

**"It's a wonder they engage with learning at all!" An exploration of the HE student as silenced stakeholder in the UK Government e-learning strategy.**

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The session presented a textual analysis of key UK government e-policy documents utilising theoretical approaches from the study of Literature and Media. The textual analyses indicate a privileging of the technology that in effect marginalises 'education' and learning whilst pathologising and silencing the student; any resistance to or unwillingness to engage in HE being described as a 'special learning need'. Policy on on-line learning environments in effect appears to favour excluding students from physical contact with the university and its tutors.

I thought that there was some interesting and relevant discussion. One delegate wanted to make the point that there is a great deal of good work being done in the e-area, and there was general agreement with this view. The presenters made the point, however, that policy sets the agenda and reductionist policy sets a reductionist agenda. For example, creativity can be stultified by policy, especially when it refers to 'learning packages' rather than 'learning experience'.