

Learning for a Complex World

A lifewide concept of learning,
education and personal development

Edited by
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Chapter 6

An imaginative lifewide curriculum

Norman Jackson

The idea of curriculum goes to the heart of what we take higher education to be, of what might be and should be in the twenty first century.

Barnett and Coate (2005:16)

Synopsis

The vision for an imaginative lifewide curriculum is a vision of a curriculum that engages learners in a deep and enduring way because learners themselves use their imagination and agency to design, create and inhabit their own spaces and places in order to develop. This vision has the potential to embrace all the spaces and places in learners' lives while they are involved in higher education. Such diversity of experiences is necessary to provide the contexts and situations to enable learners to develop the self-awareness, capabilities, qualities and dispositions necessary to survive, prosper and be fulfilled in a complex, uncertain and changing world. A set of principles, based on the ideas discussed in the first five chapters of this book, define the purposes and goals for an imaginative lifewide curriculum.

An imaginative curriculum

In 2001 I facilitated the development of a network of people who cared about students' creative development while they were studying in higher education. We called it the *imaginative curriculum network*.¹ We never defined what we meant by an imaginative curriculum, but in the foreword to the book *Developing Creativity in Higher Education: An Imaginative Curriculum*, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi wrote:

So if one wishes to inject creativity in the educational system, the first step might be to help students find out what they truly love and help them to immerse themselves in the domain. ... When students are eager to immerse themselves in learning because it is a rewarding, enjoyable task, the basic prerequisites for creativity are met.

(Czikszentmihalyi 2006:ix–xx)

Viewed from this perspective, the essence of an imaginative curriculum is one that by design, encourages and enables learners to immerse themselves in the domains which they find rewarding and enjoyable. The vision of a lifewide curriculum (Jackson 2008a, b; Jackson and Campbell 2008; Jackson 2010) is a vision of a curriculum that engages learners in a deep and enduring way because learners themselves use their imagination and agency to design, create and inhabit their own spaces and places which enable them to develop into the people they want to become. This vision has the potential to embrace all the spaces and places in learners' lives while they are involved in higher education. This would enable learners to gain recognition for the ways in which they are making their own education more complete through all the things they are doing to develop themselves.

An imaginative curriculum is an engaging curriculum. When we engage deeply or immerse ourselves in an experience we are involved intellectually, practically and emotionally – head, body and heart (see Chapters 3 and 10 this volume). Engaging someone is an intentional act. Within the educational context it is motivated by the desire to promote learning and personal development. In higher education intentions are usually framed and made relevant within the context of a subject and the educational goals of a module or programme. Relevance might also be framed using a theme like employability, vocational training or personal development planning. In the context of a lifewide curriculum our intentions are framed by the intention to promote learning and personal development that is relevant to all aspects of a learner's life - in other words their holistic development as a person.

From a learner's perspective, being engaged, or giving focused attention to something, is an intentional act. It requires a conscious decision to be made: in that space between stimulus and response there is a space and in the space I am choosing to 'engage' with the situation at a level that requires cognitive, physical and emotional effort. Engaging learners occurs when:

students make a psychological investment in [their] learning. ... They take pride not simply in learning the formal indicators of success (grades), but in understanding the material and incorporating or internalising it in their lives. Students are engaged when they are involved in their work, persist despite challenges and obstacles, and take visible delight in accomplishing their work. Student engagement also refers to a “student’s willingness, need, desire and compulsion to participate in, and be successful in, the learning process promoting higher level thinking for enduring understanding.” Student engagement is also a usefully ambiguous term that can be used to recognize the complexity of ‘engagement’ beyond the fragmented domains of cognition, behaviour, emotion or affect, and in doing so encompass the historically situated individual within their contextual variables (such as personal and familial circumstances) that at every moment influence how engaged an individual (or group) is in their learning.

(Wikipedia n.d.)

Hodge *et al.* (2009), describing the philosophy of an *engaged learning university* (based on the educational approach used at the University of Miami, Ohio), explain:

An engaged learning university features principles and practices that lead students steadily toward self-authorship in which epistemological, interpersonal, and intrapersonal maturity are integrated. ... To discover new ideas, learners must possess an internal set of beliefs that guide decision making about knowledge claims, an internal identity that enables them to express themselves in socially constructing knowledge with others, and the capacity to engage in mutually interdependent relationships to assess others’ expertise. These capacities cannot be cultivated solely by engaging actively with the raw materials and tools of the academy or by participating in a student-centred classroom, although these are essential. Instead, they emerge gradually when educators foster students’ holistic growth through continuous self-reflection, seamless and authentic curricular and co-curricular experiences that steadily increase in challenge, and appropriate levels of support.

... the key tenets of our intentional, engaged learning philosophy:

- Guide students to develop an internally defined and integrated belief system and identity, which prepare them personally and intellectually for lifelong learning.

- Actively engage students in discovering new knowledge in a sequenced, developmentally appropriate way to enable them to evaluate evidence critically, make informed judgments, and act ethically.
- Create a vibrant campus learning community that blends curricular and co-curricular learning opportunities and capitalizes on the roles of all constituents (faculty, staff, and students) in promoting student learning.

Hodge *et al.* (2009: 1–2),

These views are entirely consistent with the idea of a lifewide curriculum, but adopting such a concept would require an engaged learning university to embrace the extra-curricular as well as the co-curricular experiences of students.

Concepts of curriculum

Fraser and Bosanquet (2006) argue that there is no single definition that accounts for the way academic staff understand the term curriculum. They identified four ways in which academics thought about curriculum: 1) curriculum is contained within a unit or module of study 2) curriculum is contained in the content and process of a programme of study comprising a variably prescribed set of study units or modules 3) curriculum is visualised as the students' experience of learning and is negotiated between learners and teachers and includes 'intended and unintended.....transactions' between a learner and a teacher' 4) curriculum is a collaborative partnership between learners and teachers that result in changes for both learners and teachers (Fraser and Bosanquet 2006:274). All these conceptions are based on an assumption that learners learn a curriculum, whether it is designed for them or negotiated by them.

In their study of creativity and curricula in UK higher education, Edwards *et al.* (2006), derived a similar set of perspectives on what academics thought curriculum meant:

Use varied widely, ranging from 'syllabus' and programme plans, to notions of the hidden curriculum, in which the social, cultural and political context (what some participants described as the 'fuzzier bits') was counted as part of what was taught. ... However, one conception of the curriculum emerged for understanding the broader possibilities for understanding creativity. This was the idea of the lived curriculum as experienced in the classroom. ... The lived curriculum arose dynamically out of interactions with students.

(Edwards *et al.* 2006:60)

Kelly (2004:8) provides a conceptually more valuable definition 'the curriculum is all of the learning experiences that the student has as a result of the educational context.' The strength of this definition is the way it is grounded not in content or structure, but in an individual's experience that takes account of the context for that experience.

The vision for an imaginative lifewide curriculum (based on a lifewide educational context) is for a lived curriculum that is experienced and contemplated by the learner through all the life spaces she inhabits.

In their book *Engaging the Curriculum in Higher Education* Barnett and Coate (2005) drew attention to a significant issue in UK higher education policy debate, namely the near total absence of any discussion or concern for 'curriculum' in the two major reviews of higher education.² They attributed this not to carelessness but with the desire by those orchestrating the debate to avoid the challenges posed by serious engagement with the idea of curriculum: 'the absence of the term "curriculum" from these reports is not happenstance. It represents a systematic disinclination to engage seriously with matters concerning higher education as an educational project' (Barnett and Coate 2005:14). 'The absence of the term curriculum is not just a matter of vocabulary; not just a matter of a missing term. Its absence is indicative of systematic interests at work for which the term curriculum would pose difficulties' (ibid. 16).

These authors concluded that the policy debate, as it was framed by these national reviews, 'is tipping [curriculum] into the skills, standards and outcomes model of curriculum rather than a reflexive, collective, developmental and process oriented model' (Barnett and Coate 2005:18). '[This] emerging concept of curriculum neglects more intractable dimensions of human development such as human qualities and dispositions' (ibid. 24).

This critique identified a significant issue and challenge, and provided one of the stimuli for the lifewide curriculum to try to create a more inclusive, developmental and process-oriented curriculum that encouraged and enabled learners to develop as whole people.

Barnett and Coate (2005:51) acknowledge that there were pioneers who were calling on 'concepts and theories of complexity to assist our understanding of curricula' (Tosey 2002; Jackson 2004) and endorsed these ways of thinking 'provided that complexity is understood as characterising the framing and acting

out of curricula as well as the forms of human capability that curricula are intended to develop'. The approach described in this book attempts to engage with this challenge.

Framing the lifewide curriculum

A lifewide curriculum is formed around the idea that an individual's curriculum (rather than a programme for a group of students) should enable him to be the person he wants to be and enable him to develop into the person he would like to become. The framing concept of knowing–acting–being developed by Barnett *et al.* (2001), Parker (2003) and Barnett and Coate (2005) helps us understand an individual's relationship with a curriculum.

Chapter 1 argued that a higher education should help prepare people not just for their first job, but for the rest of their lives – lives that require us to continuously develop and adapt and perhaps also to reinvent ourselves. Barnett and Coate (2005:48) highlight some of the challenges of a rapidly changing world for curriculum design maintaining that such concerns have never been accepted as a generally valid way of approaching curriculum design.

a changing world calls for certain kinds of human capacity and dispositions and for self-awareness and self-confidence. The self is implicated in a changing world. No longer can the wider norms and practices be endorsed: individuals have to work things out for themselves in their own situations. Individuals have to become selves, strong, careful, open, resilient and critical selves. Students' being, willy-nilly, comes into play.

Knowing, acting and being, these then are the three challenges of a changing world that curricula in higher education have to address. there is ... a responsibility on all those at the sharp end in higher education to ensure that curricula with which they are associated are supplying responses of some kind to these three challenges. ... These challenges open up possibilities for universities to do even more justice to their hopes of educating. For example, if 'higher learning' is that form of learning that is appropriate to higher education, it has now to be interpreted as referring to a composite of especially challenging forms of learning that are appropriate to a changing world.

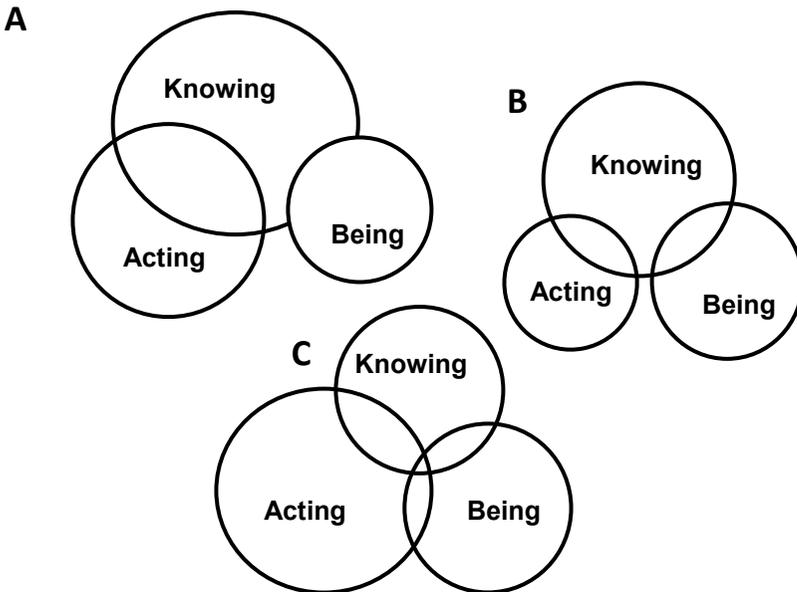
(Barnett and Coate 2005:48-49)

The knowing–acting–being curriculum paradigm developed by Barnett *et al.* (2001) and Barnett and Coate (2005) represents the higher education

curriculum as the structure, process and experience for student development across the domains of knowledge, action and self (Figure 6.1).

Analysis of curriculum documents and discussions with course designers revealed that the relative significance, connection and integration of these different domains varies across different discipline areas and types of programme. In science and technology disciplines 'knowledge' is emphasised, with action taking a lesser role, and self residing in the background. In humanities and arts disciplines knowledge is emphasised with self playing a lesser role and action residing in the background. In contrast, in curricula, where there is a professional orientation, action is fore-grounded, with self and 'knowledge' taking a lesser but still important role. Curricula which aim to prepare people for the professions tend also to have a better balance and integration of the three domains. This set of relationships is summarised in Table 6.1.

Figure 6.1 Representation of the knowing–acting–being curriculum paradigm. Source: Barnett *et al.* (2001) and Barnett and Coate (2005:73-7). Circles represent relative emphasis and degree of integration of the three domains in the curriculum of different disciplinary fields: a) science and technology, b) humanities and arts and c) professional disciplines.



Barnett *et al.* (2001) and Barnett and Coate (2005) criticised higher education for paying too little attention to the 'self' dimension of curriculum. This is now being addressed systemically across higher education through the introduction of PDP with its emphasis on self-awareness, reflection and planning for self-development.

Table 6.1 Summary of the relationships between knowledge, action and self in different disciplinary areas. Source: Trevitt and Perera (2009), based on Barnett *et al.* (2001) and Barnett and Coate (2005). In this schema '>' denotes 'has a greater weighting than' and '=' denotes 'has an equal weighting with'.

Broad disciplinary area	Emphasis across the key domains
Science and technology	Knowledge > action > self
Arts and humanities	Knowledge > self > action
Professions	Action > self = knowledge

Parker (2003) used this way of framing a higher education curriculum to argue that curriculum designers should move beyond 'the prevalent commodified discourse in Higher Education' and, instead, embrace the idea of a 'transformational curriculum' – one where potentially the student is actively involved in negotiating his own customised approach across the three domains posited by Barnett *et al.* (2001).

Trevitt and Perera (2009) also utilised this conceptual framework to evaluate the orientations of an autonomous self-regulating professional taking responsibility for his own continuous professional learning and development through his work contexts and practices (Figure 6.2). In this context:

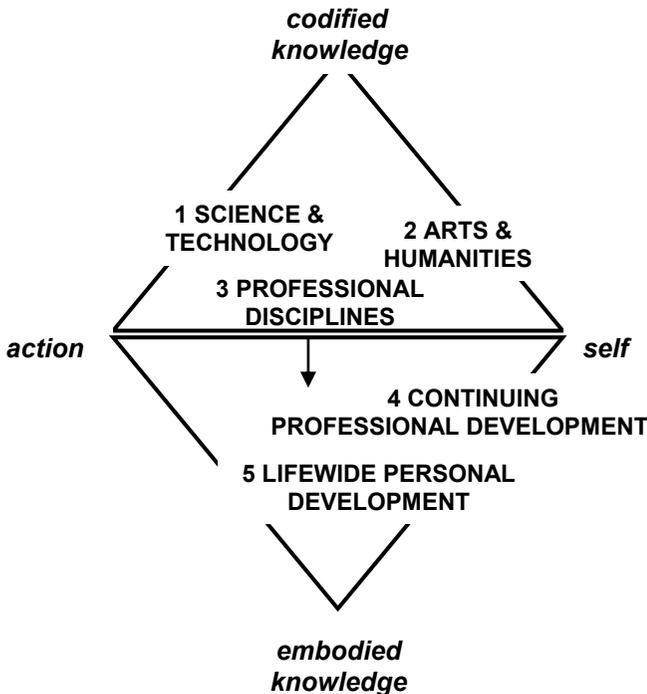
the very notion of curriculum [as an educator-designed experience for learning] now becomes a more contested one with ... learning in context (or participation in the workplace) taking precedence over classroom-based activities. ... [W]e are now dealing with 'multiple knowledges' rather than a previously implied singular 'knowledge'

(Trevitt 2010:5)

The continuing professional learning perspective offered by Trevitt and Perera (2009) and Trevitt (2010) 'foregrounds our concern with the on-going process of negotiation of professional identity(ies)' (Trevitt 2010:5).

Figure 6.2, builds on ideas developed by Trevitt (2010). It shows the three curriculum perspectives (knowledge-action-self) developed by Barnett *et al.* (2001) and Barnett and Coate (2005), together with a fourth perspective - continuing professional learning (CPL) added by Trevitt and Perera (2009). The latter proposed the need for a personal 'space for learning'; namely professional lifelong learning where self > action > knowledge, and where embodied knowledge is more important than codified knowledge. This additional perspective also approximates the curriculum space for holistic personal development through lifewide learning where self > action > knowledge and where embodied knowledge is more important than codified knowledge.

Figure 6.2 Curriculum orientations within the knowing-acting-being paradigm. Adapted from Trevitt and Perera (2009) and Trevitt (2010), drawing on the original concept of Barnett *et al.* (2001) and Barnett and Coate (2005). The upper triangle shows the orientations of curricula in formal education. The lower triangle shows the orientations of personal and professional development through everyday work and wider life experiences.



When this conceptual tool is applied to the lifewide curriculum idea we can see that while students' formal education might be engaged through a curriculum that is discipline-based, with one of the three orientations postulated in Figure 6.1, by viewing the curriculum as a lifewide proposition we can see the potential for students to engage in the development of their own identity (or self-authorship: Baxter Magolda 2004 and Chapter 5) more completely through their involvement in the places and spaces they choose to inhabit outside formal education. Through this conceptual lens we can see how they would develop embodied personal knowledges, agency, self-fulfillment and confidence derived from their actions in the situations that they encounter or create for themselves. They are in fact gaining the sorts of experiences, knowledges, capabilities and dispositions that will stand them in good stead when they embark on their professional careers because many of these ways of being and acting, and developing multiple forms of knowledge, are a necessary part of participating and engaging in work.

A curriculum for integration

The ability to integrate our knowledge, imagination and capability in order to act effectively in a given situation and achieve something is core to our functioning. The challenge to higher education is how can we improve students' ability to integrate and apply their learning and development in different contexts.

Developing students' ability to integrate and apply learning [in different contexts] is an important piece of what makes higher education relevant to today's world. On any given day newspaper headlines point to the need for graduates who are sophisticated in their thinking, able to discern complexity in situations, and motivated to continuously seek better, more responsible, solutions to problems encountered in work, in life and in society ... The current context also requires graduates who are creative; who can anticipate the not-yet-known, and negotiate rapid technological, cultural, and global shifts.

(AACU 2009a:1)

Integrated education is based on designs, facilitation and support mechanisms that seek to enable and empower learners to integrate their experiences and learning from, and in, different contexts and to transfer, apply and adapt their learning to new situations and contexts. The promise of a lifewide curriculum is that it holds more potential for encouraging learners to see themselves as the integrators of their life experiences and their own learning, than an academic curriculum alone.

Integrative learning is an understanding and a disposition that a student builds across the curriculum and co-curriculum, from making simple connections among ideas and experiences to synthesizing and transferring learning to new, complex situations within and beyond the campus.

(AACU 2009b:1)

Integrative education is based on designs, facilitation and support mechanisms that seek to enable and empower learners to integrate their experiences and learning from, and in, different contexts. The *Integrative Learning Value Rubric* developed by AACU (ibid.) identifies four areas of integration: 'connecting skills and knowledge from multiple sources and experiences; applying theory to practice in various settings [and perhaps growing new theories from experience?]; utilizing diverse and even contradictory points of view; and understanding issues and positions contextually' (AACU 2009b:1). All these areas are highly relevant to our discussion on lifewide learning and development.

In the USA the integrative learning movement has grown mainly in colleges and universities that provide a liberal arts education. The movement appears to have grown from a number of reasons:

1. The desire to create greater coherence for the learner of curricular experiences that appear to be highly fragmentary – combinations of major/minor/service components. In the UK, because of the strong emphasis on single honours degrees, there is less interest in learning outside the academic curriculum so this reason is far less pronounced.
2. A concern to make academic learning more relevant and connected to the real world.

Fostering students' abilities to integrate learning – across courses, over time, and between campus and community life – is one of the most important goals and challenges for higher education. Initially, students connect previous learning to new classroom learning. Later, significant knowledge within individual disciplines serves as the foundation, but integrative learning goes beyond academic boundaries. Indeed, integrative experiences often occur as learners address real-world problems, unscripted and sufficiently broad, to require multiple areas of knowledge and multiple modes of inquiry, offering multiple solutions

and benefiting from multiple perspectives. Integrative learning also involves internal changes in the learner.

(AACU 2009b:1)

This reasoning is valid for any higher education system.

3. An appreciation of the challenges of the modern world and the need to develop students' capabilities for, and commitment to, lifelong learning and to the process of continual renewal, adaptation and reinvention that their working lives will necessitate.

These internal changes, which indicate growth as a confident, lifelong learner, include the ability to adapt one's intellectual skills, to contribute in a wide variety of situations, and to understand and develop individual purpose, values and ethics. Developing students' capacities for integrative learning is central to personal success, social responsibility, and civic engagement in today's global society. Students face a rapidly changing and increasingly connected world where integrative learning becomes not just a benefit ... but a necessity.

(AACU 2009b:1)

This would also be a valid reason for developing more integrative approaches in any higher education system.

4. An appreciation of the pedagogies and learning capabilities required of a trans-disciplinary world that must transcend discipline-only contexts. But also a recognition that there needs to be a connection between disciplinary and real world study.

Because integrative learning is about making connections, this learning may not be as evident in traditional academic artefacts such as research papers and academic projects unless the student, for example, is prompted to draw implications for practice. These connections often surface, however, in reflective work, self assessment, or creative endeavours of all kinds. Integrative assignments foster learning between courses or by connecting courses to experientially-based work. Work samples or collections of work that include such artefacts give evidence of integrative learning. Faculty are encouraged to look for evidence that the student connects the learning gained in classroom study to learning gained in real life situations that are related

to other learning experiences, extra-curricular activities, or work. Through integrative learning, students pull together their entire experience inside and outside of the formal classroom; thus, artificial barriers between formal study and informal or tacit learning become permeable. Integrative learning, whatever the context or source, builds upon connecting both theory and practice toward a deepened understanding.

(AACU 2009b:1)

This would also be a valid reason for developing more integrative approaches in any higher education system.

5. An attempt to address the issue of emergence in complex adaptive social systems i.e. the societies in which we live. Emergence is 'the process by which patterns or global-level structures arise from interactive local-level processes. This "structure" or "pattern" cannot be understood or predicted from the behavior or properties of the component units alone' (Mihata 1997:31). It is phenomenon that we can all recognise in everyday life in the real world, but to which higher education traditionally gives little consideration.
6. The need to make better use of the resources we have available within a university environment for educating learners as whole people.

'Learning Reconsidered' is an argument for the integrated use of all of higher education's resources in the education and preparation of the whole student. It is also an introduction to new ways of understanding and supporting learning and development as intertwined, inseparable elements of the student experience. It advocates for transformative education – a holistic process of learning that places the student at the centre of the learning experience.

(NASPA & ACPA 2004:1)

This argument makes considerable sense, especially in a world where resources for higher education learning are ever more costly and scarce. The arguments and thinking elaborated in this proposal are totally consistent with the lifewide learning and education concept.

7. To this list we might add the need to make better use of resources for learning in environments outside the university to which a learner has access.

The vision of a lifewide curriculum is for an educational and developmental design that would improve a university's ability to meet all these concerns. A lifewide curriculum would empower those learners who choose to see themselves as the authors and implementers of their own designs for personal development. It would encourage learners to see the whole of their life experiences as opportunities for their own development and enable them to integrate learning and development from any aspect of their lives into their higher education experience and vice versa. Finally, the adoption of a lifewide concept of learning would provide a university with a rationale for connecting all of its staff and services that support students, their learning, wellbeing and personal development in a common educational enterprise.

A lifewide curriculum

The lifewide curriculum is a response to the challenge of how to design a curriculum that enables learners to integrate their life experiences into their learning and developmental process to prepare themselves for the complexity and uncertainty of their future lives. Such a curriculum shifts the focus from a 'skills, standards and outcomes model of curriculum [to] a reflexive, collective, developmental and process oriented model' (Barnett and Coate 2005:18). It focuses attention on the importance of developing capability, dispositions, knowledge, qualities and confidence for acting in the continuous stream of situations that make up learners lives (see Chapters 3 and 4 this volume) and it shows them that higher education values the choices they are making about how they are choosing to live their lives. In framing the curriculum in this way we are championing the idea that capability is 'essentially one of freedom – the range of options a person has in deciding what kind of life to lead' (Dreze and Sen 1995:11). In revealing his lifewide curriculum a learner is choosing to reveal the life he has chosen to lead: he is revealing how he is authoring his life (Chapter 5).

Propositions for a curriculum that prepares learners for life

The following list outlines emerging propositions for an imaginative lifewide curriculum that would help learners develop the multiple forms of knowing, skills, capability, qualities and dispositions necessary for being successful, effective and fulfilled in a complex, uncertain, changing and sometimes disruptive world. These propositions are derived from the perspectives offered

in the earlier chapters of this book and they are intended to support the development of the complex integrated capabilities of highly effective people described by Greene (2004 and Chapter 4 this volume).

An imaginative lifewide curriculum:

1. gives learners the freedom and empowers them to make choices so that they can find deeply satisfying and personally challenging situations that inspire, engage and enable them to develop themselves
2. enables learners to appreciate the significance of being able to deal with situations and see situations as the focus for their personal and social development
3. prepares learners for and gives them experiences of adventuring in uncertain and unfamiliar situations where the contexts and challenges are not known, accepting the risks involved
4. supports learners when they participate in situations that require them to be resilient and enables them to appreciate their own transformation.
5. enables learners to experience, feel and appreciate themselves as knower, maker, player, narrator, enquirer, creator and integrator of all that they know and can do, and enables them to think and act in complex situations
6. encourages learners to be creative, enterprising and resourceful in order to accomplish the things that they and others value
7. enables learners to develop and practise the repertoire of communication and literacy skills they need to be effective in a modern, culturally diverse and pluralistic world
8. enables learners to develop relationships that facilitate collaboration, learning and personal development
9. encourages learners to behave ethically and with social responsibility
10. encourages and enables learners to be wilful, self-directed, self-regulating, self-aware and reflexive so that they develop a keen sense of themselves as designers/authors and developers of their own lives appreciating their learning and developmental needs as they emerge.

This concept of a lifewide curriculum is intended to complement and inform, not replace more traditional forms of academic curriculum – i.e. a ‘lifewide’ curriculum embraces *all* of a student’s experiences while he is engaged in a higher education. The propositions take account of the need for learners to work things out for themselves as they engage intentionally or accidentally in the experiences that they encounter in the real world outside the classroom.

Visualising a lifewide curriculum

When designing educational experiences curriculum designers usually begin with *their* purposes and the outcomes *they* want to promote, and then *they* think about the content, and process, create and organise resources to support learning. *They* decide what counts as learning, and finally *they* evaluate the standards and quality of learning, as demonstrated through one or more assessment methods and tools that *they* have designed guided by criteria *they* create to assist them in making judgements. This is the way teachers generally do things in higher education.

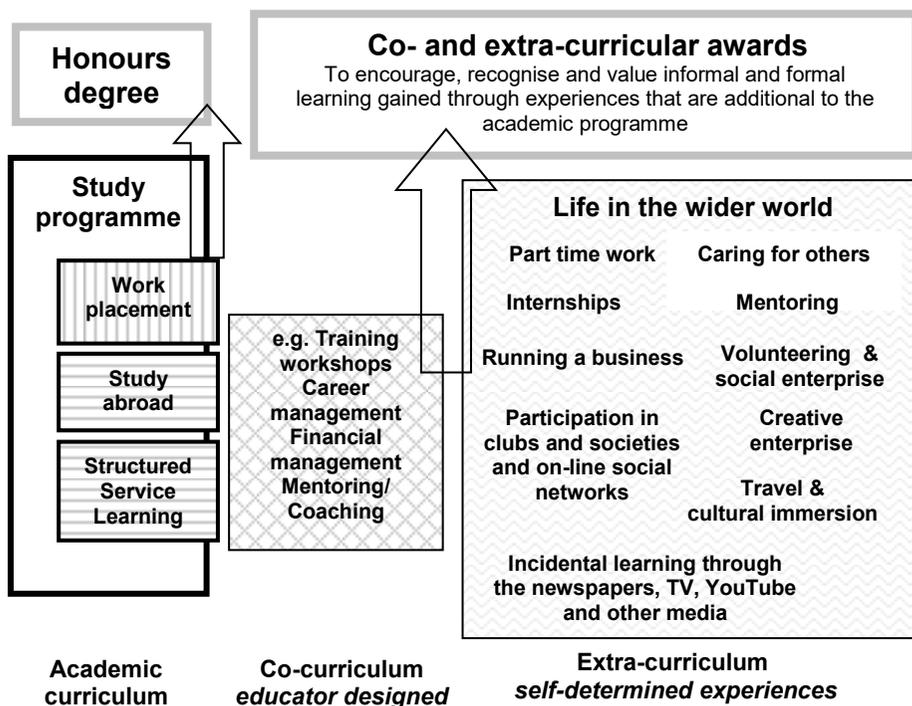
Some designs, particularly where curricula have a strong vocational orientation, require participation in real world environments and problem working (for example through a work or clinical placement) and include assessments of performance that relate to doing a job and performing a role in a work context. In these situations, people other than teachers (e.g. work place supervisors) may be involved in making judgements on performance and achievement. These sorts of learning experiences involve the highest degrees of integration of knowing, acting and being and consequently are more able to prepare learners for the complexity of the professional world.

This is a curriculum for the world of professional practice but relatively few students have this type of learning experience, so the challenge to curriculum designers is how to create opportunity for more students to participate in experiences that will enable them to gain a richer and deeper experience of knowing–acting–being in authentic contexts where they can apply their learning. Our response to this challenge was to turn the problem on its head and ask the question, what if we were to begin with the learner and his life, and see the learner as the designer of an integrated, meaningful life experience? An experience that incorporates formal education as one component of a much richer set of experiences that embrace all the forms of learning and achievement that are necessary to sustain a meaningful life.

This way of thinking resulted in the idea of a lifewide curriculum (Jackson 2008a, b, 2010b) to embrace the idea of an educational design that seeks to empower and enable a learner to integrate his learning from any aspect of his life into his higher education experience. Such a curriculum was also considered by Jackson (2008a) to afford the best opportunity for students' creative development, since the intrinsic motivations that drive creativity are more likely to be present in the spaces that individuals choose to inhabit and to which they devote time and attention.

Figure 6.3 conveys the most inclusive concept of an undergraduate curriculum and the forms of validation and recognition for learning and personal development. It embraces: the academic curriculum, the integrated theory-practice curriculum such as are found in many health and social care programmes, programmes with placement opportunities, community-based service learning opportunities, co-curricular experiences on or off the campus, students' self-determined extra-curricular experiences on or off the campus.

Figure 6.3 Lifewide curriculum map. Source: Jackson (2008a, b and 2010)



The concrete expression of this idea translates into curriculum map (Figure 6.3) containing three different curricular domains, all of which have the potential to be integrated into a learner's personalised higher education experience and be recognised and valued by the institution:

1. academic curriculum, which may by design integrate real-world work or community-based experiences

2. co-curriculum: educator-designed experiences that may or may not be credit-bearing and for which learners may or may not receive formal recognition
3. extra-curricular experiences that are determined by the learners themselves and constitute all the spaces that lie outside of 1 and 2, above.

The precise form of this curriculum map will reflect the curriculum arrangements of an institution. For example, at the University of Surrey, where these ideas have been developed, the undergraduate academic curriculum contains the following types of programme : three- or four-year programmes integrating theory and academic practice; three-year programmes which integrate theory and work-based practice throughout the period of study; four- or five-year programmes in which the third year is spent in work-based practice and three- or four-year programmes that offer opportunities for study in other countries. The co-curriculum offer (additional experiences that have been designed to support student development) will also vary from one university to another.

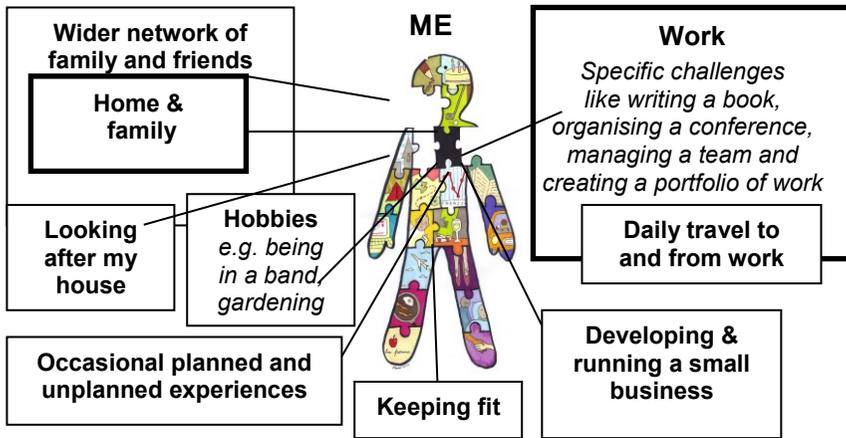
The University of Surrey has a long tradition of single honours programmes with a strongly regulated core content (core modules) with relatively little opportunity for optional modules that would permit students to incorporate broader experiences into their credit-bearing programme. But it would also be possible, with an accommodating curriculum framework, to design a lifewide curriculum that was integrated into the credit-bearing structure.

Creating personal meaning

A lifewide curriculum is a personal curriculum. It constitutes the spaces and places in and through which an individual has determined the life he wants to lead. It reflects the choices he has made to create new opportunities for himself in the future. The principle of 'freedom of choice' that underpins the idea of lifewide learning means that the learner must choose to reveal his lifewide curriculum.

A life space map (Figure 6.4) can be used to reveal the spaces and places we inhabit, the things we do in those spaces and places, the significant relationships we have and value, and the ways in which we maintain our physical, emotional and spiritual well-being.

Figure 6.4 My life spaces map (January 2011)



In creating a life spaces map the learner is revealing something about who he is and what sort of life he is choosing to lead. The creation of a life spaces map can be used to promote reflection on our opportunities for development through the situations that we encounter and create in our daily lives. Every space we inhabit has its own challenges and opportunities each holds the potential for us to exercise our will, harness what we know and can do, develop new knowledge, be creative and resourceful, behave ethically and use and integrate many of our capabilities. In every life space there are opportunities for learning, relationship building and the development of capability that ultimately can be transferred and utilised in other life spaces.

Figure 6.4 shows my own life spaces map. It summarises the life I am choosing to lead at the time of writing (January 2011). My family and home is my most important life space. Day to day, it involves my wife and two children who are living at home, but I have four other children, one at university and three who are older with partners; not to forget my grandson. Beyond this we have extensive branches of the family in Iran, Australia and other parts of England. All in all we have close to 100 members in our blood-related family – there is complexity even within the family domain. Families are great for involving you in the lives of the people you care most about. Capability in this domain is very much geared to supporting, guiding and helping family members develop and live their lives in such a way that they feel valued, enabled and fulfilled. And there is just as much challenge in this as in any other life space.

My house continually challenges me practically and emotionally. It's a lovely but complicated house and there always seems to be something requiring attention, and working out what needs doing, finding someone who can help at reasonable cost or learning how to fix something myself, is a never-ending story. We have a large garden with woodland which needs constant and sometimes urgent attention and my significant challenge at the moment is a rabbit problem. We are under attack and if I can't work out how to deal with this problem there will be more holes than garden. So there is lots of scope for personal development here!

My work, consumes a majority of my time. As leader of the SCEPTrE team it involves my relationships with colleagues in my team, the institution and the wider world, leading and collaborating, planning and decision making, creating activities that others see value in and achieving specific goals, one of which is completing this book by a specific date. Capability in this domain is concerned with *the ways and means we have* to build relationships for accomplishing the things we set out to do, to generate and implement ideas, to sell ideas, persuade others of their value, to negotiate in order to achieve what we value in the belief that it will be of benefit to our students.

I include in my life space map the daily journeys I make to and from work because this is often the time I plan or reflect on daily events or more generally on my work and the other happenings in my life. Many of my ideas or decisions about what to do seem to emerge from my thinking and jottings in this space so it fulfils an important role in my life.

I also involve myself in experiences that help maintain my sense of well-being, like reading, listening to music, swimming and gardening, and more social activities like being a granddad or playing in a band. The latter has its own challenges as we juggle commitments to meet to practise, members leave and are replaced and we 'negotiate' what to play.

Occasional planned and unanticipated experiences which become our temporary life spaces add to the opportunity and the challenges we face. In the last 12 months I have experienced losing my closest friend to cancer, witnessed two of my children getting married and had a family holiday in Egypt. Such experiences (including such things as family bereavement, loss of job or serious illness) are the situations in everyday life that put us in the domain of unfamiliar contexts and challenges that we have to learn to deal with and that may require us to go through a transition in order to adapt to a very different life.

At the time of writing I am approaching a transition point in my life as the SCEPTRe project comes to an end I will be leaving the university. I know I have to create my own future and I have two strands to my strategy. The first is to keep an open mind and to be receptive to any opportunity I can recognise as it emerges. The second is to try to create opportunities for myself, so I have established a business with a partner to capitalise on what I think I am good at and what I know he is good at. We have already begun trading and we are both having to develop our knowledge and capability to try to create a successful enterprise that we hope will provide services that others value and will bring us a sense of purpose and fulfilment.

Final integrating thoughts

This chapter has set out the proposition that:

- The life spaces and places we occupy and the relationships we have and the things we do in them are the most tangible expression of the way we are choosing to lead our life within our current freedom and capability.
- Collectively, our life spaces and places represent our self-determined lifewide curriculum within which our learning and development are planned and managed, or emerge through our day-to-day doings and beings. We need to be able to respond to both planned and emergent situations for development.
- Our life spaces and the relationships we have and the things we do in them hold the potential for our future life. By adding to these life spaces or changing what we do within them we are choosing to lead a different sort of life.
- By revealing our life spaces and places, the relationships we have and the things we do in them we begin the process of explicitly recognising our lives as our most valuable resource and opportunity for learning and developing ourselves.
- The process of creating and reflecting on our life space map can help us think systematically about the life we are choosing to lead and the opportunities we have for which we have for developing ourselves.

John Dewey (1897) said that 'education is a process of living and not a preparation for future living'. Inspired by his friend, Eduard Lindeman framed his vision for adult education in the words I have chosen to frame this book.

A fresh hope is astir. From many quarters comes the call to a new kind of education with its initial assumption affirming that *education is life* – not

merely preparation for an unknown kind of future living. ... The whole of life is learning, therefore education can have no endings.

(Lindman 1926:6)

Eduard Lindeman's vision for education was not one constrained by classrooms, timetables and formal curricula. His vision was framed by a concern for the educational possibilities of everyday life; non-vocational ideals; situations not subjects; and people's experience. That pretty much sums up my own view of lifewide education.

Endnotes

1 <http://imaginativecurriculumnetwork.pbworks.com/>

2 Robbins Report (Committee on Higher Education 1963); Dearing Report (1996).