

02.7.2024

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Title

Conceptions of the value of higher education in a measured market / Michael Tomlinson

Publication year

2018

Source/Footnote

In: Higher education. - 75 (2018) 4, S. 711 - 727

Inventory number

46878

Keywords

Hochschule und Staat : allgemein ; Hochschule und Wirtschaft

Abstract

A critical analysis is developed of the dominant meanings of value in marketised higher education. In policy terms, this has become informed by the logics of the measured market whereby value has become synonymous with economic return and institutional accountability. The notion of value is one which permeates many discussions on the purpose of higher education and the perceived benefits it confers onto individuals and society as a whole. This, however, remains largely implicit and unearthing the specific meaning of value (and values) clearly presents challenges. This article critically examines a variety of concepts relevant to discussion of the value of higher education, including the relationship between value and quality, consumerism, goods and performativity. In each case, it unpacks their meanings and implications for the relationship between students and institutions, particularly at a time when this is seen to be increasingly transactional. It then outlines an alternative value framing to the utilitarian 'value for money' so prevalent in much market-driven policy. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Tomlinson, Michael, E-Mail: m.b.tomlinson@soton.ac.uk