

The Role of the Universities (Paying particular attention to Social Sciences and Education).

The role of the university is to:

- **Advance understanding**, especially by, in the social sciences in particular, supporting adventurous (i.e. non literature-driven) research into important social questions – such as how to design/create a society in which *homo sapiens* will have any chance of surviving into the future.
- **Involve students as apprentices in that process** so that they develop the competencies of the scientist – the ability to problematise, invent ways of collecting relevant information, obtain funding, etc.. ~~(Note how this differs from the common assumption that the Universities are there to convey a temporary knowledge of smatterings of out of date knowledge for recitation in examinations).~~
- **Provide opportunities for people**, at any time in their lives, **to work with those at the cutting edge of advancing understanding** and to get new studies onto the agenda.
- **Provide mentors who will facilitate the development of generic high level competencies** (such as initiative, the ability to identify, and contribute to the solution of, problems, and the competencies required to contribute to emergent climates of intelligence or innovation in groups and society) **through individualised, project-based, competency oriented education..**
- **Facilitate the evolution of multiple alternative ways of life** such as might be envisaged by sectors of the “degrowth” movement.
- **Offer numerous short, up-to-date, modularised, knowledge and skills-oriented, courses.**
- **Offer opportunities for people**, at any time in their lives, **to pursue intellectual enquiries of their own choice and to a level of depth of their own choice.**