

Professor Sally Kift

Abstract for Teaching and Learning Forum 2016

Tertiary educators as purveyors of fine learning: What have we learnt?

purveyor pur|vey|or

Pronunciation: /pə'veɪə/

Noun

1 A person who sells or deals in particular goods

1.1 A person or group who spreads or promotes an idea, view, etc.

<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/purveyor>

As purveyors of fine learning, what is it that we have learnt since 1992? Critically, have those learnings impacted positively on the student experience of Australian higher education and discernibly improved our policies, practices, processes and pedagogies? As we look back to inform the future, it is clear that the sector's journey from 1992 has been dynamic and turbulent. Our departure point in 2016 is patently a product of our context; continually buffeted by swirling shifts in policy and destabilised by competing agendas and seemingly intractable tensions. If, as the above definition would have it, we 'sell or deal in goods' and/or 'spread or promote ideas and views' how fit for purpose have our contributions been? And, frustratingly, have we settled on what that purpose is? This presentation will explore the best of times and worst of times for our sector and ask a critical but fundamental question of higher education in 2016: has the 21st century student experience of learning in Australian higher education got better? Particularly, and setting aside the rhetorical flourishes, is the Australian "world class educational system", in which our government and the sector puts so much store, delivering on its educational promise? How does the scorecard for Team Australia HE read? While there is much to be positive about, there clearly remains a great deal to be done and much of it by our determined and agile purveying of learning leadership.