

# Teachers and Careers Advisers Conference: HE Sector Overview

Friday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2023

Dr. John Cater  
Vice-Chancellor  
Edge Hill University



# A crowded policy landscape

HE Strategy  
and Reform

HE Funding

Lifelong  
Learning

Quality &  
Standards

**B3**  
Continuation  
Completion  
Progression

TEF  
REF  
KEF

NSS changes

Freedom of  
Speech

Safety on  
campus

No 10  
DfE  
OFS

Skills and Post  
16 Education

Seizing control  
in Education &  
Health

Reducing  
bureaucracy



The road ahead?



# Yellow Bricks or Perdition?



# The Context

## Burgeoning Population:

- Live births 2005 (2023 entry cohort): 722,549
- Live births 2012 (2030 entry cohort): 812,970 (+12.5%)
- Live births 2020 (2038 entry cohort): 681,560 (-17.2% on peak)  
(- 5.7% on 2023 cohort)





## Burgeoning Cost:

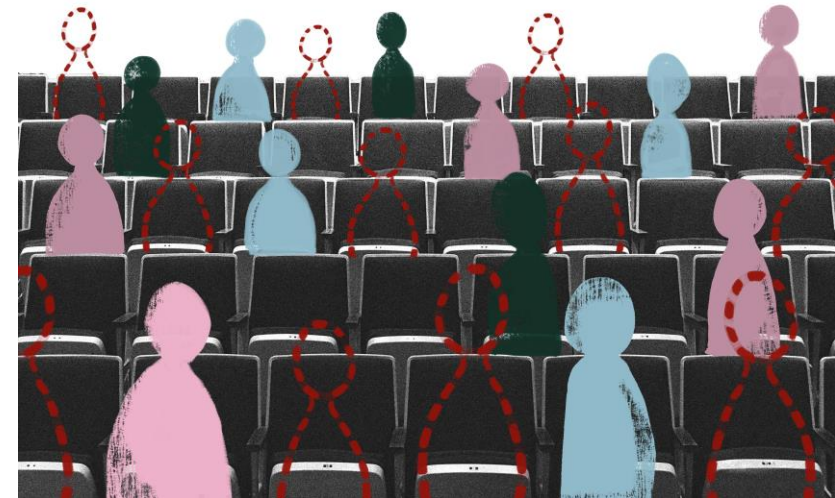
- Peak Student Loan Book Debt (2049): £743,000,000 (£743bn (NAO))
- Average 'Debt' per FTE: £45,800
- 2021 Average Repayment (est.): Male: £19,300
- 2021 Average Repayment (est.): Female: £13,800
- NAO estimate of students repaying in full (pre-2023 entry): 20%
- HMG estimate of students repaying in full (2023-): 55-60%



# Burgeoning Demand?

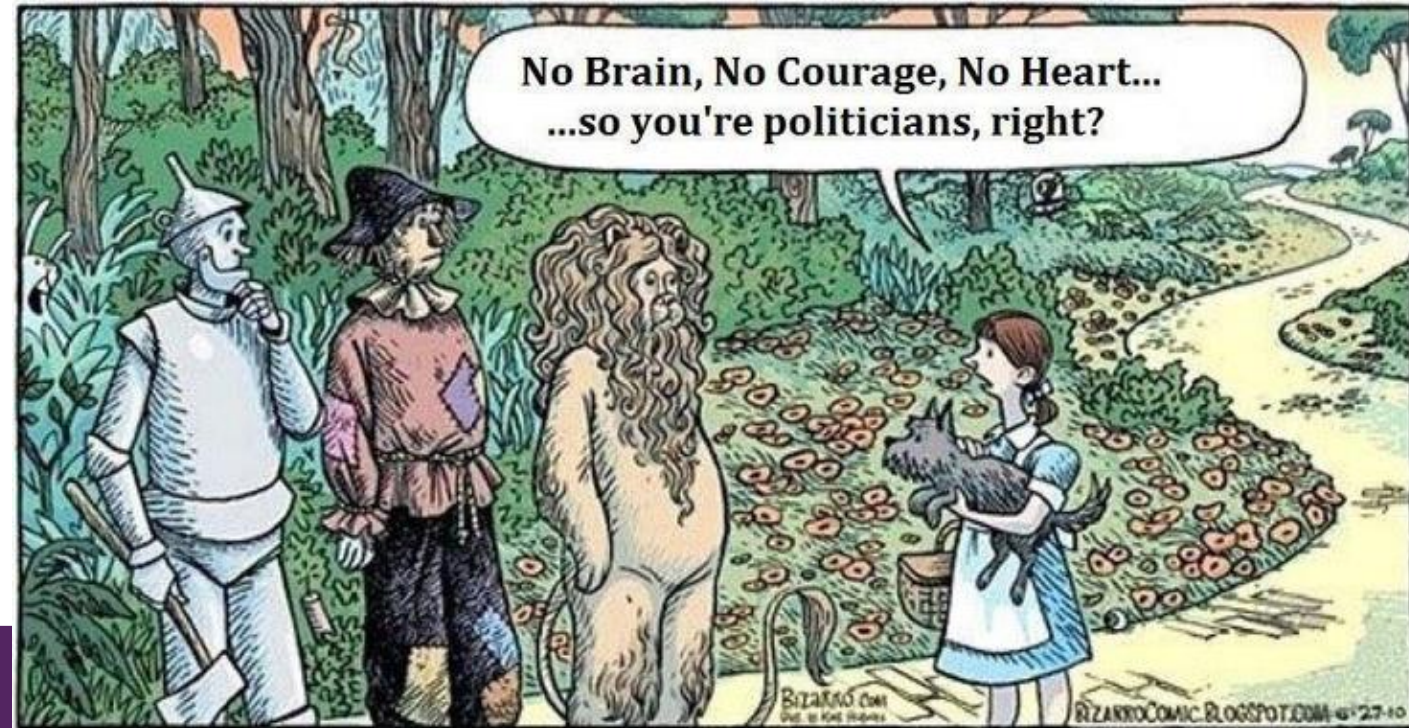
- Home API rates (18-19 years old) rising annually to 2021 (38.8%)
- Increase in API + Increase in Population (+12.5%) + Covid costs + Brexit + OECD forecasts = Institutional sustainability
- But... 2022 saw first(?) drop in API (from 38.8% to 37.8% (DataHE)).

**Why?**



# The Politics

- The Political Cost of Denying Aspiration
- Media and the Shaping of Public Opinion
- Politics, Policy and the Re-Shaping(?) of Demand





# Politics and HE 1

1. ACAS-facilitated negotiations
2. USS Pensions (vs. TPS)
3. International: Dependents and the Graduate Route
4. China and the Foreign Affairs Select Committee
5. Brexit: -£1.6bn and a Future 'Horizon Alternate'
6. EU R&D – 'third party' or 'third country' status?
7. Turing and the Dysfunctionality of Capita





## Politics and HE 2

8. Halfon and 'The Skills Reform Movement' 10-year Strategy.
9. Phasing the LLE...
10. Response to Augar: FD fee limits? Minimum Entry Requirements?? Student Number Caps??
11. Fees in the Deep Freeze...
12. ONS and Public Sector Universities??
13. Educating for the Public Sector Professions
14. Barber, Greening and Resisting the Decline of BTEC



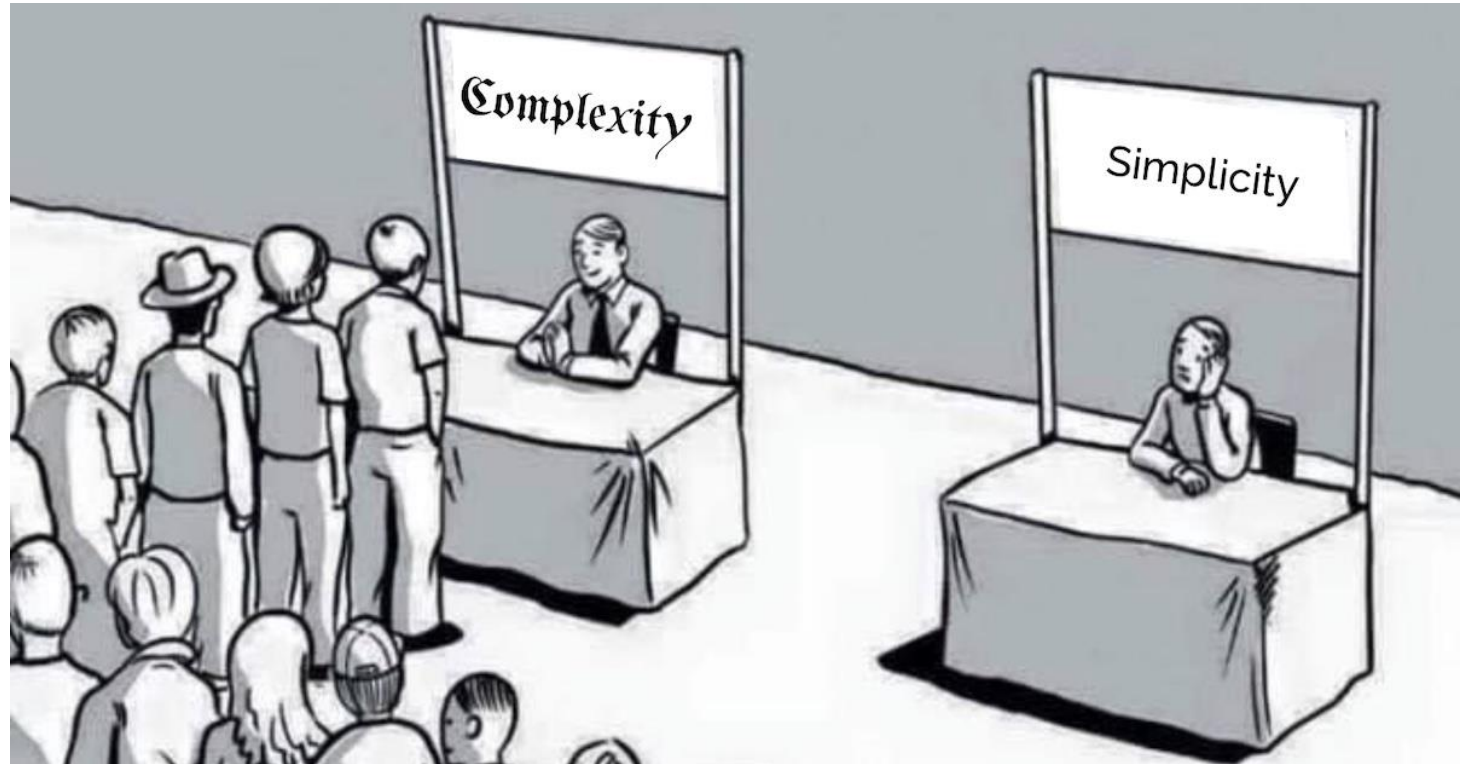
# The Market vs The State

- The Universities, Colleges and Apprenticeships Service (Halfon, March 2023)
- Depressing Demand (Inflation 10.1%, Maintenance Loan +3.8%) – polarizing Polar?
- Depressing Demand (60,000 fewer applications (-1.8%) as at 19/03/23)
- CF/UF Yields down (-0.3% (29.9% versus 30.2%))
- Creating conversations...

# Avoiding Perdition: A Simple Business?

---

- Recruitment
- Retention
- Student Satisfaction (NSS)
- Graduate Outcomes
- Financial and Business Integrity
- Strong investment strategy
- Culture & Ethos



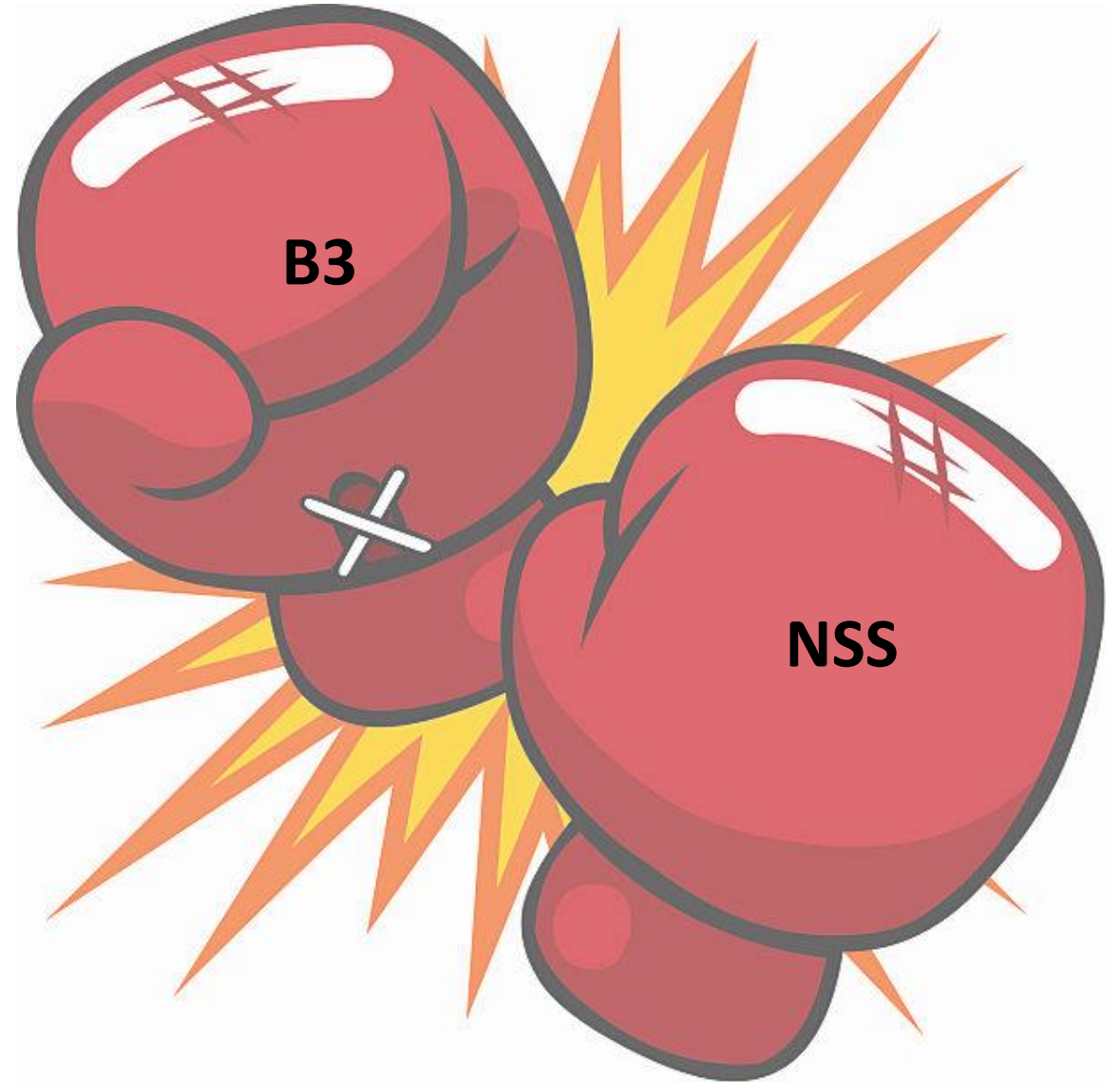


# Where are we now?

## An example - B3 vs NSS

---

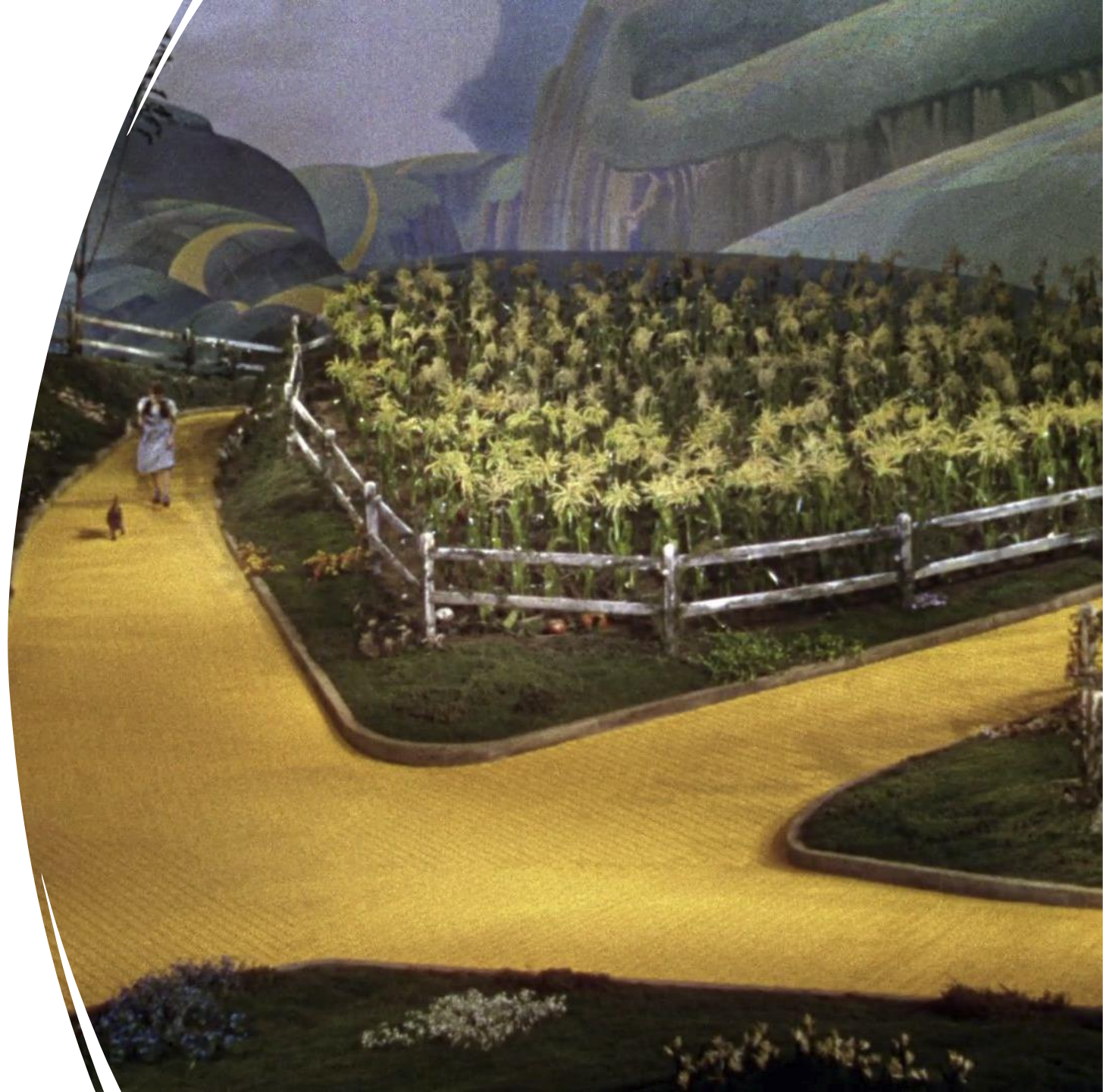
- A shift in focus?
- 'Subjective' (NSS) versus 'Objective' (B3) measures
- Avoiding the Bottom Quartile...
- The Road to Perdition: Named, Shamed, Penalized (and not contextualised)



# TRIFURCATION

## Higher Education 2030

---



# (I): UNIVERSITY AS WE KNOW IT?

- The Yellow Brick Road (To the Emerald City?)
- Prospering in the Perceptual Elite?
- 3Y UG FT, Residential, Strong PG, Strong R, Polar 4&5<
- ‘Gold Standard’ and the Pervasiveness of Brand
- U-Pay: Gap between cost and loan support widens further
- Russell, (ex-)1994 Group, and....?





## (II): THE UNI-TECHNICS?

- Rolling Back the Years (and an idealised fiction?)
- In the City and the City Region
- Partnership-driven (FE (Levels 4/5)), Business & Industry)
- Degree Apprenticeships
- Knowledge Exchange
- Strong WP, Polar 1&2< Fine words....?



### (III) THE GLOBAL POWERS?

“I’ve got a feeling we’re not in Kansas anymore”

- Blended Online and Hybrid Study is here to stay...
- ..But in an ‘As Well As’ environment and expectation
- Universities will endeavour to serve their own, but...
- Global corporates, with global names, levels of investment, are likely to dominate mass online learning
- Depending on the structure of the Lifelong Loan Entitlement, a massive shift of State-funding for HE from the sector to corporate entities



# THE FUTURE LANDSCAPE

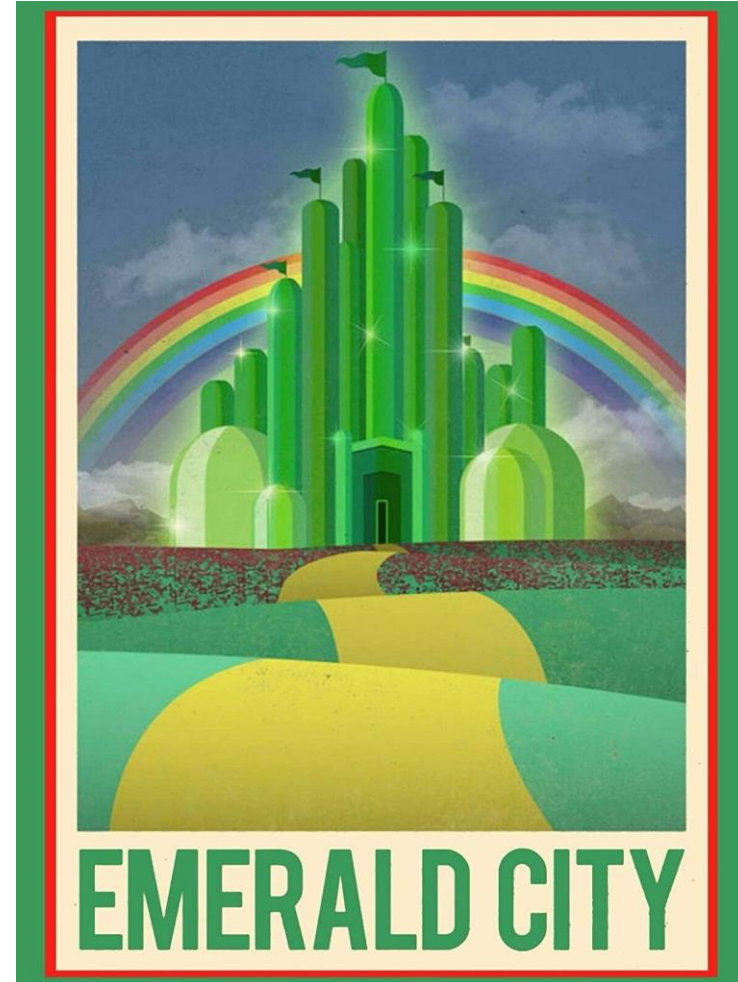
Selling Living and Learning – a Three Year Life Experience

Effective and Efficient Customer Service Counts in a Digitized World

But Service needs to be Personal and Personalized too!

Brand and Reputation Matter (not just a pie...) and will matter more

Be Known. Be Good. Be Known to Be Good.







# THE FUTURE GRADUATE

## Core skills

Digital literacy



Numeracy & Data analysis



Literacy



## Conceptualising skills

Complex problem solving



Critical thinking



Planning & organisation



Creative & innovative thinking



Reflective skills



## People related skills

Teamworking



Communication



Influencing & negotiating



Networking



Leadership



## Personal attributes

Resilience



Adaptability & flexibility



Self-motivation



Professionalism



Empathy



Inclusivity





**THE  TIMES**  
**THE SUNDAY TIMES**  
**GOOD UNIVERSITY**  
**GUIDE 2022**

**MODERN**  
**UNIVERSITY**  
**OF THE YEAR**



**THE  TIMES**  
**THE SUNDAY TIMES**  
**GOOD UNIVERSITY**  
**GUIDE 2022**

**UNIVERSITY**  
**OF THE YEAR**  
**SHORTLISTED**



# THE 'EDGE WHERE' ROAD...



SPOTLIGHT  
AWARD  
2018





# THE ROAD AHEAD

