

## CGHE Annual Conference 24-25 May 2022: Session details



### **Universities and Regions: confronting the ‘levelling up’ agenda**

25 May 2022, 1.50-2.50pm (UK)

*Chair: Maia Chankseliani*

*Speakers: Michael Shattock and Aniko Horvath*

There is general agreement (McCann 2019, IPPR North 2022 and Levelling Up White Paper 2022) that the UK represents the extremes of regional inequality and that this extends to areas of multiple deprivation in otherwise affluent regions. Historically the university system developed without reference to regions and location and the context of foundation have been crucial determinants in defining institutional status and mission: in general research intensive recruit students nationally while teaching-led universities recruit much more from their own localities and their graduates are much more likely to seek employment locally. This constitutes a significant contribution, long term, to ‘levelling up’.

There is evidence of increasing links between universities and further education colleges, particularly in universities with a strong local clientele; the colleges provide an important bridge between communities and higher education. Some universities have established extensive college networks. These relationships point to the creation of a tertiary system in England (Wales has already done so and Scotland is moving in that direction). England remains an over centralised university system and for a tertiary system to be effective coordination needs to be decentralised to regions. The decentralisation of higher and further education and the implicit transfer of initiative downwards represents a critical step in ‘levelling up’ and in the creation of a modern post secondary education system.

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