



# Negotiating the Curriculum

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## Our Experience of Negotiating the Curriculum

Jeremy –University of Wales  
Newport

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Swansea

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# The Community University of the Valleys Partnership

- Strategic Network of Universities and Community Learning Providers
- Mission – develop accessible community learning that helps widen participation in HE
- Shared Ethos/Key Principles
- Good Practice Guides – Aiming High

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# Outline of Presentation

- Why negotiate the curriculum?
- Contribution to widening participation
- Models
- Examples
- Challenges

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# Why Negotiate the Curriculum?

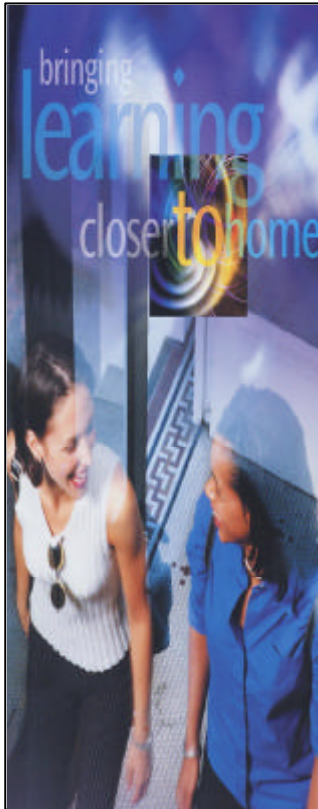
Adults learn best when learning is:

- Flexible and relevant to need
- Linked to issues of interest and life experience
- Within a democratic and participatory setting

And offers opportunities to:

- Explore options and broaden choice
- Develop ownership of the learning process

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## Why is this important?

In widening participation:

- Helps Retention and Progression
- Helps Learners overcome lack of confidence and increases motivation for learning
- Helps Tutors reflect and ensure appropriate courses and delivery methods
- Helps Providers ensure quality through ongoing review

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## Models of Curriculum Negotiation

- Provider designs course in response to learners expressed interests
- Learner groups negotiate between themselves and/or with provider which of an existing range of courses will be delivered
- Courses are designed so that there are content options for learners to decide on
- Courses are frameworks for learning in which content can be negotiated
- Learner groups are involved in the design of courses

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## Examples of Negotiated Curriculum

- CUV East/University of Wales, Newport:  
Certificate of HE - Combined Open Studies
- WEA: OCN Level 3 Psychology
- University of Wales Swansea:  
Community Part-Time Degree in  
Humanities

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# Challenges

- Limited resources/being realistic about what can be achieved
- Avoiding tokenism/reaching genuine consensus – dominant people can mask true negotiation within a group
- Ensuring the end product has value for all - learners, tutors and providers

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## Group Discussion:

What is your experience of negotiating the curriculum?

What are the implications of this approach for institutions i.e. when non-traditional learners progress from community to campus provision ?

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# 'Negotiating the Curriculum & Ensuring Learner Democracy'

A Good Practice Guide in the CUVP

Aiming High series

[www.cuv.org.uk](http://www.cuv.org.uk)

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