

01.3.2026

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**Title**

Mass higher education and massification / Malcolm Tight

**Publication year**

2019

**Source/Footnote**

In: Higher education policy. - 32 (2019) 1, S. 93 - 108

**Inventory number**

48014

**Keywords**

Wissenschaft : Hochschulforschung (Forschung über Hochschulen) ; Wissenschaft : Interdisziplinarität ; Hochschule : gegenwärtige Situation

**Abstract**

Mass higher education and massification, the process by which it is achieved, are now common throughout the developed and developing worlds and have thus been the subject of much debate amongst both policy-makers and higher education researchers. This article — based on a systematic review of the published research literature — discusses the origins and meanings of the terms, examines their application and practice in the literature and considers the various issues and critiques which have been raised. It concludes that the elite/mass/universal typology may finally have outlived its usefulness and that there is a pressing need to reconsider what higher education means in the post-massification era.(HRK / Abstract übernommen)