and specific form of 'double shuffle'—between material conditions and institutional forms of marketisation, on the one hand, and spaces for distinctive forms of pedagogy on the other.

NEGOTIATING THE CURRENT EDUCATIONAL FRAMEWORK: PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES AND DIVERSE FORMS OF PRACTICE

If the demographic profiles and identities of students in CBHE are complex, the motivations and ways of conceptualising the roles of lecturers in FE can also be interpreted through the first example of the shuffle between human capital and social justice and a second example of the struggle between marketisation and space for different forms of professional identity and pedagogy. In the marketised spaces it occupies, English FE has had to develop multiple roles and forms of provision, including CBHE. Teaching may include a range of vocationally orientated sub-degree qualifications. These may include foundation degrees but also HNDs, HNCs and other professionally orientated qualifications. In one sense, Hodgson and Spours argue, this has 'contributed to a weakened sense of professional identity' (2019: 229). However, Avis and Orr also acknowledge the motivations of lecturers in CBHE and ask why their commitments to 'increasing the participation of excluded and disadvantaged groups reflects an interest in social justice and a concern to provide enhanced opportunities for non-traditional learners' (2016: 51).

This question also relates to debates on 'dual' and 'triple' forms of professionalism and has implications for how identities are ascribed and negotiated and how the inner drives of a CBHE lecturer are understood and conceptualised (see Gannon 2014). Notions of 'dual' professionalism conceptualise the combination of a vocational identity with that of lecturer (Gannon 2014). But, for the lecturer, a state of flux may produce multiple rather than dual, or binary, identities. Hodgson and Spours (2019: 232) argue that this is a triple professionalism:

'those working in the FE and skills system continue to fulfil the function of dual professionals, that is experts in both their occupation and as teachers, they will also need a greater emphasis on the ability to work beyond the boundaries of the institution and towards the wider geographical, policy and economic landscape.

In an earlier review of professionalism and professional learning in FE, Gannon (2014) summarised Spours' emerging definition of 'triple professionalism' grounded in how teachers' practices are shaped by the context and conditions they may work within. A series of seminars, hosted at the Institute of Education, London, in 2013-13, explored the nature of professionalism at four critical levels: international, national, institutional and classroom/workshop. Spours referred to a range of professional dispositions: the ability to be experts in their own profession or subject area, to be inspirational and expert teachers and to be able to work with other partners—particularly in their locality or region. This form of professionalism, characterised as 'democratic,' 'activist' and 'ecological,' was conceptualised as underpinning the co-production of knowledge and professional development. In this instance, leadership in FE (and perhaps CBHE) is seen in a supportive role. Spours also identified that the production of this form of professionalism needed to be nurtured by greater time for initial teacher training and postgraduate study, access to local, national and international communities of practice focused on improving teaching and learning and 'expansive working environments'. Fuller et al. (2011) summarised the attributes of such environments. These include: the involvement of all staff in decision-making (beyond one-off events); the promotion and use of extensive forms of constructive feedback and the embodiment of values including respect, nurture and a sharing of expertise. In earlier work (2003, 2010), Fuller et al. (2011) acknowledge intra-institutional differences. For example, it is possible for a single organisation to display a 'spiky profile' with different departments exhibiting different combinations of 'restrictive' or 'expansive' traits (Gannon 2014: 11)—and these, in turn, may be in flux rather than fixed.

Dual and triple forms of professionalism within CBHE, relate to the work of Hoyle and John (1995) and Cunningham (2015) on 'restricted' and 'extended' forms of professionality. 'Restricted' forms of professionality are characterised by skills derived from experience but limited to an immediate time and place and a perception of each event in isolation from others. By contrast, 'extended' professionality is framed and mediated

between experience, theory and perspectives placing each event in a broader social and political context (Hoyle and John 1995). Cunningham (2015) expands this notion of an 'extended' professional further by reviewing different forms of 'hybrid' or 'blended' professionalism in which opportunities to work collaboratively with others from within and outside an institution are widened. A range of regional and national networks include the Association for Research in Post Compulsory Education (ARPCE), British Education Research Association (BERA) and its Post Compulsory Education Special Interest Group, the Learning and Skills Research Network and annual events organised by individual Universities (for example, 'Reimagining FE' at Birmingham City University) illustrate these collaborations and possibilities.

However, the conditions of possibility for research, and an openness to new ideas, are not only shaped by the values of those who teach (Elliott 2012; Duckworth and Smith 2019). They are also formed by uneasy struggles between political contexts, material and institutional conditions in which CBHE is located and the time, as well as space, for developing individual and collective research and collaborative curriculum development. For example, in one sense, the current debate about the place of the Foundation Year, in HE, and how it may compete with other forms of CBHE and Access to HE, in FE, (see Augar Report 2019) is one example of both shifting boundaries between FE and HE but also within HE in specific settings. This competition may sit uneasily alongside others forms of partnership between HE and FE, and within an HEI. However, it also exemplifies contemporary processes of marketisation where, ironically, in this instance, specific universities developing Foundation Year programmes are adopting a quick response to market opportunities—associated with dominant narratives about FE. These processes may take precedence over previous forms of collaboration nurtured in partnerships between FECs and HEIs. This example of marketisation, combined with managerialism, is both a 'mode of regulation' but also a 'measure of productivity and output'—with institutional but also individual advantage secured (Lea and Simmons 2012: 182).

CONCLUSION

This chapter has emphasised different dimensions of the multiple identities of institutions, students and lecturers in CBHE. It is grounded in Elliott's call for the need to understand the spaces and diverse possibilities

in which CBHE may flourish. The chapter also relates to Keenan's analysis of the identities of CBHE lecturers and students and Kadi-Hanifi's review of research within CBHE. Each policy episode reviewed earlier illustrates organisational forms of FE, HE, CBHE or FE in HE. These, and contemporary enactments of practice, are specific to the identities of 'embedded' (Duckworth and Smith 2019) or 'anchored' institutions—rooted in urban and rural landscapes (Elliott 2018). On one level, how each diverse college, or university, imagines its future, and multiple identities within CBHE, is bound up in different combinations of local, regional, national and international missions and markets. However, these struggles also exemplify two manifestations of a 'double shuffle' threaded through this chapter. First, a struggle between CBHE meeting the material demands of human capital, on the one hand, and social justice on the other but also, secondly, a specific further struggle between the marketisation of FE and spaces for the multiple identities of students and lecturers in CBHE.

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