

# Uk higher education: a shift to the alternative providers



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For more than two hundred years now (1800s – 2015), educational landscape has been constantly changing and continues to change into the future.

Private institutions such as London School of Management Education (LSME) are riding with the wave of change to meet the demands of technological economy in the UK, Europe and the rest of the world. Higher education has evolved considerably in the United Kingdom since the 1800. The enactment of Further and Higher Education act 1992 gave way to the Fair access and Widening Participation (Office for Fair access (OFFA) of the disadvantaged groups to participate in higher education which was the privilege of few.

It all began in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with a Royal (university) Charter which removed the divide between the universities, the polytechnics and the Scottish central Institutions. The reform in the 1960s bridged the gap between the ancient universities and redbrick universities. The reforms over the years have been to meet the growing demand for education and to meet the demands of ever changing technological economy. Private education such as LSME has been at every corner of educational reform. In the United Kingdom, education is valued highly and this began in the city of Oxford in 1096, followed by the establishment of Cambridge University in 1209. All parts of the United Kingdom experienced growth in educational demand. By 15<sup>th</sup> century, there was rise in the establishment of higher education in Scotland with the establishment of St. Andrews, Glasgow University, Aberdeen University, and the Edinburgh University, established by the Royal Charter in 1583.

The emergence of “ Redbrick” universities (the amalgamation of medical, science and engineering colleges in England), especially in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century saw the establishments and merger of institutions in almost all cities of England and Wales. 1956 saw the emergence of colleges of advanced technology in different cities of the United Kingdom. The advancement of education to meet the growing demands for technological economy enabled to government of United Kingdom to award university status to most of the city colleges in 1966. Some of these universities include Aston, Brunel and surrey, to mention but a few. These higher educational developments continued expansion till 1992, though with little consideration to ever-growing divide of equality in the UK. The widening gap, inequality and the income disparity of the British people resulted to the underprivileged to miss out on higher education. To meet the demands as mentioned above, the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 was pass by the act of parliament. This Act provided room for the Office of Fair Access (OFFA) to accommodate the underprivileged peoples of United Kingdom.

According to the British Council Institute, by the enactment of Further and Higher Education Act 1992, thirty five (35) former polytechnics and further and higher institutions gained university status. From 2001 to 2013, thirty one (31) universities were created. There were one hundred and sixty six (166) institutions in the UK with Degree Awarding Powers. By 2011, there was an expansion of institutions both community and private. It is estimated by the British Council Institute that by 2011, there was establishment of one thousand six hundred (1, 600) institutions, including two hundred and fifty (250) other further education colleges and the alternative (private) providers

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of higher education. In this expansion, London School of Management Education (LSME) is one of them. The alternative providers, known as private colleges offered opportunities for peoples of disadvantaged background to gain access into higher education. The increasing number of private colleges was not enough to create opportunities for the underprivileged groups due to the high cost of education in the. The 2010 reform of higher education system by the government offered the opportunity for students of alternative (private) Higher Education providers to gain access to the student loan through the Student Loans Company. This reform provided an opportunity for the underprivileged peoples of England and Wales to access tuition fee through student loan of up six thousand (£6, 000) pounds per year. Colleges such as London School of Management Education embarked on providing Higher National Diploma (HND) through Pearson BTEC. Higher National Diploma is a work-related vocational higher education qualification that enables holders to be employable at the job market. The design and delivery of HND is focused on the skills required by UK employers to meet all the skill shortages in the economy of the United Kingdom.

The Further and Higher Education Act 1992 and the 2010 Higher Education Reform enabled 3. 2% increase in full time higher education by the underprivileged, the underrepresented and the youth. By 2012-13 academic year, there was a decrease of part time education by 10. 8%. Between 2010-11 and 2013-14, there was a 27% increase in UK and EU domiciled undergraduate entrants. It is noteworthy that during this period there was a decrease of 55% of demand for university education. It is important to know that there was an explosion of demand for higher education through the

alternative providers such as London School of Management Education (LSME). Between the quoted period as above, there was an increase of 259% demand for higher education with the alternative providers such as LSME. This is as a result of removing the barriers to education for the benefits of the underprivileged and the good working practice of the private colleges, who centred the design and delivery of higher education on their students. Most of these students have been out of school for many years and cannot cope with the university style of education which is not person-centred. The private colleges, like what is obtainable at London School of Management Education focused the design and delivery of their programme with students' involvement. The college understands the need of their students, knowing fully well that student-provider relationship is vital. It provides a conducive environment for learning. Learning is not all about reading books and presenting lecture slides to students, it includes mental development and empathy. At London School of Management Education, there is partnership with employers to enable students' engagement for work experience.

It is important to note that most of the underprivileged were black and ethnic minority groups. It is estimated by the UK National Student Survey that from 2007 to 2013 academic year, there was an increase demand for higher education of 74% (13, 792) Blacks, 34% (11, 584) Asians, 54% (7, 860) mixed and other ethnic background, and 18% (50, 000) white. This increase of student number which was enabled by the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, and the 2010 Higher education Reform offered opportunities for alternative providers of higher education to compete for students in the education industry. London School of Management Education chose to offer

HND in Business and Health and Social Care through Pearson BTEC. As demand for teachers grow, and also to offer opportunities to the disadvantaged groups, LSME offers Diploma in Education and Teaching (DET).

This educational reform offered opportunities for ethnic minorities to be employable in education industry. The NSS report shows that students are happy. London School of Management Education works hard in meeting all the quality assurance framework as set by Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) and the stringent scrutiny of Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). To meet the complaint system, London School of Management Education complies with all the rules and regulations of The Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) to ensure that students' complaints are investigated and resolved to their satisfaction. This is to ensure that students receive value for money of their investment in education. LSME also complies with the authorities of Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) to supply details of students who have graduated from their college after one year. London School of Management Education is a fast growing college that thrives on student satisfaction. It is subscribed to the rules and regulations of Competition and Market Authority (CMA). The new Fit for Purpose Regulatory Framework for the Higher Education Sector 2012 protects students' interest, promotes diversity and choice, and supports high quality provision. There is huge opportunity in the education industry for alternative providers such as London School of Management Education to share in the £30billion industry. It was revealed by the British Council Institute that universities and colleges received the sum of £29. 1 billion in the 2012-13 academic year. The reform

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in education is focused on partnership with employers to tailor courses to meet the growing sophistication of the technological world and the demand for quality. This enables the universities and colleges to form partnership with the Professional and Statutory Regulation Bodies (PSRBs) to share ideas and experiences, and to discuss areas of mutual interest with QAA for sharing good practice for the development of UK's economy and professionalism. For the development of good practice and quality delivery of higher education, London School of Management Education complies with all the requirements of the governing bodies in education industry. This approach has earned it recognition with the industry which led to the good turnouts of dignitaries from all walks of life for their Convocation Ceremony on the 6<sup>th</sup> of October 2016.