

You can tell a great university by the companies it keeps

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- 1 The British are good at universities. It is not just that Oxford and Cambridge remain among the best in the world; another dozen regularly rank in the international top 100. Given their relative poverty compared with American universities and the country's size, it is an extraordinary achievement.
- 2 Nor does it stop there. Wherever there is a university, there is an identifiable buzz. What they do spills over into everything from cafe, club and restaurant life, and local companies, large and small, feed off their research, academics, students and graduates.
- 3 Universities are sources of intellectual, economic and social vitality. But the alchemy that creates the university is very particular. Their culture is sustained because they are autonomous, serving their vocation as places of free learning, scholarship, teaching and research. Any beneficial impact they have on the city in which they are located comes next.
- 4 Everyone pays lip service to the idea of university as an Enlightenment centre of knowledge. But those who govern universities – and their government paymasters – face a tricky task. Too much emphasis on knowledge and learning

for their own sake and the university becomes an ivory tower; too much emphasis on economic benefits and the idea-generator implodes. In the US, despite American universities' world standing, there is growing concern that too many universities and academics have sold their intellectual birthright to the demands of commerce, so killing off the very idea of the university. Some British academics are beginning to voice similar concerns.

- 5 These worries reached a new pitch last week by a document, leaked to the *Financial Times*, that sets out how the new Department for Innovation, University and Skills (DIUS) sees universities – or did four months ago. The paper, like the innovation white paper to be published later this month, stresses the economic impact of universities and their research as their alpha and omega. They must further move towards becoming business-led hothouses of local innovation to which other university objectives must be at least partially subordinate.
- 6 Business must be enlisted to design degree courses and partly fund students' courses, and universities must do more to commercially exploit their intellectual property. New money will go to the universities that get the message; those which do not will live on short rations, with even their precious autonomy threatened.
- 7 Already a row is brewing. For the government, there are academics

such as Derek Fairhead, professor of applied geophysics at Leeds, whose fast-growing spin-off company Getech has made him and colleagues millions while generating jobs and exports aplenty. If university research is left unexploited, he says, it is a scandalous opportunity lost.

8 The University of Nottingham's Philip Moriarty, professor of physics, takes the opposite view. Universities should not become the research and development wings of corporations, using tax payers' money for research that does not serve the wider public interest. There are differences between how company and university scientists approach research which must be respected to the last.

9 Both men recognise the tightrope they walk: **34a** does not want to be cast as the defender of the ivory tower, nor **34b** the apostle of hyper-commerciality. But there is an academic vocation that does not readily sit with commercial values. The evidence is that research needs to be undertaken for its intrinsic interest, with researchers free to go down blind alleys. If you force universities to overprescribe what can and can't be researched at the behest of corporate backers, you kill the goose that lays the golden egg. It is only later, when an idea hatches and a proposition is proven that business should enter the frame.

10 And yet... universities are pivotal to the economy and set to become

more so. To forgo making money from research is to *ignore* that truth. And despite all the effort and exhortation of the last few years, the amount of additional income generated by commercialising intellectual property by the UK university sector was a mere £31m in 2005/6, a success rate that would embarrass a single venture capitalist, let alone the university sector worth some £10bn. A survey by law firm Morgan Cole found that 90 per cent of universities still prefer publishing to boost their research standing rather than applying for patents. Small wonder the DIUS ministers get impatient.

11 Yet business's part in the failures remains largely free of criticism. Business wants research on the cheap and, too frequently, it is as much its failure that ideas do not become translated into business propositions, as a recent pro-business review of university-business links conceded. Nor is business any more generous about training. At the last count, there were just 2,045 students who were part-funded by business in doing their foundation degrees. The chances of lifting that number by some 100,000 over the next 12 years to meet the government's targets, unless business radically changes its tune, are zero.

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Tekst 7 You can tell a great university by the companies it keeps

- 1p 29 Which of the following statements is in agreement with the contents of paragraphs 1 and 2?
- A All over the world British academic standards are held in high esteem.
 - B No other country has as many top universities as the UK.
 - C Universities are the chief source of employment in British university cities.
- 1p 30 What point does Will Hutton make about universities in paragraph 3?
- A Their ability to make a city a vibrant place has no priority over their academic merit.
 - B Their influence depends on the degree to which they are integrated into city life.
 - C Their presence adds to a city's prestige nationwide.
- “But those ... a tricky task.” (alinea 4)
- 1p 31 Wat maakt de opdracht lastig?
- 1p 32 Which of the following quotations reflects “other university objectives” (at the end of paragraph 5)?
- A “the alchemy that creates the university” (paragraph 3)
 - B “knowledge and learning for their own sake” (paragraph 4)
 - C “economic benefits” (paragraph 4)
 - D “the demands of commerce” (paragraph 4)
- 1p 33 Which of the following characterises paragraph 6?
- A It discusses the demands that commercial corporations lay upon universities.
 - B It outlines Will Hutton's advice for universities that wish to innovate.
 - C It summarises the government's view of the direction universities should take.
- Op de open plekken in alinea 9 (34a en 34b) stond de naam van een persoon genoemd in alinea 7 of 8.
- 1p 34 Noteer op je antwoordblad 34a en 34b, gevolgd door de op die plek passende naam.
- 1p 35 Leg in eigen woorden uit wat in alinea 9 wordt bedoeld met “the golden egg”.
- “To forgo making money from research” (alinea 10)
- 1p 36 Geeft de schrijver een concreet voorbeeld hiervan in alinea 10? Zo nee, antwoord “Nee”. Zo ja, citeer de eerste twee woorden van de zin waarin dit voorbeeld staat.
- “unless business radically changes its tune” (einde alinea 11)
- 1p 37 Wat zou deze verandering moeten opleveren?

Bronvermelding

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