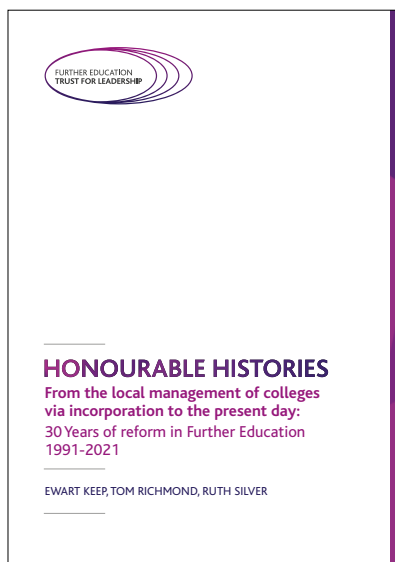


Where we are and where we are from: FE in a changing world

Two new reports from FETL attempt to understand the current state of play in further education in England and the factors that have shaped the sector we know today

JANUARY 2021



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Further Education Trust for Leadership (FETL) has published two reports, taking a timely look at the recent history of further education and skills in England, and examining the trends and circumstances that are shaping the sector of the near future.

Compiled by Professor Ewart Keep, Tom Richmond, Director of education think tank EDSK, and Dame Ruth Silver, President of FETL, *Honourable Histories* surveys 30 years of changes and impacts in FE from 1991 on. It provides a useful timeline of policy churn in further education, from the local management

of colleges through incorporation to the present day, while also looking ahead to the next phase of development and the factors shaping the current policy scene.

The second of the two reports, *A Framework for Leading in FE and Skills: 2021*, written by Simon Kelleher of Policy Connect, provides an overview of the key elements of the current landscape, including the most recent policy changes, while providing a breakdown of the roles senior leaders and leadership teams may take on, their core responsibilities and challenges of leadership in the current climate.

Dame Ruth Silver, President of FETL, said: 'It is apt that these are the first two reports published by FETL in its final term, weighing, in the spirit of TS Eliot, both "time present and time past" to inform our thinking about and understanding of "time future". The reports complement each other and, together, give readers a detailed sense of the current state of

play within FE and skills, and of the developments which, over the past three decades, have made us what we are and given us the distinct challenges we now face.

'It is important that we understand where we have come from. Everyone who has worked in or around further education and skills for any length of time will have been frustrated by the shortness of policy memory in the sector, particularly at the level of policymaking. With each change at the level of senior policymaking, it seems we have to reinvent the wheel, making our case once again, often defending the sector against either cuts or ill-conceived reforms.

'This important learning is what these reports aim to support, first, by offering an overview of the recent history of the sector; second, by providing a framework of understanding for the current leadership challenges we face. Given the scale of these challenges, and they are, to put it mildly, significant, it is critical that we learn these lessons in creating a better, fairer and healthier future.'

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