

Integrating the curriculum based on the principle of student academic freedom

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Q1: How can a curriculum respond to the societal needs of today?

1) By not trying to satisfy *everyone*

‘You can please some of the people all of the time, you can please all of the people some of the time, but you can’t please all of the people all of the time.’ (John Lydgate, Poet)

‘The modern university must neither fear the world nor make itself responsible for its consequences’ (Abraham Flexner, 1930:15)

Q1: How can a curriculum respond to the societal needs of today?

2) By being clear about the prime aim or purpose of a *higher* education curriculum

Critically-minded and intellectually independent graduates who will be able to adapt and contribute the most to the development of society and the economy.

Without a clear aim the curriculum will be fragmented and direction-less

Q2: How can a curriculum stimulate student involvement?

By rejecting notions of 'student engagement' as a form of coercion and surveillance (ie bodily, participative and emotional performativity)

By embracing 'student engagement' that allows students to define how they engage and respects and protects student rights to:

- * non-indoctrination
- * to choose how to learn
- * to be treated as an adult
- * to reticence

Forms of student performativity



Bodily
performativity



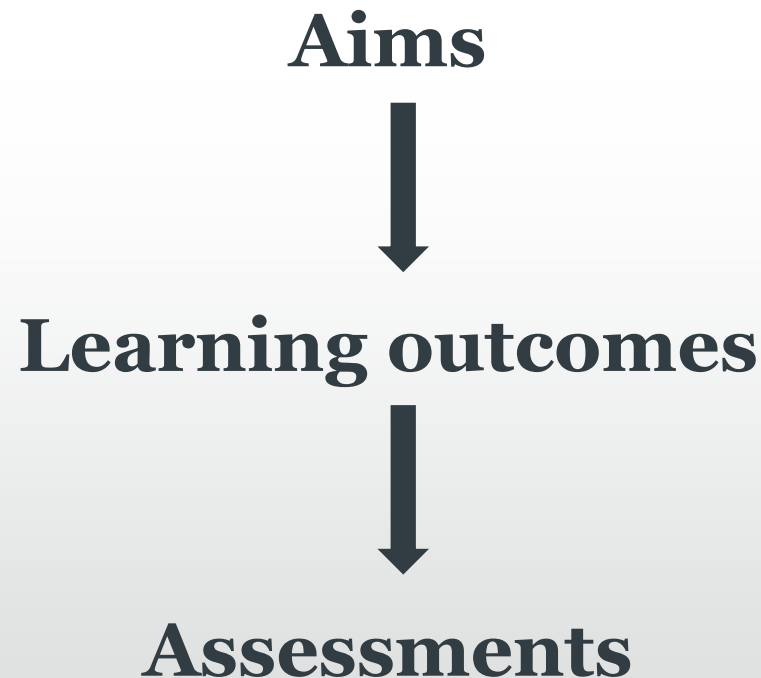
Participative
performativity



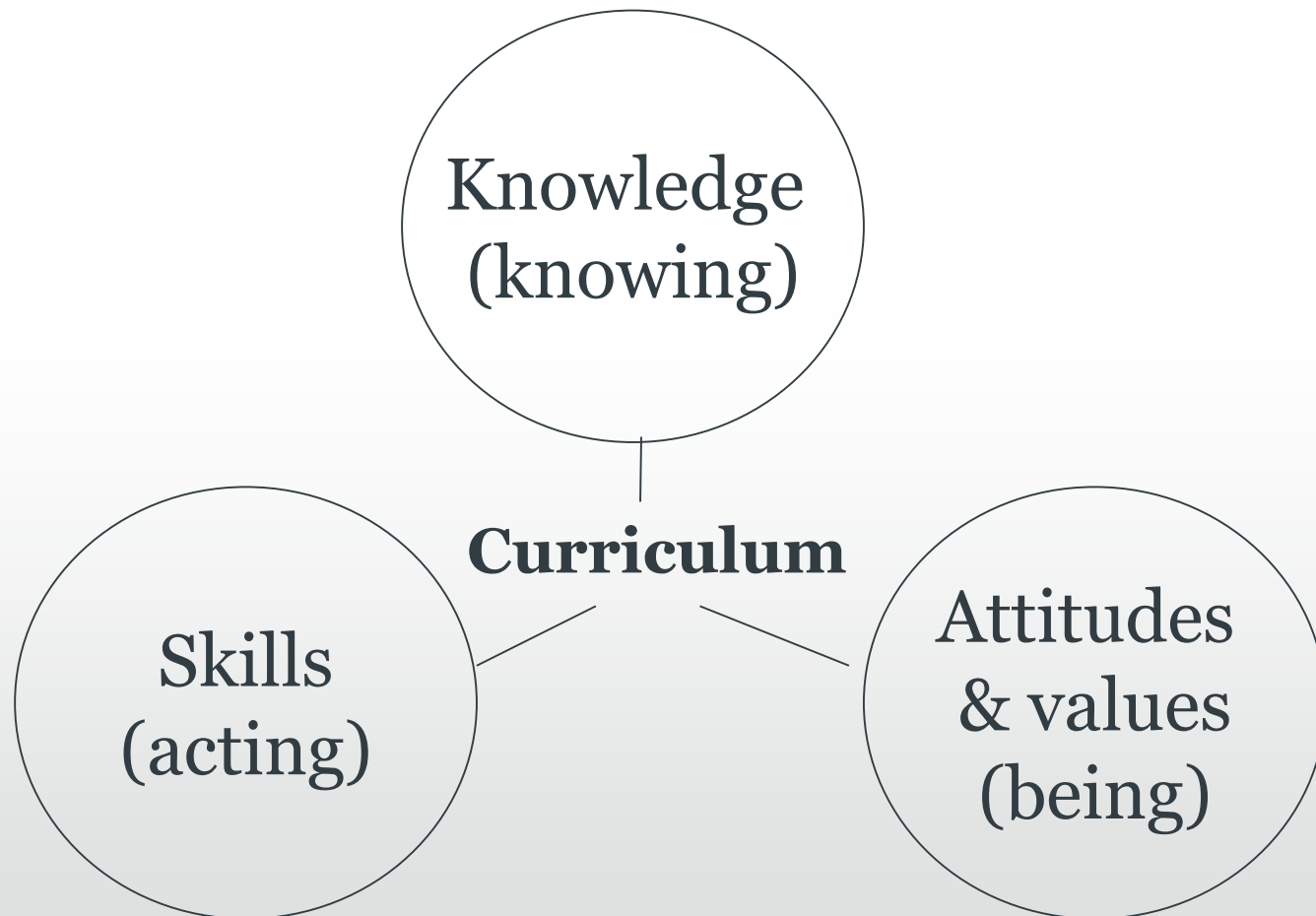
Emotional
performativity

Q3: How can the curriculum do the above in an integrated way?

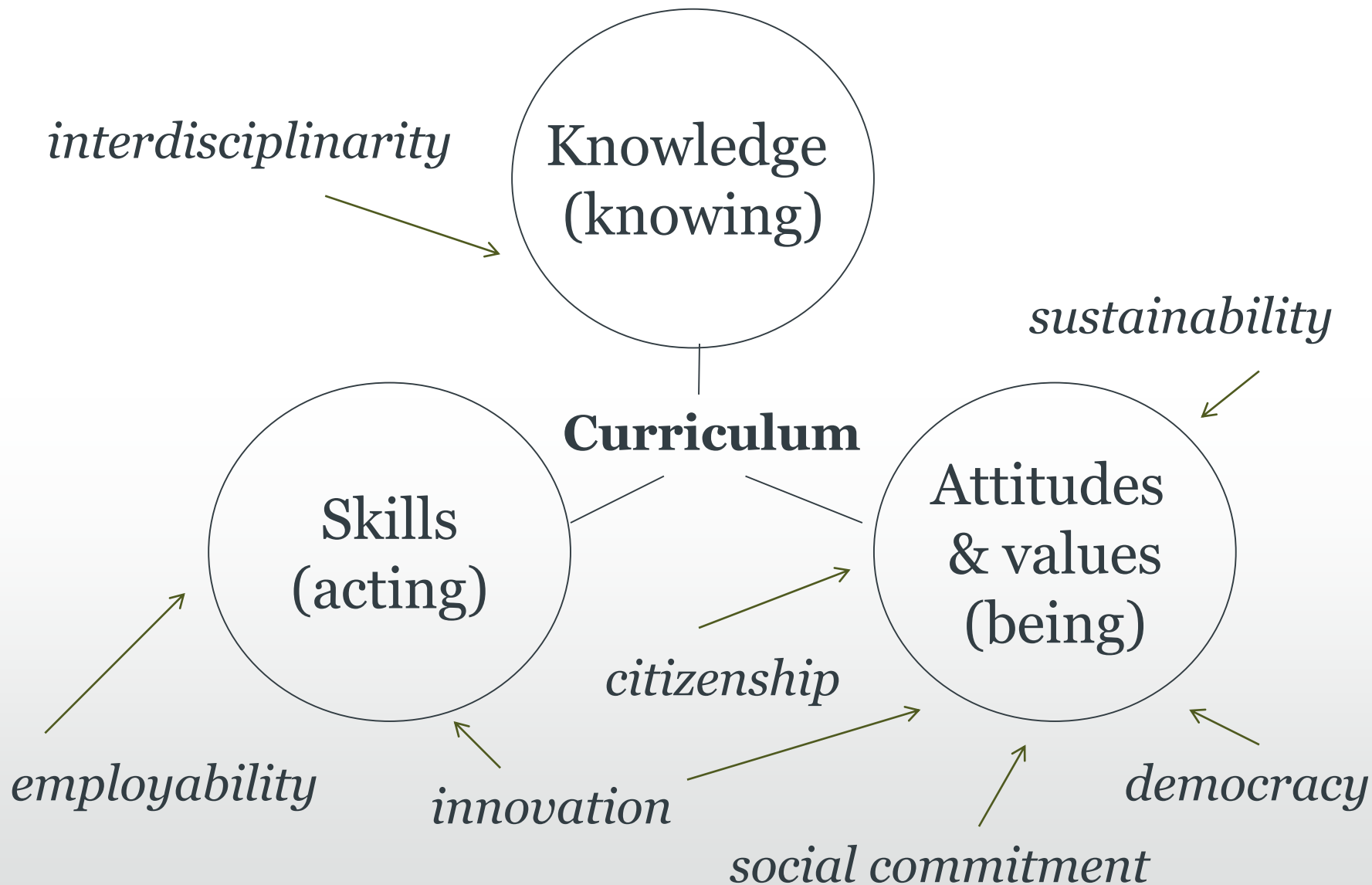
1) through constructive alignment between:



2) Through clarity about the *aims* of higher education:



Adapted from Barnett and Coate (2005)



Q4: Is the curriculum the only instrument for this?

Institutional ethos and mission, residential facilities, etc, can also play a role

Q5: What is the relationship between the learning outcomes and the curriculum, and is it sufficiently clear?

Not currently. Learning outcomes are not meaningful unless aligned with aims and assessments

Q6: How do we know if the curriculum is doing what is intended?

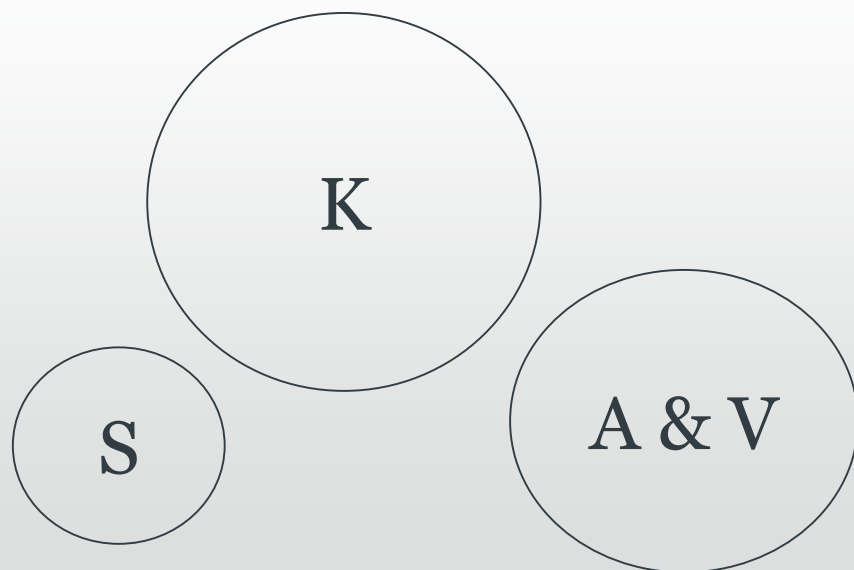
You don't unless you have *constructive alignment* (Biggs, 1996) and other relevant data such as destination statistics

Q 7: How powerful is the curriculum?

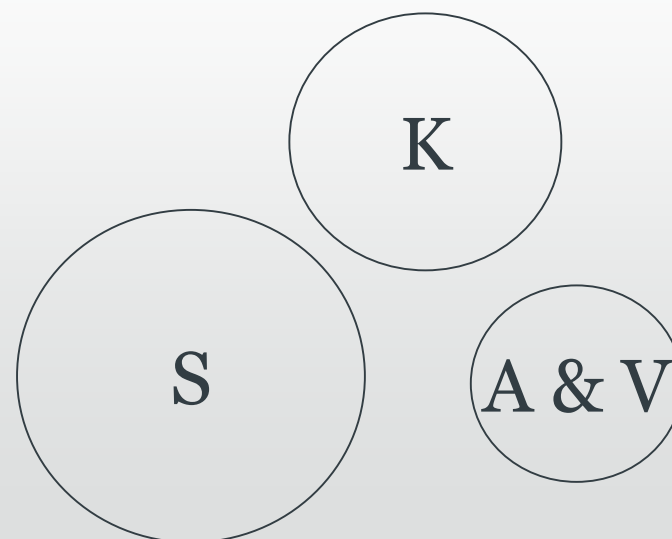
Very!

Q 8: Does an institution have sufficient space to devise the curriculum of a particular programme?

Curriculum 1



Curriculum 2



Q9: How can teachers and staff be professionalised?

What does ‘professionalised’ mean? A teaching qualification? But this does not make someone a legitimate university teacher, only being an active researcher can do this

‘If one of the objects is to get undergraduates *to recognize that the frontiers of knowledge are mobile*, no one is better qualified to demonstrate that fact than those who have themselves helped to move those frontiers, and understand how the job is done.’

Conrad Russell (1993:88)

Q10. What is the role of the stakeholders in curriculum (re)design? Who owns the curriculum?

Students should 'own' the curriculum in the sense that the boundaries of their studies should be shaped by their interests, intellect and passions.

The curriculum should *open up*, not *close down* access to knowledge

Only knowledge - or the truth - can set you free



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Thank you for listening.

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