

Richard Yelland



Richard Yelland has been Head of the Education Management and Infrastructure Division in the OECD Directorate for Education since its creation in 2002. This Division is responsible for the work of the Programme on Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE) and the Programme on Educational Building (PEB). Richard joined OECD in 1986 from the Department of Education and Science in the United Kingdom, where he had held a range of posts in educational policy and administration since 1974. He has led PEB since 1989. Following a secondment to the University of Adelaide, South Australia, he was given the additional responsibility for IMHE in 1998. Richard is a member of the Advisory Board of the UNESCO Centre for European Higher Education (CEPES), and of the International Advisory Network for the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education in the United Kingdom. He has contributed as an international expert to the evaluation of educational institutions and programmes in Belgium and France

In your view, what is the most probable or desirable future scenario regarding differentiation in higher education?

After fifty years of growth I expect to see a period of rationalisation of the higher education sector: a trend towards larger institutions, with some weaker and lower-quality institutions merged or closed and major brand names emerging and others strengthened.

In your opinion, what is or should be the most important objective for higher education in the future? Why?

Improving access to higher education while maintaining and improving quality.

What do you consider to be the main future challenge(s) for higher education systems? Why?

Addressing the needs of the twenty-first century for human capital and innovation

Securing adequate funding

Improving efficiency

In your opinion, what would be the worst, but possible, way to tackle these future challenges? Why?

Homogenisation of the system as too many institutions pursue 'world-class university' status through international rankings.

What do you consider to be the best possible way to tackle the above mentioned future challenges? Why?

Finding genuine ways to value the various outputs of higher education so that diversity of institutional mission can be achieved without reinforcing hierarchies between institutions. The question is whether this can be done in a reliable way without creating an excessive administrative burden or creating new distortions.