



Society for Research into Higher Education

Annual Conference, 8-10 December 2009

Celtic Manor Hotel, Newport, South Wales, UK

Dear Colleagues,

As chair of the Conference organising committee, and on behalf of the Society, I would like to extend a very warm invitation to you to participate in the SRHE Annual Conference 2009. This year we will be visiting Wales and will be located at the famous Celtic Manor, close to Newport in South Wales and the venue for the prestigious Ryder Cup in 2010.

Conference Theme

This year's Conference will explore the theme of Challenging Higher Education: knowledge, policy and practice. Higher education is facing fundamental challenges to its purposes and role in society, stimulated by the shift from elite to mass- and now near- universal -provision in many national contexts. There are shifting civic and economic expectations to which higher education is being asked to respond. At the policy level, the extent to which mass participation can promote social and economic mobility is being seriously questioned as is the boundary between 'higher' education and other parts of the post-secondary sector. The role and purposes of higher education are also subject to challenge from a conceptual or knowledge perspective. Here, there are challenges to Western ideas of the university posed by alternative traditions and philosophies, within cultures, countries and regions where higher education is expanding rapidly. At a practice level, the nature of academic identity is being challenged as the synoptic role 'unbundles' into sub-specialisms. There is a continuing search to find ways to teach our students more flexibly, and questions about how we ought to evaluate the quality and 'impact' of our research. These and many other issues face higher education practitioners, policy makers, managers and researchers. They reflect challenges arising both within and outside the academy.

The 2009 SRHE Conference will embrace three specific themes illuminating these challenges. Examples of topics to be explored in each theme include the following:

Knowledge

Challenges to:

- Western, liberal conceptions of higher education and their impact upon alternate local, national and cultural traditions (eg Asian, indigenous)
- the role of academic disciplines in knowledge creation as a result of the ascendancy of knowledge created in its applied context (eg 'mode 2', professional)
- educational orthodoxies in respect to knowledge creation and learning presented from alternative and emerging theoretical or disciplinary positions

Policy

Challenges to:

- the funding of continued expansion of higher education and the policy assumption that mass participation can produce social and economic mobility
- the boundaries between 'higher' education and other post-secondary sectors and institutions (eg schools, community and further education colleges)
- the role and status of public higher education in the context of expanding provision by private and corporate universities
- the way universities should engage with employers, civic and community groups, and balance their commitments to local, regional and global communities
- the structure of the higher education curriculum driven by radical reform initiatives (eg Melbourne Model) and the Bologna process

Practice

Challenges to:

- the ways in which student expectations are understood, evaluated and met
- the ways in which academic achievement is recorded and presented in response to demands to improve fairness, clarity and comparability
- the synoptic academic role resulting from the blurring of practice boundaries between academic and other professional staff
- the balance between teaching, research and other academic functions within the academic role in the context of performance management and quality audit
- the use of learning spaces as demand grows for flexibility and informality to support an increasingly bespoke and work-based curriculum
- the role of research in the university as a result of growing expectations with respect to its subsequent use and applications

Author Submission

You are invited to contribute to this debate in a variety of ways: by presenting a paper, sharing in a symposium based on your own and others' research or scholarly work, including work of a conceptual or theoretical nature, or organising a poster on any aspect of this year's theme – or simply by attending the Conference, or the Postgraduate and Newer Researchers Conference on the same theme. Empirical and scholarly research from a wide range of perspectives is welcome.

The Society's Annual Conference has become a truly international event bringing together delegates and contributors from over 30 countries and we aim to build on this reputation again this year. We hope that researchers and scholars from the many forms of higher education globally as well as from the UK will contribute to this Conference, stimulating international debate on the way in which higher education is challenged by governments, policymakers, institutions, employers, and staff and students themselves.

Professor Bruce Macfarlane

Conference Chair, SRHE Conference 2009

Professor of Higher Education and Head of Academic Development. University of Portsmouth.UK

Conference Venue

Celtic Manor has gained the reputation of being one of the finest conference and golf resorts in Europe. Set in 1400 acres of panoramic parkland in the Welsh Usk Valley it will be hosting the famous Ryder Cup golf championship in 2010. As you would expect from a world-class facility with five star status, the conference spaces are ideal for our event offering comfortable state of the art conference facilities, lots of networking space, beautifully appointed bedrooms, good food, a health and fitness club and health spa. For international delegates who wish to extend their stay, the resort offers many other activities which can be found on their website: <http://www.celtic-manor.com>

Location: Celtic Manor is only 90 minutes from London Heathrow, 45 minutes from Bristol and Cardiff-Wales International Airport and 5 minutes from the Severn Bridge (M4 Motorway). It is located close to inter-city rail services at Newport, with direct trains to Cardiff, London Paddington, and Birmingham.

Conference Programme

The Conference programme will include a varied and diverse range of contributions:

- peer-reviewed paper presentations, symposia, roundtables and poster sessions
- plenary sessions addressing the main Conference theme of *Challenging Higher Education: knowledge, policy and practice* from a range of perspectives with input from invited speakers;
- a chaired panel question and answer discussion on getting published in higher education journals involving editors and publishers

- a chaired panel session on “How to become a professor” with contributions from different career perspectives
- a forum for international delegates to discuss and share research knowledge and interests
- an open event to meet with the convenors and members of the Society’s Networks and participate in developing future research topics
- a linked one-day conference for postgraduate students and newer researchers in higher education to be held at the same venue on Monday 7 December 2009

Conference Timetable and Social Events

The Conference will begin on the morning of Tuesday 8 December 2009 (11.00 am) and will end mid-afternoon on Thursday 10 December 2009 (3.30 pm).

The SRHE Annual Conference is planned as a participative event at which delegates presenting their own work will also participate in the discussions in plenary sessions and the presentations of the work of others. The Conference programme is planned on the basis that delegates will attend the whole event over the three days.

Networking with colleagues is an integral part of the SRHE Conference and social events are a good opportunity for participants to meet and converse in a relaxed atmosphere. This year, there will be a number of events:

- ❖ Welcome Drinks Reception on Tuesday 8 December, open to all participants at the Conference at the Celtic Manor Resort, followed by the chance to take dinner at one of the five restaurants in the resort and arrange to meet with specific colleagues or mingle with other delegates at tables set aside for conference delegates. For resident delegates this dinner is included in their conference fees. Non-resident delegates may also take dinner at the hotel on this evening for an additional fixed charge.
- ❖ Conference Dinner held on Wednesday 9 December at the Celtic Manor Resort. There will be a pre-dinner drinks reception sponsored by Routledge/Taylor and Francis and the cost of the dinner of (£40.00) includes a three-course menu and wine. The senior overseeing chef at the Hotel is an award winning restaurateur who has been awarded a Michelin star for his associated restaurant nearby.

Call for Proposals

All submissions are subject to a peer review process.

Proposals are invited for:

Individual Papers

Each paper accepted for individual presentation will be allocated a minimum of 30 minutes for presentation and discussion.

Discussion Workshops

If the number of abstract submissions is as high as in recent years contributors may be invited to present their work, along with other contributors, in the format of a discussion workshop. These workshops will not offer the opportunity for full individual presentations of papers, but will provide greater time for discussion of papers submitted in advance on related themes.

Symposia

These consist of presentation of three or more related papers on a single theme, explored in one-hour (3 papers) or two-hour (4–6 papers) sessions. Symposia submissions can be made by one individual and all abstracts for inclusion in a symposium submitted together or a planned symposium set up and contributors may then add their papers using the online submission system. Proposals must state clearly the rationale for the theme, the names of the convenor and the chair of the symposium, the names and details of all participating presenters and the title of each presentation planned. The symposium proposal should include an abstract for each presentation.

Roundtables

These comprise discussions of linked contributions for which there is an overall chair/discussant and a minimum of three paper presentations for each 60 minute session. The Roundtable format may be especially suitable for 'work in progress' submissions, providing a platform for discussion with other researchers working on related topics. Proposals for roundtables must make clear what links the presentations and must include an abstract for each presentation. The proposal must include the name(s) of the chair/discussant and all participating presenters.

Poster Sessions

These provide the opportunity for researchers to present their work visually in the format of a wall poster. Poster displays will be on show throughout the Conference and specific times will be allocated in the Conference programme when poster presenters should be with their posters and delegates invited to engage in dialogue and informal exchange. Abstract proposals should contain a title, originator(s), presenter(s), contact details and a description of the research work undertaken.

Submission of Abstracts

In order to maintain the high quality of papers presented at the conference and to ensure that the review process has access to a sufficient level of detail on paper proposals the Society is introducing some changes to requirements for abstract submission this year. Submitting authors are asked to provide a short paper for peer review in two parts.

Please note that both parts will be required at the point of first submission, but there will be no subsequent call for fuller papers for accepted abstracts.

- Part 1 Abstract: a 150 word summary of the proposal which will be printed in the published conference programme and also made available at conference on the CD Rom.
- Part 2 Outline : a maximum 1000 word paper (excluding reference) to be available at conference on the CD Rom and website only.

Proposals should state clearly the title of the paper on which the abstract is based, the name of the authors and their affiliations as they should appear in the conference proceedings, the name of the person or persons who will be presenting the work at the conference, again with the affiliations as they should appear in the conference proceedings.

Submissions must be made under one of the specified research domains established and authors should choose the domain which fits most closely with the content of the presentation.

It is appreciated that it is not always obvious which domain provides a best fit but authors are encouraged to submit proposals in the domain in which they would like their paper to be timetabled. The Conference welcomes research papers relating to further, higher, undergraduate, postgraduate and professional education in all research domains and where possible such papers will be grouped on a sector basis as well as a domain theme.

These research domains are aligned with the Society's networks and the peer review process will be led by network convenors, ensuring rigorous review by peers with appropriate research knowledge and expertise. Contributors are encouraged to relate their submissions to the Conference theme and explore their research findings in the context of Challenging Higher Education and the subsets of theme outline above.

Research Domains

- Academic Practice, Work and Cultures
- Higher Education Policy
- Management , Leadership and Governance
- Learning and Teaching
- Student Experience
- Quality Assurance and Assessment:

Submission of Proposals

All submissions will be subject to rigorous peer review by panels of assessors specially selected for each research domain. Some proposals may be accepted for joint presentation in discussion workshops only. Please indicate when submitting proposals if you are unwilling to accept this (in which case, you may be unable to present).

The deadline for submission of proposals is 24 July 2009. All proposals should be submitted electronically, via the SRHE website at [http:// www.srhe.ac.uk/conference2009/](http://www.srhe.ac.uk/conference2009/) Authors will find here all the instructions needed on what is required in making a submission.

Conference Registration

To register for the main Conference and/or the Postgraduate and Newer Researchers Conference please register online via the Conference website at <http://www.srhe.ac.uk/conference2009/>

Special discounts apply to SRHE members and full-time students. Early registration also attracts substantial discounts. To obtain the 'early registration' discount you must register by 31 October 2009.

Accommodation

Residential Rates

All delegates choosing the residential package will have single occupancy accommodation reserved at the Celtic Manor for two nights, 8 and 9 December. This cost includes breakfast, lunches, teas and coffees, the Welcome Reception, dinner on the Tuesday evening and attendance at all Conference sessions and plenary events.

The Society has secured preferential rates for delegates taking the residential package and we strongly advise Conference delegates to take this option as it will represent a substantial saving on overall costs.

Non-residential Rates

Delegates not taking the residential package and requiring accommodation for the duration of the Conference will be responsible for making their own accommodation arrangements at prevailing commercial rates. The non-residential package includes attendance at all sessions and plenary events, lunches, teas and coffees and the Welcome Drinks Reception.

Day Delegate Rate

A day delegate rate is available for the middle day of the Conference, Wednesday 9 December, only. This rate includes attendance at all sessions and plenary events, lunch, teas and coffees on this day only.

Special SRHE Membership Offer

SRHE is pleased to offer a 10% discount on one year of SRHE membership in conjunction with the Conference. Individuals joining SRHE when registering for the 2009 Conference can benefit from the reduced SRHE member rates for the Conference. SRHE members also benefit from free attendance at all Network events throughout the year. Please see the registration form for full details.

Student and Newer Researchers Bursaries

The Society will provide a number of bursaries this year to help full time students and newer researchers to attend one or both conferences as presenters. Details of how to apply for these bursaries will be posted on the conference website.

Further Information

For all abstract submissions, conference registrations, further information and updates on the Conference please access the Conference website at <http://www.srhe.ac.uk/conference2009>

If you require any further information, please contact the SRHE Conference Team:

Email: srheconferenceteam@srhe.ac.uk

Conference Director: Helen Perkins Director, SRHE

About SRHE

The Society for Research into Higher Education is a UK-based international learned society concerned to advance understanding of higher education, especially through the insights, perspectives and knowledge offered by systematic research and scholarship. The Society aims to be the leading international society in the field, for both the support and the dissemination of research.

More fully, its aims are to:

- stimulate new forms of research and inquiry into higher education as a field of study
- assist in developing research capacity in relation to the field
- encourage and support those coming into the field of higher education studies
- develop a network of scholars and researchers in the field of higher education studies
- offer fora for the presentation of research and scholarship in the field
- promote the development and widening of research methodologies in the field
- provide opportunities for the publication of research and scholarship in the field
- develop opportunities through which researchers in the field can engage with policy makers, practitioners within higher education and other interested parties so that policy and practices may be shaped by research