

Social Diversity & Difference Seminar
Researching Inequalities in Teaching & Learning

Degrees of Success

Diversity in educational pathways and transition to HE

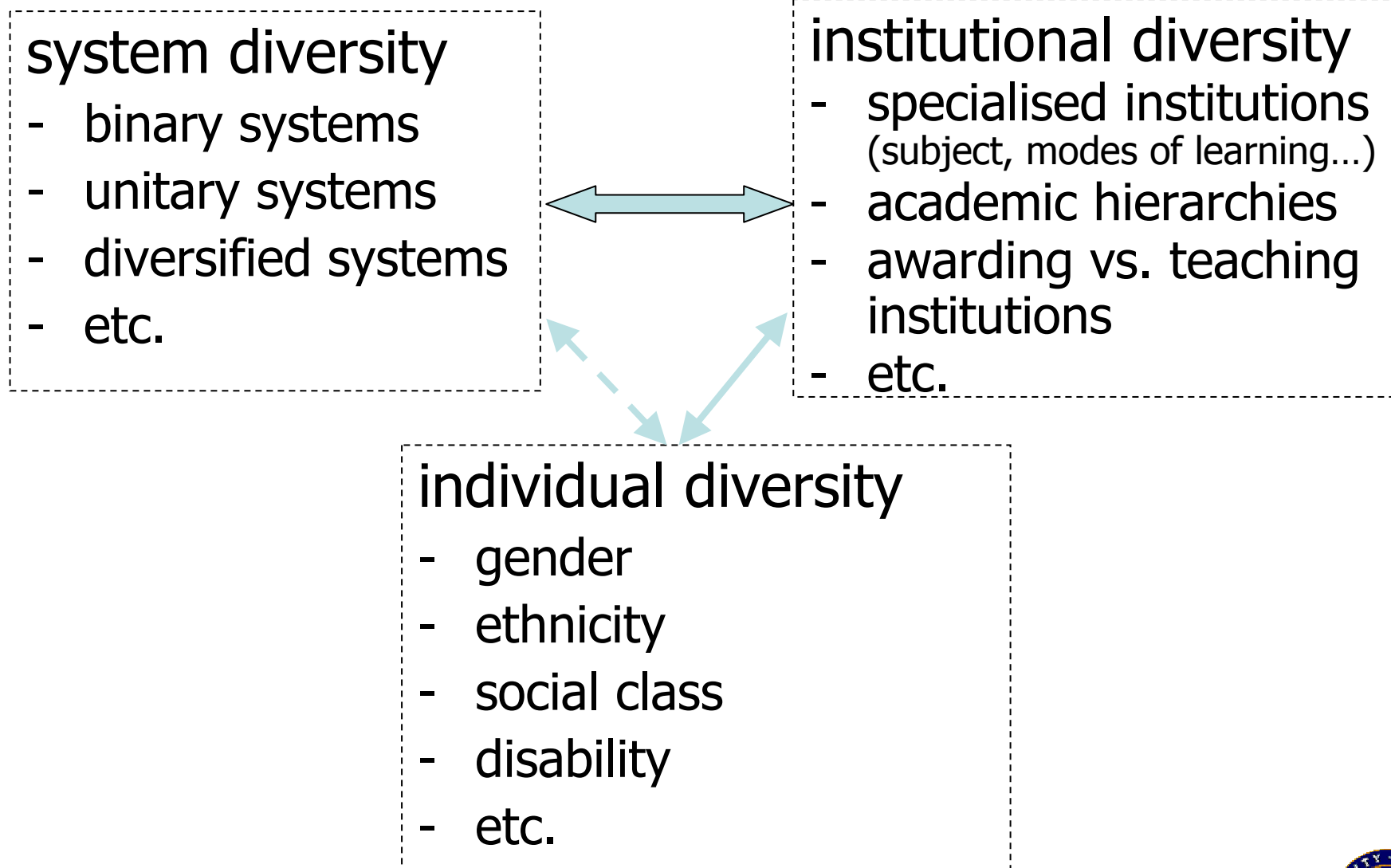
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Notions of diversity in HE



HE Initial Participation Rates by Gender and Age 2005/06 (prov.I)

Gender

Age	Males			Females		
	Initial Entrants	Population	HEIPR (%)	Initial Entr.	Population	HEIPR(%)
17	885	346,315	0.3%	1,360	326,490	0.4%
18	63,350	342,095	18.5%	78,400	323,255	24.3%
19	31,265	340,435	9.2%	33,085	321,000	10.3%
20	8,875	348,335	2.5%	9,005	326,675	2.8%
21	4,415	337,780	1.3%	4,960	320,455	1.5%
22	3,055	329,725	0.9%	4,110	320,215	1.3%
23	2,475	319,655	0.8%	3,650	320,480	1.1%
24	2,280	331,535	0.7%	3,520	335,780	1.0%
25	2,195	337,320	0.7%	3,520	340,535	1.0%
26	2,095	328,735	0.6%	3,225	329,105	1.0%
27	1,860	311,160	0.6%	2,850	309,485	0.9%
28	1,690	307,525	0.5%	2,650	305,555	0.9%
29	1,580	316,775	0.5%	2,585	312,290	0.8%
30	1,560	325,970	0.5%	2,480	321,635	0.8%
17-30 (Overall)	127,575		37.6%	155,405		48.1%

Source: DfES (2007): National Statistics First Release. SFR 10/2007, 27 March 2007, p. 5 (Coverage: England)



Ethnicity

Ethnicity of home applicants to Higher Education, 1996/97, 2004/05 and 2005/06 entry

Ethnicity	Entry for academic year		
	1996/97	2004/05	2005/06
White	80.4%	76.0%	76.4%
Asian	8.8%	8.6%	9.4%
Black	3.7%	4.5%	5.2%
Unknown	5.5%	6.7%	5.3%
Other	1.6%	4.1%	3.7%

Source: Universities UK (2006): Patterns of higher education institutions in the UK: Sixth report. (Brian Ramsden). London: Universities UK, p. 56



Social Class

Age Participation Index (API) by social class (percentage)

Year of Entry	Social Class							I-IIIIn	IIIIm-V
	I Professional	II Interm.	IIIIn Skilled (non-manual)	IIIIm Skilled (manual)	IV Partially skilled	V Unskilled			
1991	55	36	22	11	12	6	35	11	
1992	71	39	27	15	14	9	40	14	
1993	73	42	29	17	16	11	43	16	
1994	78	45	31	18	17	11	46	17	
1995	80	46	31	18	17	12	47	17	
1996	82	47	32	18	17	13	48	18	
1997	72	45	29	18	17	13	45	17	
1998	72	45	29	18	17	13	45	17	
1999	76	48	33	19	19	14	48	18	
2000	76	48	33	19	19	14	48	18	
2001	79	50	33	21	18	15	50	19	

Source: Commons Hansard Written Answers text for 16 June 2005 (British Parliament), Vol. 435

Disability

Percentage of disabled within all students

	Academic Year			
	1994/5	1999/2000	2004/05	2005/06
Postgraduate	1.2%	2.9%	5.0%	5.1%
Undergraduate	3.1%	4.2%	6.0%	6.4%
Total	2.6%	3.9%	5.8%	6.1%

Source: Performance Indicators (HESA and HEFCE) (reproduced in Tinklin, T., Riddell, S., Wilson, A. (2004): "Policy and provision for disabled students in higher education in Scotland and England: the current state of play" in: *Studies in Higher Education*, 29, p. 640)

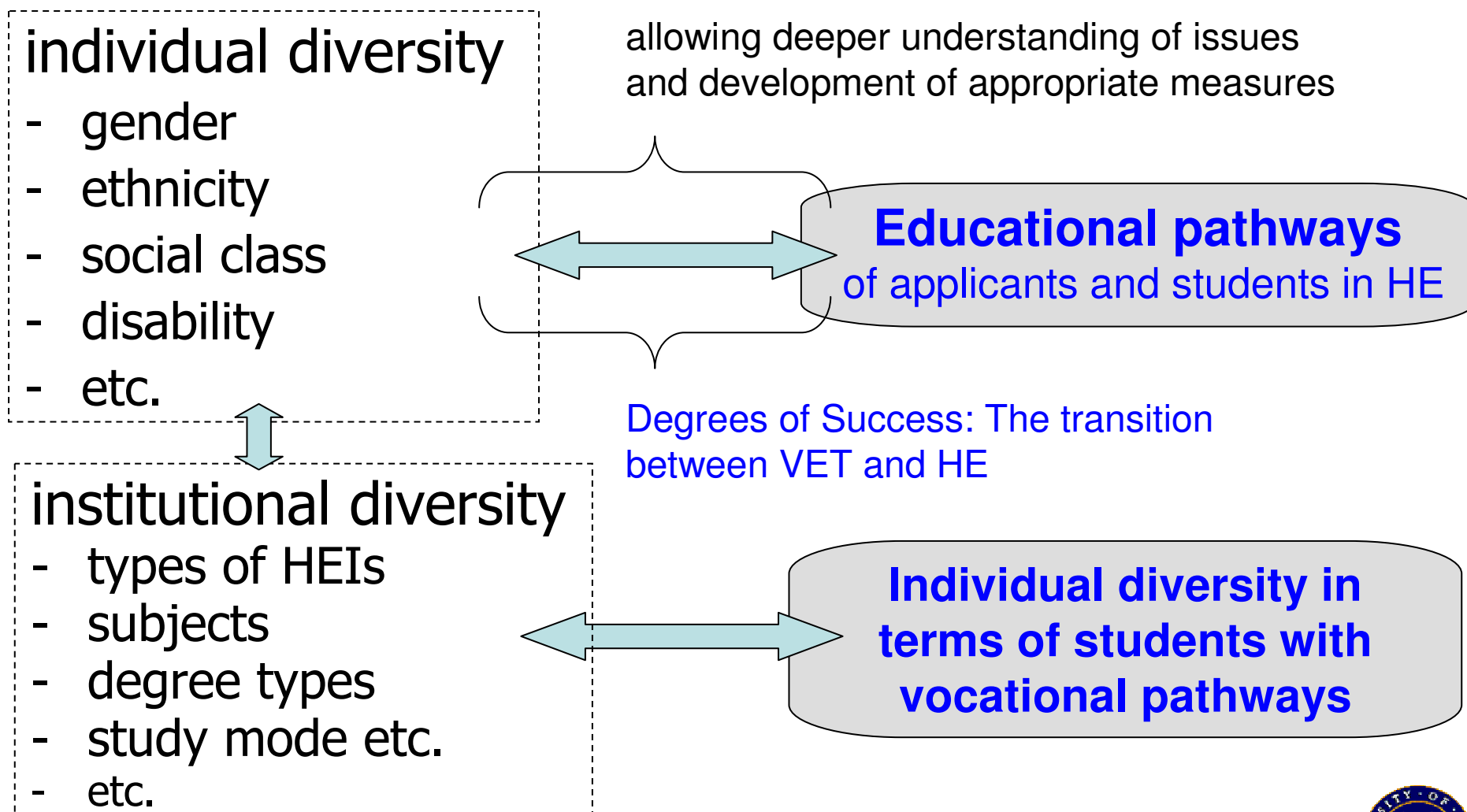


Limitations of past analyses of individual diversity

- emphasis on description rather than explanation of phenomena
- unhelpful categorisation of data (i.e. in terms of ethnicity)
- lack of information and explanation of interactional effects (‘white working class males’) on likelihood of participation in HE
- limited impact on achieving widening participation goals



Alternative views on diversity



Slide 8

M3

I am not sure if we want to talk about "educational background" or about "pathways" or "learning trajectories"?

Maybe say something about the way educational background is used up to now: School-type, sometimes achievement. That's pretty much it (at least from the official side), although they have the data, if you ask them five or six times...

My way through these interesting boxes would be: single arrow from "ind. diversity" to educational background, from there single arrow to individual diversity in terms of students...", from there single/double arrow to institutional diversity, and a single arrow from ind. to inst. diversity.

Or maybe first leave "ind. diversity in terms of students with VET" out, and then in a second slide substitute the "educational background" with this one.

However, what we have to discuss tomorrow is: Is there an independent effect of the educational background in our perspective, is it a moderator-effect, an interaction effect, or what?

What does taking the educational background into account really gain us?

MichaelH, 16/07/2007

Difficulties in researching diversity in educational background

Degrees of Success: The transition between VET and HE

- collection, grouping and presentation of data in national datasets
- definitions/conceptualisations of educational pathways
- interplay with other sources of diversity

definition of 4 types of pathways

- academic
- vocational
- access/FD
- other

→ pragmatic decision to make quantitative data analysis possible
→ conceptualisations of pathways in qualitative part of our work



First findings: Quantitative analysis

Educational background	Overall (% of all students)	Gender (% of females)	Socio-Economic Group (% of students from the lowest three classes)	AGE (MEAN)
A-Level	70.2	55.6	18.2	19.2
Vocational Qualific.	20.0	52.4	26.6	20.2
Foundation/Access	9.4	69.0	24.1	26.3
Other	16.8	62.8	15.1	24.6

- Big differences within the different pathways concerning “traditional” dimensions of diversity
- Students with vocational qualifications extremely interesting in terms of diversity/widening participation
- Are educational pathways merely reproducing other dimensions of individual diversity or have they an additional (positive or negative) effect?



First findings: Qualitative analysis

Computing admissions lecturer (E2, CL2) asked about qualities in student intake:

We find that students who come in with the what you call *'outside the norm' A-levels, people who come in with occupational qualifications and BTECs*, tend to apply themselves more, primarily because of circumstances. *They are doing BTEC/vocational qualifications mainly because they slipped somewhere on the line, and maybe because they haven't been able to go to a good school to do A-levels.* So, for them, they see it as a second chance, and from where I sit, I see their *motivation to apply is stronger or higher, than the students who have come in via the more traditional A-level route [...] the point is they are less likely to drop out or to fail. [...]*

They are more engaged because they learn a lot more from the session and I also teach them in smaller groups, tutorials, and in terms of tutorials the students who ask the questions and who *really engage in the tutorial, are the ones whom I think have come in through the BTEC route, [...] and the AVCE route.*

- Pathways represent categories for HE lecturers' thinking about student intake
- Pathways and personal characteristics interact



First findings: Qualitative analysis

Lecturer in Nursing, E2, NL1, asked whether Access courses offered by local FE Colleges are a good route into the nursing programme

L: Yeah, from an academic advisor's point of view it's brilliant because it usually sets them up well for what we do, and I don't know if I am allowed to say this, but personally I would say that it is a much better route than the cadet programme and pre-nursing students that we get through the NVQ route. They seem to be more able to cope with what we ask them to do if they come in via FE Access than if they come in through the NVQ route.

- Pathways work as categories for analysing qualitative data
- Report on differences in pathways, but particularly 'vocational pathway' needs to be differentiated further



First findings: Qualitative analysis

Lecturer In Nursing, E2, NL3, asked about the ideal intake of students

Ideally we look for a mixture, because of the wider access we get students from different walks of life with different qualifications, it gives a good mix and that works well certainly in the adult programme. [...] It's good, there's a support element in there as well, having more mature students, students with families, as well as having younger students who've come straight from school, and some of them find value in that as well in terms of support.

[...] Some of our students as well come from years of experience in practice, as care assistants and support workers, and go on to do the HNC and come into practice as well, and they're actually very motivated and probably go out the door at the end with their registration, very enthusiastic, and probably go quite a long journey down the road in terms of academia as well. But again it comes from being very motivated to go and take the HNC route to start off with to come onto the programmes.



First findings: Qualitative analysis

Business, admissions lecturer, S1, BAL1:

I rely extensively upon the kind of information that a senior member of the staff of the college would have to say, usually they provide the reference and they would give very clear pointers as to whether this individual is likely to benefit from 3rd year entry. And sometimes they'll telephone and ask me if I could look again at an application form, because this person happens to be particularly talented. So I usually do that as well. So I rely upon information being fed to me by other members of staff. [...] But then there is the second category of entrant to 3rd year, and these are people, perhaps in their late 20s, 30s even 40s, and they have gone back to education, they are obviously more mature, they are engaging with the work, it's a challenge for them. They are a better bet, they are- I can speak from experience, they don't tend to let me down, they do the necessary to ensure that they pass.

I: What about the direct entry students who come in with an HND, how successful are they then?

L: It tends to split, again we find, as I've said, that the more mature candidates do tend to perform very well. In fact last year there was a 1st class honours in Business and Management and she came via the HND route, and her friend got a 2:1, a very good 2:1, narrowly missed a 1st in fact, but they were in their mid 20s, approaching 30. The younger ones tend to be less successful. If there are going to be casualties then it will be in the younger group, where they're not accustomed to formal, unseen examinations, for example. They tend to be undergoing a continuously assessed programme at college.



Conventional way of presenting data

LEVEL 2 AND 3 ATTAINMENT BY YOUNG PEOPLE IN ENGLAND MEASURED USING MATCHED ADMINISTRATIVE DATA: ATTAINMENT BY AGE 19 IN 2006 (PROVISIONAL)

Young people aged:	Qualification Type:						Total Population with Level 3 by age 19	Proportion achieving Level 3 by age 19
	AS, A-Levels, AVCEs or Advanc. GNVQs	Advanced Apprenticeships	NVQ Level 3	VRQ Level 3	Combinat. of qualif.			
19 in 2004	37.10%	0.50%	0.90%	2.30%	1.30%	259,000	42.10%	
19 in 2005	37.10%	0.50%	0.90%	5.80%	1.30%	282,000	45.60%	
19 in 2006	36.60%	0.60%	1.00%	7.00%	1.50%	296,000	46.80%	

Source: DfES (2007): National Statistics, First release SFR 06/2007 (27 Feb.)



The notion of pathways into HE

