

Projects developing good management of processes

Benchmarking for media services

Reference	GMP4
Lead organisation	Standing Conference of Heads of Media Services (SCHoMS)
Funding awarded	£33,020
Web-site	www.schoms.ac.uk
Objectives	Compare service provision and increase the efficiency of media services within HE
Project leader	Dr Anne Mumford, Director of Audio Visual Services
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Introduction

The Standing Conference for Heads of Media Services is a relatively new professional body for the UK HE sector. The work was jointly undertaken through the Loughborough University Audio Visual Services and Library and Information Statistics Unit (LISU).

Objectives

The aims of the project were to:

- scope the areas covered by media services
- develop and undertake a benchmarking survey
- report the results
- put in place a system through SCHoMS to ensure that the survey continues on an annual basis.

The areas covered by the survey were:

- audio-visual support for lecture rooms
- graphic design
- printing
- photography
- video production and video services.

Some institutions include other facilities (such as language laboratories) within media services but these were excluded from the survey.

Work done

Consultation (undertaken at a SCHoMS workshop for 40 people) at the start of the project helped develop the outline of the survey. Participants developed the areas to be addressed in the survey and drafted questions. The survey was developed further to ensure consistency across sections of audio-visual services and piloted through further meetings and site visits.

The workshop proved to be an excellent way of starting the project. It enabled collaboration of the survey scope and questions, widened ownership of the activity and created engagement between the project staff and the HE professionals who would be asked to respond.

The survey was piloted on paper and then in electronic form. Thirty-eight HEIs responded to the survey. During the process there was contact with around 30 more HEIs, and it is likely that many of these will make a return in future surveys.

Results to date

Benefits achieved

The survey has enabled comparisons to be made among media services; this has resulted in debate among media services professionals within the sector.

HEIs are already recognising their lack of measures of performance, and many are putting in place mechanisms for ensuring better returns next year. The collaborative development of the survey means that people have been involved in the development of the measures, and although they may not currently collect the data, can see the potential for doing so.

Dissemination

Completion of data collection timed well with the SChOMS April 2001 conference (attended by 46 delegates) and enabled discussion regarding the format of the data.

A summary report is available in paper and on the project web-site. The full report containing all the data tables is available to SChOMS members and to respondents. The second survey is about to be launched and the grant from the HEFCE GMP programme provides partial funding for this second survey, which will become self financing in the future. SChOMS is aiming for 60 respondents for this second survey.

Benchmarking for good management

Reference	GMP5
Lead organisation	St Mary's College and Association of Managers in HE colleges (AMHEC)
Funding awarded	£250,000
Web-site	www.amhec.org.uk
Observer	Ian Gross, Head of Internal Audit, HEFCE
Objectives	Refining an existing collaborative benchmarking model developed by AMHEC, this project creates a benchmarking framework to identify areas for improvement
Project leader	David Leen, Director of Finance, St Mary's College
Project manager	Andrew Young
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Partner institutions

The member colleges of AMHEC are:

- Chester College of Higher Education
- King Alfred's College Winchester
- Liverpool Hope University College
- Newman College of higher education
- St Mary's College (lead institution)
- Trinity and All Saints College
- Trinity College Carmarthen
- University College Chichester
- York St John College.

Objectives

There were three main aims:

- to develop a collaborative benchmarking model to identify good practice and continuously improve business performance
- to develop a framework to ensure recurrent benefits by appointing a self-financing project leader
- to disseminate the process and good management practices revealed by the project across the HE sector.

Work done

The benchmarking software in use produces detailed peer comparison reports and analysis using various datasets:

- financial
- staff
- student
- estates
- 500 detailed items of income and expenditure
- 15 key performance indicator charts and tables for comparison purposes

- report downloads to spreadsheets.

The benchmarking strategy group within the project identifies two or three key strategic themes each year. A function group is created to investigate good practice processes in relation to these themes.

Themes identified to date are:

- learning resources (relative costs and structure)
- residences (capital and financing packages)
- media, marketing and recruitment (relative costs and structure)
- academic staffing (staff levels and resource allocation)
- school block experience (costs and practices)
- procurement (practice and methodology)
- validation, quality and accreditation (relative costs).

Results to date

The benchmarking work has resulted in identifiable good practice being shared between the nine AMHEC institutions. The reviews instigated by benchmarking the selected themes have promoted careful attention to costs and encouraged institutions to seek opportunities for income generation. Benchmarking is becoming integral to corporate planning for the partner institutions. After the cessation of HEFCE GMP funding, the project will continue as a self-financing project linked to the corporate planning process.

Review of central academic and administrative services

Reference	GMP14
Lead organisation	University of Essex
Funding awarded	£146,150
Web-site	www2.essex.ac.uk/academic/ac-sec/hefce-project.html
Objectives	Measure service delivery, consult service users and re-engineer central academic and administration processes
Project leader	Dr Tony Rich, Registrar and Secretary, University of Essex
Project manager	Tony Platt
Project officer	Philip Rawe
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Introduction

Some management review methodologies are ideal for the needs of the manufacturing sector but may not be suitable for HEIs. The University of Essex Administrative Services Review (ASR) methodology offers a way to achieve business review with a relatively low input of time and expense by an institution.

Details

The ASR process requires a unit manager to define the service they provide for each area, identify any alternatives or opportunities for the future and, if appropriate, cessation of the service. The unit is encouraged to seek staff views within the section to contribute to this stage of the process.

It is critical to involve service customers. A client panel of key stakeholders and critics of the service, chaired by a senior academic, is then invited to represent the university community and comment on the service. The first question for the client panel is: 'Do you want the service?' If the answer is yes, the client panel is invited to suggest how the service could be better by costing less, being more efficient or more comprehensive. After identifying these changes the client panel is required to agree how changes should be implemented.

Results to date

As a result of applying the ASR process to review the accommodation office at the University of Essex, added weight was given to an argument to dispose of a property that was expensive and inconvenient to maintain, thus releasing £600,000 into university funds.

Another recent review was of 'Central Purchasing, Goods Inwards and Central Stores' at the University of Essex. Central Purchasing offers advice on the purchase of consumables and negotiates bulk purchases at preferential rates. The outcomes of the review were:

- a. An agreed purchasing and stores distribution strategy.
- b. Introduction of a desktop service for ordering stationery and cleaning materials. Associated with this change:
 - the range of products covered by preferential price bulk purchasing contracts was widened

- by removing the order processing from the central purchasing unit, departments are receiving a better quality and lower cost service
 - the procedure for dealing with delivery notes and invoices has been revised.
- c. A single location for incoming goods, central storage, post and distribution provides improved tracking of items received, with small parcels being distributed as part of the internal post.
- d. Changes to Central Stores generated savings available for re-investment of approximately £60,000. Central Stores now holds significantly fewer lines of stock. Only maintenance items are now held, thus releasing 100 square metres of space for other purposes. Also it has been possible to redeploy a member of staff from Central Stores to Central Purchasing.

NWUPC Procurement management development programme

Reference	GMP45
Lead organisation	North Western Universities Purchasing Consortium (NWUPC)
Funding awarded	£200,000
Web-site	www.man.ac.uk/NWUPC/
Objectives	Develop and deliver training in professional procurement management, helping trainees to acquire NVQ qualifications in procurement and membership of the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply
Project leader	Paul Toman, Director, North Western Universities Purchasing Consortium (NWUPC)
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Introduction

The North Western Universities Purchasing Consortium comprises 20 universities and HE colleges plus four further education colleges across the north-west of England and North Wales. NWUPC provides a structure for HEIs to mutually secure value for money in the purchasing of goods and services. NWUPC has purchasing contracts that have an annual turnover of approximately £50 million.

Objectives

With devolved budgets, most routine buying is undertaken by staff in departments and faculties whose main role is not purchasing. These staff may not have formal purchasing training, may not be familiar with European regulations and frequently lack the skills and/or confidence to deal with trained private-sector sales representatives. National Vocational Qualifications (NVQs) undertaken by staff not in a formal purchasing role help ensure that best practice is followed. NWUPC was awarded £200,000 to fund two trainers and administration support over three years to run an NVQ programme across its member institutions.

Results to date

- 124 NVQ candidates are participating in the programme, undertaking levels 2, 3 and 4
- 2 candidates have achieved an internal verifier award
- 5 candidates have completed NVQs
- 22 member institutions have staff working towards a NVQ in procurement
- presentations about NVQs were made to 300 delegates at the national conference on university purchasing (COUP 2001)
- workshops were delivered to NVQ candidates on contract law, EU directives, the role of the buyer, obtaining goods and services, and 'putting the jargon into practice'
- the training programme has been supported by the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (CIPS) after a validation visit
- NVQ candidates have been involved in six NWUPC EU tendered contracts in the past year

- savings and improved value-for-money generated by the project (from start to 31 July 2001) are estimated at £150,000.

The NVQ training programme has spread the awareness, use and involvement of the NWUPC contracting programme into many departments and faculties previously not using NWUPC contracts. NVQ candidates have gained understanding and confidence in purchasing and their ability to obtain better value for money in departmental/faculty procurement.

Administration and IT requirements for adult part-time students

Reference	GMP52
Lead organisation	Birkbeck College
Funding awarded	£63,548
Objectives	Examine existing administration and support processes for part-time students, aiming to streamline the administrative tasks
Project leader	David McGhie, Planning Officer
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Introduction

The project aims to define the administrative processes and information systems necessary for the effective management of adult part-time students in HE, identify best practice in the field of part-time HE, and to specify an appropriate information system.

Objectives

The project has been conducted through:

- an evaluation and systems analysis of the processes that make up the administration of part-time students – from first enquiry to course completion
- the production of a written specification for an integrated student information system tailored to the needs of part-time students.

The college contracted Southern Universities Management Services (SUMS) to review registry and student information processes and to prepare an information system specification. Interviews were held with approximately 70 staff during the information gathering stages.

Results to date

At the conclusion of this work a report on student management and registry arrangements was delivered to the project steering committee in 2001.

The analysis of administrative processes is being used to inform the specification for a registry student information system geared to the needs of part-time students. This specification will be made available to the sector. A good practice guide on the administration of part-time students in HE will be disseminated to the sector in 2002.

Learning points

Whilst the report found similarities in the administrative requirements of full- and part-time students in HE, in many instances the particular needs of part-time students merited more specialist consideration:

- a. The need for the HE institution to reach its part-time undergraduate and postgraduate markets effectively using its own resources. Part-time courses need to be actively marketed; the well defined channels of communication found in the main full-time market do not apply here.

- b. The market for part-time courses is more dynamic than for full-time. Courses often have a shorter life-cycle; it is important to continually review and refresh the course portfolio if it is to remain attractive to students.
- c. The importance of the 'first point of contact' for prospective and new part-time students; effective enrolment management is important in the recruitment and retention of part-time students.
- d. The need to actively redirect competent applicants to alternative courses for which they may be suitable, if they cannot be accepted on the courses for which they have applied.
- e. The need for effective communications with part-time students – relying more on e-mail, the internet, telephone and post rather than face-to-face contact.
- f. The value of maintaining the student database to include a record of contact between part-time students and the providers of university services.
- g. Maintaining access to essential student academic and administrative support services at times convenient to part-time students, for example outside normal working hours for students attending evenings-only classes.
- h. The incidence of discontinuous study in part-time education (especially in continuing education) makes it important to identify breaks in study and to apply this knowledge to the marketing of part-time courses, and for maintaining contact with students. Providers of part-time HE also need to be flexible in allowing students 'time out' from a course.
- i. The need to facilitate controlled access by students to information on the database relating to the progress of applications, academic progress and personal details.
- j. An efficient fee system with excellent reporting features is particularly important. It is often more difficult to communicate with part-time students than full-time students, and this can add to the burden of recording accurate fee payment information.
- k. Part-time students usually pay tuition fees with their own money. Most are in employment and may have demanding careers. Consequently they expect high standards from the administrative service provided by an HEI.

Project management framework for the implementation of information systems in higher education

Reference	GMP65
Lead organisation	University of Newcastle upon Tyne
Funding awarded	£59,000
Web-site	www.ncl.ac.uk/mids/fgmp.htm
Objectives	Produce a generalised project management framework applicable to the implementation of any major information system within the HE sector
Project leader	Professor John Goddard OBE, Pro Vice-Chancellor
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Introduction

In the face of increasing demands for management information for both internal and external users, several universities have resorted to integrated off-the-shelf information system (IS) packages, with limited degrees of success.

Objectives

The aim of this project was to create a project management framework to improve the likelihood of success when implementing IS solutions. This framework will offer a forum for co-operation between senior university managers (who may have limited experience of information systems) and IS professionals (who may not always understand the unique nature of universities).

Work done

The project comprised three main elements:

- a. 'Blueprint identification'. This involved documenting and analysing the experience of a number of UK universities in the implementation of large-scale enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems to identify both specific project management issues and areas of good practice.
- b. 'Realisation'. Building on the 'business blueprint', an integrated suite of tools, techniques and methods was developed within an established IS project management framework tailored for universities.
- c. 'Testing and evaluation'. The evolving project management framework, processes and tools that were developed in the 'realisation' stage, were tested and evaluated within the University of Newcastle upon Tyne on a live IS project.

Most information for the study was collected by interview with key personnel directly involved in IS implementations within the HE sector. A semi-structured interview approach was adopted, which proved highly successful. Early research focused on experiences of ERP system implementation

within the University of Newcastle upon Tyne. The information collection was later extended to cover other institutions that had implemented similar large-scale ERP solutions.

A literature review was also undertaken on subjects such as information systems management, project management, business strategy, organisational theory and HE management.

Observations from the collected data were combined with information from the literature search to generate a high-level three-dimensional framework:

- a. The first and principal dimension is scope, defined in terms of a number of interacting factors dubbed 'the 7-S's' of project management – strategy, structure, systems, staff, skills, style and stakeholders.
- b. The second dimension of the framework is the project management lifecycle. A convenient acronym is 'the 3-D's' of project management – design it, do it, and develop it.
- c. The third dimension of the framework is concerned with scale and distinguishes between project management at three distinct levels ('the 3-Ms') each of which implies its own perspective of the project to be managed – the macro, meso and micro levels. The macro level would typically relate to a new ERP implementation process undertaken over more than one year. The meso level would typically include the implementation of new modules or major upgrades to an existing system that become projects in their own right. Finally the micro level addresses the need for revisions and developments in response to user requirements and changes in the external environment.

The testing phase comprised an evaluation of the framework, in action, at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne; since the main phase of ERP implementation had been completed at the time of writing, the testing and evaluation were confined to a meso stage in the ERP implementation.

Results to date

In summary, the framework and interlocking models proposed by this project are intended as an adjunct, rather than a replacement, to established system development and project management methodologies that may be known to HE managers and IS professionals.

The '7-S' framework is now available for dissemination as a device for identifying and accommodating key IS project impacts from a 'socio-technical' perspective. These broadly define the factors that the IS project team has to get right. This implies an emphasis on the systemic nature of the framework and the importance of adequately accommodating the interactions that occur between the components. Schematic models and work tools are also presented that can facilitate management during the phases of an IS project.

Management in small HEIs network (MASHEIN)

Reference	GMP70
Lead organisation	Bishop Grosseteste College
Funding awarded	£105,000
Web-site	www.bgc.ac.uk/projects/mashein/
Observer	Derek Hicks, Regional Consultant, HEFCE
Objectives	Research and disseminate best practice in the management of smaller HEIs and church colleges, which often do not have the administrative time to research good management practices.
Project leader	Professor Eileen Baker, Principal
Project manager	Dr Mark Trout
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Introduction

The project addresses management issues pertinent to small HEIs with a view to increasing their cost-effectiveness, whilst maintaining the diversity in HE represented by small colleges in their specialism(s), ethos, locations, and denominational and other specific affiliations.

Partner institutions

The project initially comprised the following organisations:

- Bishop Grosseteste College (lead institution)
- Central School of Speech and Drama
- Harper Adams University College
- Newman College
- SCOP.

The core group has been extended to include:

- Cumbria College of Art and Design
- Dartington College of Arts
- Norwich School of Art and Design
- Royal Veterinary College
- Wimbledon School of Art.

It is anticipated that this will be extended to form a wider network of institutions with membership of a further 20 to 30 small HEIs in a less formal relationship.

The involvement of SCOP as a full partner and SCOP's commitment to provide support will mean efficient dissemination of results through SCOP's membership base and representative role.

Results to date

The project has achieved several financial and non-financial benefits for the core group:

- a consultancy function performed by members for each other on a wide range of management topics, with comparative information on practices, problems and solutions

- relevant staff development for key post-holders in the core group, and through the wider network
- role analysis, performance indicators and benchmark development, customised for a distinct group of HEIs with shared characteristics
- collaborative purchasing leverage via economies of scale
- shared or collaborative development of management, resources and costing software
- dissemination of good management practices via a network to share the above benefits more widely
- a payback from improved institutional and academic efficiency.

The knowledge gained will be disseminated among other smaller-scale HEIs.

Dissemination

Seminars

The following seminars have been held:

- October 2000, Bishop Grosseteste College
 - Management structures in small HEIs and their distinctiveness and strengths
 - The accountability burden – how collaboration might directly or indirectly help
 - Discussion of HEI priorities for exploration by the MASHEIN Group
- December 2000, Harper Adams University College
 - Management issues within institutional management and leadership
 - Senior staff development including barriers faced developing management in small HEIs
- February 2001, Newman College
 - Management Information Systems
- September 2001, Central School of Speech and Drama
 - Estate management statistics and their implication for small and specialist HEIs
 - Forward action plan and final report format for the GMP70 project, to include discussions of the diversity and distinctiveness of small HEIs, finance and procurement and strategic planning
- November, 2001, Bishop Grosseteste College
 - Diversity and distinctiveness of small HEIs, including the impact of expansion in HE on smaller institutions, strategic management, benchmarking for smaller-scale HEIs, and the effect of mergers on colleges
 - Outline of the MASHEIN compact which includes an agreement to co-operate on a 'preferred partner' (but not sole partner) basis in policy development, procurement, staff development, bid development, academic review and governance.

Further dissemination

The final report will be launched at a major conference in June 2003. Opportunities will be sought to disseminate findings at other stakeholder events (for example, SCOP, Universities UK, annual conferences; regional FE/HE consortia meetings; Regional Development Agency and regional university sector events). Further dissemination will be by electronic and paper publications. A project web-site has been developed.

The final report is expected to cover: the way the MASHEIN group presently works, distinctiveness and identity, diversity and case studies. It is hoped that the final report will also elaborate on flexible models for collaboration among smaller-scale HEIs.

Developing collaborative management skills for CADISE senior executives

Reference	GMP73
Lead organisation	Consortium of Art and Design Institutions in Southern England (CADISE)
Funding awarded	£131,600
Web-site	www.cadise.ac.uk/projects/management/manageindex.htm
Observer	Rama Thirunamachandran, Regional Consultant, HEFCE
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore existing models of collaborative management (in the US, Europe and UK) and the impact of technology on a consortium of small specialist institutions • provide a programme of professional development for seven chief executive officers as they seek to define a collaborative culture for their recently formed consortium
Project leader	Professor Robin Baker, Director, Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication
Project manager	Bethan O'Neil, CADISE Administrative Director
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Introduction

To manage and sustain the CADISE consortium, the chief executives must change their traditional skills of autonomous institutional management to those of collaborative management.

Objectives

Key aims:

- to develop for the CADISE senior executives, skills in collaborative management which will help them embed an inclusive shared culture and technological leadership across the partner institutions
- to provide the HE sector with a good practice model of specialist institutional collaborative management and examples of the benefits of a dedicated consortium.

Work done

The project was divided into three stages.

Stage 1 – Models of collaboration (May – July 2000). Work included:

- in-depth examination of existing models of collaboration to enhance understanding about the typologies of collaborative activity in the UK, Europe and the US
- a 'models of collaboration' workshop for chief executives on alternative models of academic and non-academic collaboration
- interviewing representatives from various levels of the structure about the character, strengths and impact of the collaborative system
- gathering data about the efficiencies and effectiveness of the system

- assessing the applicability or otherwise of such a model to a small consortium of specialised arts and design HEIs in the UK.

Stage 2 – Theory and practice of collaborative management (Sep 2000 – May 2001). Work included:

- examining cultures – both institutional and technological
- map partner institutional cultures and define a collective strategy for change, before defining a collaborative culture for CADISE
- residential workshops for the CADISE Policy Group (comprising chief executives of CADISE partner institutions), facilitated by the Judge Institute of Management Studies at the University of Cambridge
- workshops (facilitated by the Centre for Research and Innovation Management, University of Brighton) examining opportunities for small specialist colleges to ‘punch above their weight’ by employing new technologies effectively
- investigating how technology, such as video-conferencing, can be used to link HEIs can help collaborative management.

Stage 3 – Review and Continuation Strategy (June 2001 – Feb 2002). Work included:

- collating lessons learnt in stages one and two
- exploring how to embed these lessons into future working practices within CADISE member HEIs
- wider dissemination outside CADISE.

Dissemination

This 20 month project culminated in a national ‘Collaborative Management Conference’ in London in February 2002. This included presentations on collaboration, and the development of collaborative management skills from a US, UK and regional CADISE perspective.

Keynote speakers included:

- Professor David Ward, President of the American Council on Education and Chancellor Emeritus of University of Wisconsin, Madison
- Professor Sir David Watson, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Brighton and Chair of Universities UK Longer Term Strategy Group.

Project reports entitled ‘Enhancing Collaboration’ and ‘Leading Collaboration’ have been sent to HEFCE and will form the basis of forthcoming CADISE good practice guides on collaborative management.

Learning points

There are significant differences in scale between the CADISE consortium and the models visited in University of Wisconsin (USA) and the Compostela Group of Universities (Spain) but the underlying principles for effective collaborative activity were similar.

A particular contrast between the Wisconsin model and CADISE is that the CADISE partners are a self-identified group of specialist institutions who chose to work together; the Wisconsin institutions were ‘forced’ to work together by legislation. Professor David Ward, Chancellor Emeritus of University of Wisconsin, Madison has noted that although CADISE has been in existence for three years compared to the 30 year-old University of Wisconsin system, CADISE has an inherent flexibility that the Wisconsin model has had to work towards because of the legislative imposition.

The project has been given members of the CADISE policy group the chance to learn and continue their professional development. Lessons learned will continue to be disseminated throughout the sector.

Evaluating IT-related change (EVINCE)

Reference	GMP89
Lead organisation	University of Reading
Funding awarded	£172,000
Web-site	www.rdg.ac.uk/EVINCE/
Observer	Pramod Philip, Consultant, Management Improvement Group, HEFCE
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evaluate the nature of change and factors influencing its management in UK HEIs. • study examples of IT related change, and produce practical guidance for managers of HEIs
Project leader	Annette Haworth, Director of Information Services, University of Reading
Project manager	Dr Claire Surridge, University of Reading
Research associate	Dr Daniel Neyland, Sa?d Business School, University of Oxford
Project consultant	Professor Steve Woolgar, Sa?d Business School, University of Oxford
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Introduction

The EVINCE project is using three case studies across two universities (University of Reading and University of Southampton) to investigate and analyse the social and cultural issues surrounding the initiation and implementation of IT projects. It was conceived following major failures within an IT-related project – where the technology had actually worked well. Key aims were better understanding of what makes the difference between success and failure in IT-related projects and the need to address issues around information strategy.

It adopts an unusual methodology, using the participant-observation techniques of ethnography, informed by the theoretical understanding of science and technology studies. The core EVINCE team has two members, Dr Daniel Neyland, a sociologist specialising in the project's methodologies, and Dr Claire Surridge, who has a social science background, and who has worked within computing and IT services departments.

So far EVINCE has looked at information strategy and auditing issues, along with how to define and identify success and failure. The team anticipates drawing these themes together in the context of organisational structure, culture and social relations over summer 2002.

Work done

Three case studies

The case studies were identified to cover the main areas of university business, namely research, teaching and learning, and the underpinning administration. Further details are available at the project web-site under Case Studies.

- a. **Research expertise information** The Universities of Reading and Southampton are seeking to rationalise and develop better data collation, management and on-line publication of this

information; in one case to support various internal and external marketing initiatives, and in the other to provide better management information. Work has included procurement of a software product linked with funding opportunities provision, investigating how the database can be populated for existing electronic sources, and supporting development of a promotion and training programme for academic schools and departments.

- b. **Reading lists** This case study has developed via closer partnerships across the two institutions, scoping the project to include various teaching and learning resources beyond the conventional reading list inclusions. A functional requirement (available at the project web-site under Test Bed) has been developed. Pilot work is being done on ways of using 'Endnote' software to meet that requirement. Supporting training and documentation is also under development.
- c. **Committee papers** This case study was differently scoped and progressed by the two institutions – one seeking to distribute papers pre-meeting for a single committee, the other to develop searchable committee paper archives. Both raise issues that go beyond the use of technology, including concerns about confidentiality and openness, the means and style of meetings and meeting papers, and general questions about the way committees operate and relate to each other, and consequences for university governance. One project distributing committee papers is nearing completion, using an in-house solution. The other has developed a functional requirement and is continuing to learn how committees can operate using on-line archives through a series of pilots. Further details are available at the project web-site under Test Bed.

Emerging themes

Three themes have been established:

- a. **Information strategy** – EVINCE suggests information strategy needs to be considered as a dynamic, ongoing, collaborative process that establishes proactive networks.
- b. **Audit and accountability** – This work investigates how ideas and activities surrounding audit and accountability inform and affect the practices of decision-making within IT projects.
- c. **Success and failure** – The EVINCE group found an analogy between success or failure of a university IT project with the success or failure of a charitable project in Africa aiming to provide a village with a new water pump. Both scenarios require the enrolment and ongoing commitment of the local community that will use the new service (be they villagers or university staff and students) and a good understanding of the local culture by the project implementers. It is essential to develop alliances both on a social/interpersonal level and a technical level to ensure the long-term success of a university IT project. Further details are at the project web-site under Narratives.

The final phase of the project will attempt to draw together these themes within the context of university structure, organisation and governance.

Dissemination

The EVINCE team has been presenting work on the themes of information strategy and 'success and failure' at a variety of conferences, including:

- UCISA management conference

- The Strategy World Congress, Saïd Business School, University of Oxford
- Association of University Administrators (AUA) annual conference
- SCONUL annual conference.

Detailed reports on all aspects of the EVINCE project are available via the project web-site.

Good management practice in university central administrative services

Reference	GMP107
Lead organisation	Aston University
Funding awarded	£188,082
Web-site	http://research.abs.aston.ac.uk/mgtsc1/hefce/index.htm
Observer	Pramod Philip, Consultant, Management Improvement Group, HEFCE
Objectives	Combine mathematically grounded comparative efficiency analyses with interpretative case studies, to identify and disseminate good practices in university central administration which are cost-efficient and lead to service of good quality
Project leader	Professor John Saunders, Head of Aston Business School
Project manager	Professor Emmanuel Thanassoulis
Project researchers	Dr Barbara Casu and Stan Brignall
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Introduction

The project aims to examine expenditure on central administration to identify efficient universities. The comparative efficiency analysis is carried out using Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA). Such a study has the potential to highlight substantial savings for individual universities and for the HE sector.

Objectives

The anticipated deliverables of the three-year project are:

- measures of the estimated cost efficiency of each institution, in terms of the potential for reduction in operating expenditure at overall central administration and at administrative function level
- measures of the quality of administrative service each institution provides
- peer groups identifying the closest (in terms of mix of activity volumes and operating context) cost-efficient benchmark institutions that an institution can attempt to emulate
- identification of any cost inefficiency of an institution attributable to its size
- identify best practice in delivering cost-efficient good quality administrative services, and the institutions where such best practice can be found within central administration.

Work done

During the first 18 months of the research, work has been carried out towards the following objectives:

- specification of the boundaries of the overall central administration service and of the individual functions therein
- identification of the input/output variables to be used for assessing cost efficiency at overall central administration level
- assessment of cost efficiencies, identification of benchmark administrations and estimation of how the size of an institution can affect efficiency.

Dissemination

The methodological and research issues generated by the project so far have been presented to the academic community at the following conferences:

- European operational research conference, Erasmus University, Rotterdam, Netherlands (July 2001)
- Seventh European workshop on efficiency and productivity analysis, University of Oveido, Spain (September 2001)
- First Hellenic workshop on productivity and efficiency measurement, University of Patras, Greece.

Details of the presentations are available on the project web-site.

Learning points

Preliminary results indicate:

- a. The scope for efficiency improvements in provision of central administrative services is on average around 20 per cent of the 'modelled expenditure'. So expenditure on university central administration could be capable of being reduced on average to about 80 per cent of reported levels.
- b. For each institution with scope for efficiency gains, benchmarks can be identified. These are other institutions operating in a similar context in terms of relative strengths of outcomes on research, student numbers or research grants and contracts.

The annual Finance Statistics Return is used as the main source of historical information on the total activities of all UK HEIs. It provides details of income and expenditure accounts, balance sheet information and the consolidated cash flow statement. However, results may be biased because of the potential differences between institutions in how they classify expenditure when returning data to HESA. The project staff are further exploring how to identify indirectly the potential for such data discrepancies before finalising the efficiency assessments.

University-wide management reviews

Strand 1: Disaggregation of student/teaching loads and income and expenditure account to programmes of study

Strand 2: Cost-benefit analysis of support services

Reference	GMP116
Lead organisation	University of Teesside
Funding awarded	£166,000
Web-site	www.tees.ac.uk/finance/
Observer	Pramod Philip, Consultant, Management Improvement Group, HEFCE
Objectives	<p>Strand 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• develop costing and pricing to provide cost information down to programme and module level• develop a regional response for 'subjects at risk' in conjunction with informed investment choices for new or revised programmes of study. <p>Strand 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• examine and benchmark support services, to eliminate duplicated service provision and promote value-for-money• review space requirements for support services, and calculate robust overhead rates for use in the Transparency Review.
Project leader	Professor Graham Henderson, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Development)
Project manager	Lynne Baker, Project Accountant, Finance Department
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Telephone	01642 342159
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Strand one – Disaggregation of student/teaching loads and income and expenditure account to programmes of study

Partner institutions

Darlington College of Technology
Hartlepool College of Further Education
University of Sunderland
University of Teesside (lead institution)

Work done

Data obtained from high-level records produced for the Transparency Review (analysed by Teaching, Research and Other) was further broken down into modules, research sponsor and other services.

This was produced by analysing:

- data collected on the academic workload forms to provide the split of teaching time at module level
- data from the student record system to provide the building block between modules and (approximately 440) courses
- appropriate cost drivers for specific indirect cost heads, for example, staff numbers for personnel and payroll department costs and floor area usage for premise costs.

For 1999-2000 the average academic departmental cost expressed as a percentage of total relevant income was 62 per cent. This percentage was used as a benchmark for all subject areas. A list of 'at risk' subjects with cost vs income more than 20 per cent above this benchmark was then produced for review. The data were valuable for the senior management board and school directors to agree school staffing models for 2001-02 and were used in the continuing review of the academic portfolio. Also the staffing models agreed for 2001-02 took account of changes to the 1999-2000 records for staff and student numbers.

Another output was an analysis of total income and expenditure at course level, with listings of the 20 courses generating the highest surplus and 20 generating the highest deficit.

Management action

New procedures have been implemented for the approval of new courses. For each new course proposal, a detailed costing as well as written justification is submitted for management approval.

Continuing practice

Following this collection of data the University of Teesside has begun to produce annual statements at subject area level by activity in year by taking the Transparency Review data to subject area/sponsor level and projecting it forward to take account of changes in income, expenditure levels and student data to provide more up to date information for management action.

The University of Sunderland has been monitoring the progress of work carried out at Teesside, with a view to adopting these processes.

Course costing of indirectly funded courses

The University of Teesside is working with Hartlepool College of Further Education and Darlington College of Technology to produce data similar to Teesside for indirectly funded courses for the year 2000-01, to be used in their decision making process.

Strand 2 – Cost-benefit analysis of central departments

Work done

A firm of external management consultants was appointed to review the efficiency and effectiveness of the activities carried out by central departments of the University of Teesside. The consultants presented a report to the university, with an explanation of potential efficiencies that could be made.

The university's management team has carried out a further review of the proposals, and the recommendations were discussed at the University of Teesside's internal senior management

conference in January 2002. This conference agreed a series of reviews involving the following departments:

- Centre for lifelong learning
- Facilities Management department (previously Estates and University Services)
- Information and Communications Technology
- Quality Unit
- Staff Development Unit
- Teaching and Learning Unit.

English Universities' Benchmarking Club

Reference	GMP127
Lead organisation	University of Birmingham
Project leader	David Allen, Registrar and Secretary
Project manager	Cathy Bonner
Funding awarded	£250,000
Observer	Ian Gross, Head of Internal Audit, HEFCE
Objectives	<p>Establish a 'Benchmarking Club' to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> offer a cost-effective opportunity for participating universities to compare their management processes, to effect continuous improvement provide an opportunity to learn from the private sector experience of benchmarking and continuous improvement collaboratively develop a methodology for measuring the effectiveness of university-wide processes
Address	University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, BIRMINGHAM B15 2TT
Telephone	David Allen 0121 414 3975 Cathy Bonner 0121 414 8037
e-mail	d.j.allen@bham.ac.uk c.bonner@bham.ac.uk

Introduction

The English Universities Benchmarking Club has been set up to consider a range of questions about benchmarking academic administration within universities – from the students' perspective. For example:

- what should be benchmarked
- what are the critical criteria for providing an efficient, quality service
- what are the processes used now by universities to deliver services
- how do services compare with other benchmarks from other universities.

The whole project is managed through a steering group, with senior managers representing each member university. The Club has eight member universities – Aston, Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, Manchester Metropolitan, Nottingham, Sheffield and Southampton.

Work done

In summer 2001, the Club undertook two short pilot benchmarking exercises looking at processes within student registration and assessment of student applications. The Club is using the lessons learned from these pilots to plan two further benchmarking projects in summer 2002 considering the graduation process and revisiting the registration of students. To achieve this, member universities of the Club will be developing a common approach to mapping business processes and designing formats to compare key information. This involves asking and answering many questions. Each university has a benchmarking co-ordinator as a project manager, working closely with their own

university's staff running graduation and registration, and the Club's project manager based at the University of Birmingham.

The deliverable will be a range of benchmarking comparisons across each university, enabling identification of universities with best practices. At the end of this phase, members will be able to adapt processes for their own needs. In 2003 they aim to undertake further benchmarking with organisations, inside and outside the HE sector, and learn from their outstanding practices.

Developing fair and effective student complaints procedures

Reference	GMP138
Lead organisation	The Nottingham Trent University (NTU)
Funding awarded	£76,920
Web-site	www.ntu.ac.uk/sss/projects/complaintsmanagement/
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establish university-wide performance standards for handling, monitoring and reporting student complaints • set up a regional network for HE staff involved with the management of student complaints
Project leader	Sally Olohan, Head of Student Support Services
Project managers	Lis Child and Sunita Patel, Student Support Services
Address	The Nottingham Trent University, Burton Street, NOTTINGHAM NG1 4BU
Telephone	Sally Olohan and Lis Child 0115 848 2971 Sunita Patel 0115 848 2970
e-mail	sally.oloohan@ntu.ac.uk lis.child@ntu.ac.uk sunita.patel@ntu.ac.uk

Introduction

With the support and participation of the NTU Union of Students, the Nottingham Trent University has created a practitioner network for HE staff involved in managing student complaints at the 'formal' stage. This is the first time that such a network has been established. It was created in response to a perceived need for increased opportunity for dialogue and the sharing of good practice between institutions.

Work done

During the period May-June 2001, the NTU project team visited a representative mix of 13 universities in the midlands region, to introduce the NTU project and investigate current complaints systems. Several aspects of good practice were identified from these discussions, and it was considered useful to share these examples within the wider group through the creation of a practitioner network. The institutions initially participating within the network are:

- Aston University
- University of Birmingham
- University of Central England
- De Montfort University
- University of Derby
- University of Leicester
- University of Manchester
- UMIST
- University of Nottingham
- University of Wolverhampton.

In December 2001, NTU hosted an inaugural seminar, attended by colleagues from institutions within the midlands region, all of whom had responsibilities for handling student complaints at the 'formal' stage. The agenda included dissemination of developments about this project, discussion of sector-

wide issues concerned with the independent review of student complaints, and a practical focus on complaints handling processes, through case-study discussion. Feedback from this first networking event was extremely positive. A second event will be hosted by the University of Manchester on 26 April 2002, with approximately 20 colleagues expected to attend.

In addition to the networking meetings, an electronic discussion group (entitled 'student complaints') has been created within the JISC mailbase to allow colleagues to exchange views. This restricted list is open to all colleagues working in the area of complaint management.

Evaluating the application of the EFQM Excellence model in higher education

Reference	GMP143
Lead organisation	Sheffield Hallam University
Funding awarded	£250,000
Web-site	http://excellence.shu.ac.uk/
Observer	John Rushforth, Head of Infrastructure and Management Improvement, HEFCE
Objectives	Apply EFQM methodology within a consortium of HEIs to effect business improvement
Project leader	Mike Pupius, Director of Organisational Excellence
Project manager	Carol Steed, Organisational Excellence Manager
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Partner institutions

Cranfield University
 Dearne Valley College
 University of Durham
 University of Salford
 Sheffield Hallam University (lead institution)
 University of Ulster

Introduction

This three-year project started in May 2000 aiming to test the use of the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Excellence Model in HE, to see if it produces the business benefits that others have been able to demonstrate both within and outside the public sector.

Objectives

The project has four strands:

- a. Self-assessment projects: six self-assessment projects taking place in schools, departments, research institutes, cross college, faculty-wide services and institution-wide services. Each partner institution is testing different assessment methodologies.
- b. Mapping and research projects: five projects which seek to address the relationship and gaps between the EFQM Excellence Model and other management tools, models, concepts and auditing frameworks that are used within an HE and FE environment. One project has mapped the Excellence Model with the QAA framework – mapping against Subject Review, Institutional Review and the Codes of Practice. A summary and full report can be found on the project web-site.
- c. Benchmarking projects: two benchmarking projects compare the partner institutions with educational institutions internationally who are exemplars of excellence, and with other private

and public sector organisations within the UK who have won quality awards. This will permit the development, enhancement and evolution of the methodologies and approaches used in the project.

- d. Communication projects: five communication projects include conferences for each year of the three years of the GMP143 project, development and maintenance of a web-site and a final programme report. The conference in June 2003 is to be held with the Liverpool John Moores project group (project reference GMP200).

Results to date

Improvements arising from this project are difficult to measure statistically. Many benefits are at a strategic level. Staff and student surveys will hopefully show improvements, as may some student trend data, but the effects may not be clearly seen for years. The next phase of the project is to evaluate in more detail the results demonstrated from the work undertaken so far.

Learning points

- a. Commitment of the head of the institution and the senior management team is essential for the EFQM Excellence Model to become part of an integrated way of working and to create the consequent improvements.
- b. Self-assessment has highlighted the unconnected nature of many activities within HEIs; work is often undertaken in isolation, rather than being linked through core or common standardised processes.
- c. The EFQM Excellence model has exposed a lack of clarity about an institution's principles and values – exactly what is the institution here to achieve, and for whom?
- d. Other management tools, models and HE/FE auditing frameworks can be used with the Excellence Model. They can be seen as 'approaches' to tackling specific issues.
- e. Internal communication is critical; what information is communicated – and how this is done – should always be carefully considered.
- f. The use of the EFQM Excellence Model, with adaptation and interpretation, can help people realise that they are sometimes doing activities often without knowing why.
- g. The work has provided a common language and shared learning that has not necessarily existed before, with academic schools, central departments and research institutes learning and sharing experiences together.
- h. Common themes are emerging across all pilot areas, despite the use of differing assessment methods.
- i. Staff want to improve what they are doing and there is a real willingness to embrace excellence.

- j. Much of the knowledge and information to achieve improvement already exists; it just needs to be captured, enhanced and co-ordinated. The EFQM Excellence Model has provided a consistent and logical framework for this to happen.

- k. The key to linking all these issues is clear leadership, a clear approach to process identification and management, clear communication channels and a balanced set of key performance indicators.

Improving higher education

Reference	GMP200
Lead organisation	Liverpool John Moores University
Funding awarded	£177,700
Observer	Steve Egan, Director of Finance and Corporate Resources, HEFCE
Web-site	www.improvinghe.livim.ac.uk
Objectives	Implement the EFQM model in the HE sector, focussing its use in academic departments
Project leader	Professor Michael Brown, Vice-Chancellor, Liverpool John Moores University
Project manager	Professor Philip Sullivan, De Montfort University
Address	Liverpool John Moores University, Egerton Court, 2 Rodney Street, LIVERPOOL L3 5UX
Telephone	0151 709 3676
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Partner institutions

Bath Spa University College

De Montfort University

Liverpool John Moores University (lead institution)

The Surrey Institute of Art and Design University College

Introduction

Project GMP200 trials the use of the EFQM Excellence Model in academic departments, aiming to improve performance and help manage change. Details of the EFQM Excellence Model are on the project web-site.

Objectives

The EFQM Excellence Model is being applied by many European organisations in the private and public sectors. The project aims to implement the EFQM model in the HE sector. The EFQM model allows an organisation to examine and score its current business performance, as part of a process of continuous business improvement.

While the project members self-assess against all of the EFQM model's nine criteria, criterion 5 ('Processes'), has proved particularly helpful.

Work done

Using the results of self-assessment to highlight strengths and areas for improvement, short- and long-term improvement projects have been set up across a range of processes in all four institutions. Short-term projects generally required few resources, little formality, and in many cases were undertaken by individuals. Small improvements have made a considerable difference – often through removing unnecessary bureaucracy and other barriers. Long-term projects on the other hand require a team of staff working to a project plan with regular evaluation. These projects concern topics such as:

- improving how a department approaches developing its staff
- recruiting and retaining students
- developing new courses and changing existing ones
- enrolling students
- using student feedback
- setting performance measures.

Results to date

Evidence shows ‘cost of quality’ savings of around £1,000 per member of staff, of all levels, can be made. Savings have been achieved by redesigning processes for simplicity, yet increasing rigour. The redesigned processes have quality built-in, in terms of preventative measures, and time-consuming checking and errors are reduced. The figure below summarises the benefits made possible.

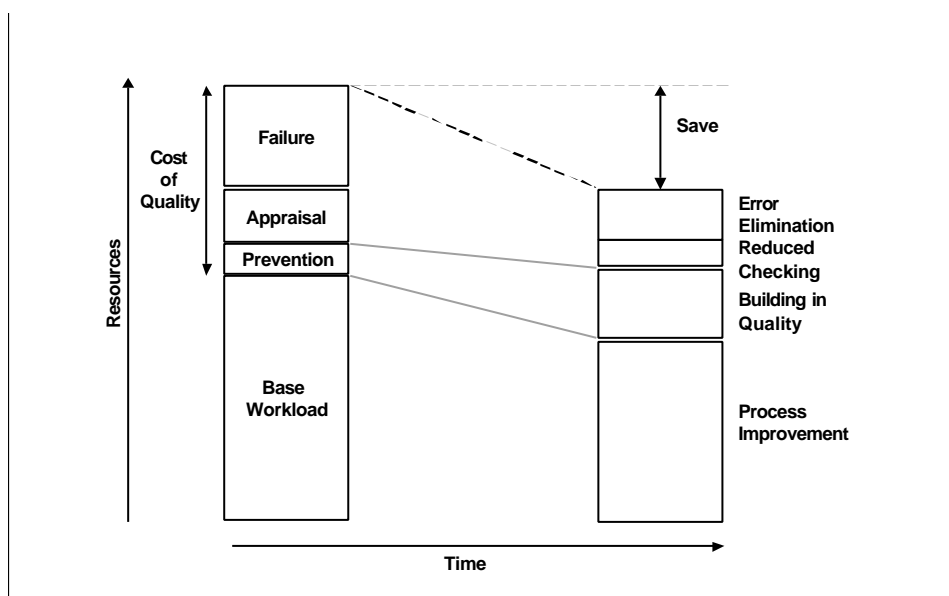
For example, at Liverpool John Moores University one course had not reached its target student recruitment for three years in succession. Through redesigning recruitment processes, the course exceeded its target in 2001 by some 40 students, around 10 per cent. The GMP200 project work made a decisive difference in this success. The ongoing challenge for the course is to retain the students, and the lessons learnt in the project will help achieve this.

Learning points

Two characteristics noted within the project work at all the partner institutions are:

- business processes cross over departmental boundaries
- business processes succeed when a single ‘process owner’ is appointed to manage the process from beginning to end.

Quantifying and marking the trends of non-financial benefits of the project is important. For example, staff satisfaction appears to be rising in some places. Also sickness and absences, and staff turnover show signs of reduction over this initial project period.



Cost of quality, source: TQMI, 1999

Developing a methodology for systematic change management to enhance organisational efficiency

Reference	GMP201
Lead organisation	University of Luton
Funding awarded	£150,000
Objectives	Draw on models of best practice to generate, document and evaluate a successful change management programme in a HEI
Project leader	Professor Kate Robinson, Senior Pro Vice-Chancellor
Address	University of Luton, Park Square, LUTON LU1 3JU
Telephone	01582 743206
e-mail	kate.robinson@luton.ac.uk

Introduction

Compelling evidence from the private sector suggests that improvements to organisational efficiency and effectiveness can be produced by a systematic and holistic change management programme which both respects the organisation's culture and seeks to strengthen it. A key feature of such programmes is the role of a change management facilitator, who acts as a stimulus, co-ordinator and motivator across all projects and initiatives. The project will draw on identified models of best practice and generate, document and evaluate a successful change management programme within a HEI.

Objectives

The project will introduce change management best practices from private- and public-sector organisations. These practices will be used to help create a generic change management toolkit. To ensure that the toolkit is generic and transferable, it will be evaluated at two other HEIs. Following this, a beta version will be made available to all UK HEIs for use and critical appraisal.

Organisational change will be considered in three major phases: feasibility, creativity and choice, and implementation. Running through these three phases is the major issue of culture; this will be addressed by considering the concepts of people, processes, technology and environment.

Techniques and approaches used in the toolkit will include, for example, diagnostic tools, guidelines, questionnaires, workshop designs and exercises. Major change aspects such as leadership, communications and motivation will be covered. The toolkit will be available to HEIs on-line and via a CD-ROM.

Development of a 'Knowledge Centre' for university business practice

Reference	GMP203
Lead organisation	University of Northumbria at Newcastle
Funding awarded	£250,000
Web-site	www.BISinfoNet.ac.uk (under development)
Observer	Pramod Philip, Consultant, Management Improvement Group, HEFCE
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop, as a sector-wide resource, a knowledge centre for university business practice • capture knowledge gained from UNN's business process reviews and systems development, as well as experience from other universities and the commercial sector
Project leader	Bernard Paton, Director, MISDU
Project manager	Janette Hillicks
Address	MISDU – Management Information Systems Development Unit, Technopole, Kings Manor, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE1 6PA
Telephone	0191 227 4095
e-mail	bernard.paton@unn.ac.uk

Introduction

Universities spend millions of pounds annually on new IT systems. IT solutions providers often do not properly understand the unique nature of HEIs so are at risk of delivering a less than optimal solution.

In the process of implementing a major IT system, university staff can acquire a good deal of valuable knowledge – which is being collected and made available via the Knowledge Centre.

Whilst the project is based at the University of Northumbria, the Knowledge Centre is very much a resource for the whole sector and, in operational terms, is independent of its home institution. The GMP203 project was funded for three years. The project's steering board takes a strategic role for approvals and decision-making, while the complementary project advisory board is nearer to the users of the Knowledge Centre – providing a forum for feedback from a user perspective.

Results to date

In April 2001 a presentation on system selection was given to the AUA conference at Exeter. The project will be arranging and hosting a joint UCISA/MSG/Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) seminar on selecting and implementing human resources and payroll systems in the first half of 2002.

A project web-site is under development. The site will be split into two, one showing the main administrative information, profiles of the team, details of relevant links and collaborators, and the second showing the actual 'product' of the Knowledge Centre – an area where case studies and other information can be accessed.

The Knowledge Centre's first training module, on system selection, is near completion. Modules two and three will be published later in 2002. How modules will be delivered is under discussion; possibilities include publishing on the web, printing hard copies for distribution, and giving face to face presentations of the information in seminars or workshops. The first module will be a testing ground for future modules, and feedback from colleagues within the sector will be invited.

Collaboration

One of the greatest strengths of the HE sector is the willingness to collaborate in mutually interesting areas. The project team has been encouraged by the response received within the sector about the creation of the Knowledge Centre.

Over recent months the project team has contacted many bodies, suppliers and institutions that have expressed an interest in becoming involved with the project. The networking has proved successful, with individuals and organisations offering a variety of help, including offers of case studies and other documentation, trading of ideas and offers of collaboration.

All of the main external suppliers and consultancy providers have been approached, and most are keen to be involved. It has been emphasised that external organisations should not approach the project purely as a marketing and sales opportunity. The requirement is for reports of practical experience and wide expertise of good practice, for publication on the project web-site. There will, however, be links to supplier web-sites, for those interested in following up product and service details.

The relationships should be two-way and beneficial to all; for instance the suppliers will learn more about the HE sector and HEIs will learn more about the suppliers. Potential benefits include HEIs gaining insight into the methodologies used by organisations, and providing a forum in which current issues relevant to the HE sector and system implementation can be flagged, discussed and steps taken.

Internet-based software to estimate staff costs

Reference	GMP206
Lead organisation	University of Leeds
Funding awarded	£62,634
Objectives	Develop internet-based software to save time for HE-sector staff when preparing budgets and costings
Project leader	Andrew Parkinson, Academic Registrar
Project manager	Andrew Busby, Academic Support Unit
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Telephone	0113 233 4032
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Introduction

When setting budgets, accurate information about an employer's 'on-costs' (employer's national insurance and superannuation costs) is essential. HE finance professionals usually calculate this via complex spreadsheets; such spreadsheets are prone to errors and require frequent updating. The internet-based software to be developed by this project will save a lot of time for HE-sector accountants when preparing budgets and costings.

Objectives

This project will further develop the 'Sirius Lite' web-based software already in use at the University of Leeds, for the benefit of all HEFCE funded HEIs. The software provides an accurate and consistent staff costs calculator, essential for preparing departmental budgets. The primary benefits of the staff costs calculator will be savings in staff time in calculating staff costs, and improved accuracy and consistency in HEIs' financial planning and management.

The software will be delivered to HEIs (at an estimated subscription cost of around £200 per annum per HEI to cover maintenance costs) via the internet and will be kept up to date for changes in costs relating to national insurance and superannuation schemes. It will also include all national salary scales as standard, and functionality to enable institutions to input and use their own local salary scales and superannuation schemes in staff cost calculations.

Working on a similar basis to the mortgage and tax calculators already found on the internet (for a simple example see the payslip calculator at www.digita.com/content/tools/calculators/payslip/payslip.asp), it will also offer advantages over the spreadsheet style solutions often used at the moment in terms of security, flexibility, consistency and maintainability. In addition by providing a national service, HEI's valuable IT resources will be saved by removing the need for duplicated software development by each HEI.

It is expected that the pilot institutions involved in the project will be using the software in summer 2002 and that the software will be available nationally in late autumn 2002. Institutions can register for further information via the project manager.

Higher education e-procurement (HEeP)

Reference	GMP215
Lead organisation	University of Salford
Funding awarded	£140,000
Web-site	www.heep.ac.uk
Observer	Ian Lewis, Head of Finance, HEFCE
Objectives	Develop a universal software interface (portal) between the financial information systems of HEIs and their suppliers to facilitate electronic procurement
Project leader	Ray Corner, Director of Finance
Project manager	Tony Oliver
Address	University of Salford, Faraday House, Crescent, SALFORD M5 4WT
Telephone	0161 295 5014
e-mail	r.corner@salford.ac.uk t.oliver@salford.ac.uk

Introduction

The University of Salford is developing an e-procurement system tailored for easy use by the HE sector. The system, known as 'HEeP', consists of bespoke software that has already been written, which, following testing, will be introduced as a live pilot site and then be available to institutions from spring 2002.

The project's customer groups are: software developers, universities and colleges, and suppliers. The HEeP software provides an electronic marketplace. By using web technology, it will link the financial (back office) system of institutions with the back office systems of their suppliers. The XML programming language will help ensure compatibility across accounting software packages.

Objectives

The project will develop a universal software interface (portal) between the financial information systems of HEIs and their suppliers to facilitate electronic procurement. Such software has already been developed and demonstrated to 'proof of concept' stage. The next stage is to develop a portal, to suit the requirements of an HEI, which will comply with the (industry-standard) XML programming language.

Work done

The University of Salford has been working with the Business Application Software Developers Association (BASDA) which has hailed the progress made as a 'breakthrough'. In theory, if a BASDA eBIS-XML system is used, a purchase requisition can be converted straight to a purchase order; when goods are received and invoiced, the goods receipt, order and invoice can be easily matched and payment made. The advantage is the elimination of time-consuming re-keying of data.

The promotion and use of industry standards means that, in due course, it will be possible for all software developers to link their financial systems to the HEeP marketplace. Microsoft is also collaborating with the project to help enable this. Software developers currently involved with HEeP are Agresso (which carried out initial prototype work), SAP, Symmetry, SCT and Relative Systems.

Among HEIs the project is being championed by purchasing professionals. The project has links to the Joint Procurement Policy and Strategy Group (JPPSG) and supported by most of the regional purchasing consortia. Following advice from purchasing officers, the marketplace software was written so that a buyer is given a direct route to an appropriate supplier and the relevant contract price. This should help to reduce the number of orders placed (nearly always at higher prices) outside negotiated contracts. Also the increased volume of purchasing against negotiated contracts will help in future contract negotiations.

The HEeP marketplace enables each regional consortium to set up its own supply information. The other main benefit to institutions will be more efficient processing. Unlike various commercial offerings, the HEeP system will be free to institutions.

Securing the participation of purchasers and suppliers

Seven leading suppliers to the sector are participating in a pilot phase: CPC Farnell, Fisher Scientific, Viglen, Lyreco, Guilbert, Sigma Aldrich and Supplies Team. Agreements have been made with suppliers to levy modest transaction charges to provide a revenue stream to ensure the continued maintenance and development of the system. Many other suppliers have expressed interest in the marketplace and it is envisaged that once the roll-out to institutions is under way the number of participating suppliers will increase rapidly to large companies, followed by small to medium sized enterprises.

Following the pilot phase the universities intending to install HEeP during 2002 include the Universities of Nottingham, Lancaster, Central Lancashire, UMIST, Plymouth, Sheffield and Strathclyde. A further 26 institutions have expressed interest in the development.

Marketing excellence – audit and evaluation tools

Reference	GMP219
Lead organisation	University of Durham
Funding awarded	£181,500
Observer	Paul Greaves, Chief Auditor, HEFCE
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve course and service portfolio management, with particular reference to external pressures • improve the management of critical marketing processes • improve the value for money obtained from investment in marketing activity • start to develop responsive standards for HE marketing and customer care
Project leader	Peter Slee, Director of Marketing and Corporate Communications
Project manager	David Roberts, HEIST Enterprises
Address	University of Durham, Old Shire Hall, Old Elvet, DURHAM DH1 3HP
e-mail	p.r.slee@durham.ac.uk drobot@heist.co.uk

Objectives

Through the development, testing and widespread adoption of a set of marketing and audit evaluation tools relating to awards-bearing courses, this project will:

- improve, within the context of institutional strategic planning, course and service portfolio management, with particular reference to external stakeholder wants/demands and the marketplace
- improve the management of critical marketing processes to enable the sector and individual institutions to achieve government growth targets, widen participation and increase international student numbers
- improve the value for money obtained from investment in marketing activity. (Approximately £170 million per annum is estimated to be spent on marketing by the UK higher education sector)
- start to develop responsive standards for HE marketing and customer care.

Details

This project will develop a model of marketing excellence and associated benchmarking tools for the marketing of HE courses. It is thought to be the largest-ever UK project associated with the development of HE marketing practice.

Project manager, David Roberts, explained: 'We are attempting to identify the key marketing processes within HEIs that need to be well-managed, so success in the chosen markets will be achieved. As in most commercial organisations, ownership of these key processes is likely to be located throughout the organisation and not in the marketing department alone. How best to achieve integration and a joined-up thinking will be a major issue that the team will need to address.'

Having developed a model of excellence, the subsequent challenge will be to develop a robust yet pragmatic process for watching current performance and specifying benchmarks.

Partner organisations

There are four core partner HEIs:

- Cumbria College of Art and Design
- University of Durham
- University of Derby
- Edge Hill College of Higher Education.

Each of these four institutions will act as a node for two or more other institutions, which are to be recruited. Thus the final collaborative group will comprise at least 12 HEIs

Other partners in the project:

- Barclays Bank
- British Council
- Derby Playhouse
- European Centre for Total Quality Management
- HEIST Enterprises
- Higher Education External Relations Association (HEERA)
- HESDA.

Expected outcomes

At the end of the project it is anticipated there will be:

- 12 HEIs equipped with the skills to improve the management of their strategic marketing
- an embryonic database of marketing best practices for HE, to include anonymous case studies demonstrating excellence and the management of specific key marketing processes
- a systematic method for evaluating strategic course marketing, applicable to all HEI providers.

Learning the habit of innovation: harnessing the technology for strategic planning

Reference	GMP248
Lead organisation	University of East Anglia
Funding awarded	£150,000
Web-site	www.uea.ac.uk/lhi/
Objectives	Create a facility for university managers within the partner HEIs to use innovative collaborative software to help solve complex strategic problems
Project leader	Ruth Goodall, Head, Centre for Staff and Educational Development
Project manager	Gurpreet Gill, Centre for Staff and Educational Development
Address	University of East Anglia, CSED, The Registry, University of East Anglia, NORWICH NR4 7TJ
Telephone	01603 592951
e-mail	r.e.goodall@uea.ac.uk / g.gill@uea.ac.uk

Introduction

University managers need to think strategically and to solve complex, cross-institutional problems in an increasingly unstable environment, where the future may be difficult to predict. This project will give a large group of managers at five universities in eastern England access to Consignia's Innovation Laboratory, a highly original model for using a leading-edge technology environment to stimulate creativity in strategic planning and problem solving, especially by groups.

With the benefit of technical and facilitator training from Consignia's Future Business Group, and through collaborative purchase of Group Systems electronic meetings software, partner institutions will have the capacity to develop their own versions of this model – ensuring a sustainable basis for promoting innovation and creativity in organisational planning.

The first session at the Consignia Innovation Lab

The following statements were made about the lab:

- 'dynamic and futuristic – but within reach. Highlights opportunities. Superb technology'
- 'can't help making links and having ideas'
- 'how easy it was to use, and how enjoyable too'
- 'structured flexibility, responsiveness to different needs'.

Future work

As part of the project each partner university has five visits to the Consignia Innovation Lab and unlimited access to the 'hub' at UEA. The hub is UEA's equivalent of the Innovation Lab and is located in the staff Learning and Resources Centre. The work of visiting groups will be supported by a Consignia facilitator and the HEI's own trained facilitator. Each visit will be evaluated and followed up to find out about the longer-term impact and the use of the creativity space and group software.

The key features of the software are:

- shared, parallel input

- anonymity
- complete and accurate record keeping.

The kind of activities the Consignia Innovation Lab and UEA hub support best are:

- thinking 'outside the box' in divergent and creative ways
- non-hierarchical generation and sharing of ideas
- brainstorming, analysing, and evaluating ideas in a systematic way
- transparent decision making processes.

Experience suggests that the use of a more informal space and the software to support planning has significant benefits. The software requires the group to frame the problems and questions to be considered with care. The atmosphere is not competitive – everybody's ideas, needs and concerns are recorded and considered, areas of substantial agreement and disagreement can be easily identified and it is easier to see where members of the group are in their thinking. The use of the software speeds up decision making but it also demonstrates that if institutions want to take decisions that stick, the process needs to be fully worked through.

Facilitators from partner HEIs have been trained in the use of the software. Partner universities are beginning to identify projects that would benefit from the use of the Consignia Innovation Lab and UEA hub.

Projects developing good management of infrastructure

Data collection and benchmarking of energy and utilities usage

Reference	GMP6
Lead organisation	The Consortium for Higher Education Energy Purchasing (CHEEP)
Funding awarded	£150,000
Web-site	www.bham.ac.uk/energy-consortium/
Objectives	Trial remote metering equipment and associated software within HEIs so that data on energy and water usage can be recorded and analysed, to permit benchmarking between HEIs and improved contract negotiations with utilities providers
Project leader	David Thomas, Chief Executive Officer, The Energy Consortium, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, BIRMINGHAM B15 2TT
Telephone	0121 414 6543
e-mail	d.c.thomas@bham.ac.uk

Introduction

Information to help institutions understand the usage patterns for gas, electricity and water consumed on site, compared with a reliable benchmark, should result in improved management of utilities and lower costs. The project has three core benefits:

- the generation of a benchmark for comparisons
- more detailed information about utilities usage via the sub-meters
- better information about utilities usage, helping price negotiations with suppliers.

The project has concentrated on electricity where the potential for reduction in electricity usage for a typical HEI is believed to be between 5 and 15 per cent.

Work done

The project is shortly to publish the first set of benchmarks, but they will be further refined for some institutions by the inclusion of additional parameters, such as floor area.

The improved usage information generated by the project has helped CHEEP to gain significant savings during the October/November 2001 contract renewal.

Following publication of the initial benchmarks an awareness campaign will be mounted to prompt institutions to compare their individual score with the benchmark and begin to compare with 'best in class' to help establish the reasons for the difference. Twelve months later a second set of benchmarks will be published and an evaluation carried out to establish and quantify any changes.

The sub-metering trial will be evaluated and a pay-back period calculated. A short pay-back period will help institutions justify funding for the installation of sub-metering systems.

Dissemination

Presentations detailing the project have been given at two CHEEP conferences, attended by senior estates staff from the HE sector.

The quality of estates contractors' work

Reference	GMP139
Lead organisation	University of Cambridge
Funding awarded	£12,000
Objectives	Research the training qualifications required by contractors engaged in HE sector construction projects, and set these training standards within contractual clauses
Project leader	David Adamson, Director of Estates
Address	University of Cambridge, 'Kenmare', 74 Trumpington Street, CAMBRIDGE CB2 1RW
Telephone	01223 337806
e-mail	dma23@cam.ac.uk

Introduction

The Latham and Egan reports highlighted a serious lack of training in the construction industry, leading to added costs to rectify construction defects. This project researches the training qualifications required by contractors engaged in HE sector construction projects and sets these training standards within contractual clauses.

Work done

The project has enabled a lot of discussion (both informal and formal) with contractors, construction lawyers, quantity surveyors, a professional construction industry trainer and four other collaborating universities.

All universities have been provided with a set of clauses which can go into tender documents along the lines set out in the University of Cambridge's bid proposal.

Three questions that can be asked of the contractor, as information to be provided in their tender returns, are:

- What training are you carrying out already?
- What further training are you prepared to undertake, if you get this job, at no cost to the client?
- What further training will you undertake (at prices to be stated in the tender) if funded by client and the Construction Industry Training Board (CITB)?

The replies to these questions can be considered as part of the process to select the successful contractor:

- as an element of the quality/price assessment
- inclusion in the 'preliminaries', that is, cost that the university client will agree to bear in return for (in this case) specific training carried out by contractor staff working on the university project.

The new contractual clauses covering training are being trialled in seven building projects at the University of Cambridge. The main changes from previous practices are:

- when contract documents are prepared, details about training are given as an annex to the employer's requirements

- contractors now submit their own 'project training plan', as part of their tender return, to fulfil the employer's requirement
- the project training plan is judged as part of overall quality assessment
- the cost of the project training plan is included in the tender. Hence the project training plan is assessed on quality/price as part of complete tender.

Learning points

The project has increased the priority given by contractors to improving training standards, firstly because it is becoming known that contractors wishing to work for this university have to take training seriously, and secondly there is a sense of fair play that the client is willing to pay for elements of training which have demonstrable benefits to the university's construction project.

Letters of appointment for estates contractors

Reference	GMP140
Lead organisation	University of Cambridge
Funding awarded	£24,000
Objectives	Draft generic appointment letters for contractors, which will define the responsibilities of the contractor and the institution regarding cost overruns
Project leader	David Adamson, Director of Estates
Project manager	Mike Phipps, Bursar, University of Bristol
Address	Estates, University of Cambridge, 'Kenmare', 74 Trumpington Street, CAMBRIDGE CB2 1RW
Telephone	01223 337806
e-mail	dma23@cam.ac.uk

Introduction

With millions of pounds spent annually on HE sector construction projects, periodic changes in legislation and continually evolving case law, effective contracts are needed to help deliver projects to time and cost. With the input of four HEIs and professional advisers, this project will draft new generic appointment letters for contractors. These letters will define the responsibilities of the contractor and the institution regarding cost overruns.

Details

Approximately £2 billion is spent annually by UK HEIs on buildings. Some years ago, the Association of University Directors of Estates (AUDE) carried out a study of appointment letters for estates contractors, in response to dissatisfaction about the 'standard' appointment letters commonly in use. These were generally produced by professional bodies (such as the Royal Institution of British Architects and the Association of Consulting Engineers) and tended to reflect their members' interests as opposed to their clients'.

Objectives

The key aim is to develop a generic letter of appointment, for use by HEIs when engaging contractors such as architects, quantity surveyors and other building consultants. The principle is that risk should be shared in capital construction projects; in current appointment letters, HEIs bear nearly all of the design risk. When risk-sharing is achieved within a construction project, there is a greater determination to achieve quality and a move away from a 'blame culture' to a more open approach.

Effective space analysis and allocation techniques

Reference	GMP220
Lead organisation	University of Newcastle upon Tyne
Funding awarded	£75,000
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• research good practice in space analysis and allocation techniques• develop improved data collection techniques using new software• generate space allocation guidelines for HEIs• address cultural issues relating to the use of university space
Project leader	Clare Rogers, Director of Estates
Address	University of Newcastle upon Tyne, 7 Park Terrace, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE NE1 7RU
e-mail	clare.rogers@ncl.ac.uk

Introduction

Effective space management allows an institution to improve its utilisation of space and resources and bring about great financial benefits.

Objectives

The aims of this project are to:

- develop a rationale and a currency for space allocation for teaching, research, administration and other uses
- tackle cultural issues surrounding property use through policy and procedural change
- radically improve the utilisation of the estate, thus adding value
- help accommodate planned growth in academic activities and student numbers
- develop a method for constant updating of space data records
- provide best practice guidelines on space management for the HE sector.

Future work

To help achieve some of the above aims, research and peer comparisons will be done. This will help identify best practice, both in other universities and outside the sector (in research trusts for example). Existing relevant work and written guides will be analysed.

Examples of the practical work to be done:

- establishing data collection and space auditing techniques to identify current use and utilisation of all space and studying the trends
- improving the functionality of the space management database and the electronic timetabling system by adding an interactive web front end to enable continual updating
- developing the use of the electronic timetabling system to analyse and predict teaching room needs and therefore release departmental teaching rooms for other uses.

Dissemination

A detailed final report is now available from the project leader. The report includes a series of guidelines on good space management.

Environmental performance improvement and benchmarking in HEIs

Reference	GMP232
Lead organisation	University of Bradford
Funding awarded	£96,610
Objectives	Improve the environmental performance of HE and thus improve value for money
Project leader	Dr Peter Hopkinson, Senior Lecturer in Environmental Sciences
Address	University of Bradford, BRADFORD BD7 1DP
Telephone	01274 234235
e-mail	p.g.hopkinson@bradford.ac.uk

Introduction

The project aims to improve the environmental performance of HE and thus improve value for money. The early stages involve the development and publishing of standardised environmental performance indicators (EPs) for four HEIs. After dissemination of findings, other institutions will be encouraged to adopt the indicators so that benchmarking comparisons can be made and opportunities for improvement identified.

The project also aims to develop the competence of managers concerned with environmental issues, for example, in estates or finance.

Details

Government policy, public opinion and other external pressures all require institutions to improve their environmental performance. For example:

- reducing carbon dioxide emissions and thereby contributing to the national targets established under the Kyoto protocol
- helping to meet government targets for reduction in the amount of waste sent to landfill sites
- reducing water consumption.

Future work

There are four main stages to the project:

- a. Action workshops – Up to three such workshops will be held around the country targeted at the environmental ‘champions’ within HEIs. Experienced environmental management practitioners will be invited to speak at these workshops, thus facilitating training. Workshop participants will also help to identify the areas for which key performance indicators for environmental performance should be developed.
- b. Developing key performance indicators – detailed work will establish the feasibility of the chosen indicators.
- c. Launch of the project web-site and follow-up activities. Further workshops will review the collected benchmarked data.
- d. Further development of the web-site and a continuation plan for benchmarking activity.

Projects developing good management of governance and legal compliance

Effective governance in HE colleges

Reference	GMP141
Lead organisation	Standing Conference of Principals (SCOP)
Funding awarded	£100,000
Web-site	www.scop.ac.uk
Observer	Simon Cannell, Secretary to the HEFCE Board
Objectives	Research and disseminate good practice on college governance, particularly via induction and training programmes
Project leader	Patricia Ambrose, Executive Secretary
Address	SCOP, Woburn House, 20 Tavistock Square, LONDON WC1H 9HB
Telephone	0207 387 7712
e-mail	patricia.ambrose@scop.ac.uk

Introduction

This project aims to nurture and support effective governance in HE colleges, taking account of the diversity of institutional types and characteristics. The project runs from September 2000 to August 2002 and is designed around three main phases:

- an initial scoping exercise of current practice in supporting governors and identifying their needs
- the establishment of a professional governance network for chairs of governing bodies, governors and clerks to governing bodies
- the development of a governance resources pack.

A steering group comprising representatives of SCOP member institutions, NATFHE and HESDA oversees the project. Following national advertising and a short-listing process, the Higher Education Consultancy Group was appointed as project consultant.

Work done

Initial scoping exercise

The project consultant completed the initial scoping exercise between September 2000 and March 2001. The work included an institution-level survey of all SCOP member HEIs, case study visits to eight institutions, a survey of all governors in SCOP member HEIs plus desk research on related developments in the private and public sectors and in other countries.

Evidence from the surveys and institutional case studies made a strong case for establishing a governance network. The survey of individual governors attracted 254 responses (approximately one-third of all governors in SCOP HEIs). Eighty per cent of governor respondents said they were likely or very likely to use a governance network. Responses from governors and institutions informed that the most valuable services a network could provide were:

- benchmarking
- identifying best practice
- networking
- updating information and knowledge
- providing specific information on HE
- training.

The findings of the phase one scoping exercise were tested and confirmed at a consultation seminar in March 2001, attended by 33 HE sector delegates, who were mainly governors and clerks to governing bodies. The group identified the needs of chairs and clerks to the governing bodies as particularly important in establishing the network, although it would be open to all with a professional interest in governance within HE.

Final versions of the scoping report and an executive summary were circulated to all SCOP heads of institutions, chairs of governors and clerks, with an encouragement to disseminate the executive summary to all members of governing bodies. The summary is also available at the SCOP web-site.

Developing a governance network

Work has been undertaken to define and develop a governance network both at a physical and virtual level. A further conference, entitled 'Governance: Making a Difference', was held in October 2001 to launch the concept of the governance network and to invite participants to identify issues and areas for further development. Forty-six delegates attended, including representatives from the majority of SCOP member institutions.

All clerks and chairs of governors at member institutions are also sent progress updates, as applicable. Over the next few months, further work will be done to more formally establish the network and to set up groups on the JISC mailbase. This will run in tandem with the development of a governance web-site.

Governance materials/web-site

The scoping exercise suggested that a web-site would be a good means of linking individuals responsible for governance with relevant information and materials. In parallel with the establishment of the governance network, this strand of the project is now developing web pages. There have been discussions with the Council of University Chairmen (CUC) and Universities UK about extending the scope of the web-site to become a collaborative venture for the HE sector as a whole. SCOP will continue to develop the site for its member institutions, as originally envisaged in the project proposal, while discussions continue. It is vital that the web-site content remains up to date. SCOP has committed itself to supporting the maintenance and regular updating of the site once HEFCE GMP funding ceases.

Data protection and personal data: good management practices for higher education

Reference	GMP154
Lead organisation	Lancaster University
Funding awarded	£148,970
Web-site	www.dpa.lancs.ac.uk
Objectives	Provide practical advice to the HE sector on the Data Protection Act and other relevant legislation (Freedom of Information, Human Rights, Regulation of Investigatory Powers)
Project leader	Fiona Aiken, University Secretary
Project manager	Andrew Okey
Project officer	Dr Mark Mukerji
Address	Lancaster University, University House, Bailrigg, LANCASTER LA1 4YW
Telephone	Fiona Aiken 01524 592021 Andrew Okey 01524 592138 Mark Mukerji 01524 592086
e-mail	f.aiken@lancaster.ac.uk a.okey@lancaster.ac.uk m.mukerji@lancaster.ac.uk

Objectives

The main goals of the project are to provide:

- practical advice, approved by the Office of the Information Commissioner, regarding the interpretation of data protection legislation and how it applies to HEIs; this will help HEIs with legislative compliance
- a web resource allowing HE sector staff easy access to this advice
- a series of workshops for HE sector staff
- exemplar data management policies that may be adopted and/or adapted by HEIs.

The project will offer advice on the following matters:

- Admissions
- Alumni
- Archive records
- Careers services
- CCTV
- Counselling services
- Data security
- Debt recovery
- Degree ceremonies
- Disciplinary proceedings
- e-mail policies
- Extent of HEI responsibilities
- Examinations
- International exchange schemes
- International degree schemes
- Legitimate interests of HEIs
- Library operations
- Marketing and recruitment
- Pastoral support
- Public display of student information
- Student support services
- References
- Research
- Retrospective application of the Act
- Shared or validated degree schemes
- Staff induction
- Third party disclosures

Dissemination

The subject matter of this project has near-universal applicability for the UK higher education sector. The project team have therefore tried to offer several ways to disseminate findings:

- the JISC mailbase has been used for publicity
- presentations at a JISC conference
- a series of workshops around the country, for HEI staff
- a project web-site containing general information, discussion papers and themed guidelines.

Learning points

- a. The potential for consistent (at least low-level) transgression of the Act by institutions is high. Institutions process quantities of personal (often sensitive) data within complex, diffuse, free-form administrative structures. There is little central control of 'local' processing carried out at departmental level. Most institutions will need to make major efforts to streamline and secure their record keeping procedures; this could be difficult for institutions with heavily devolved management structures.
- b. Certain academic processes have long been carried out under the assumption that academics' opinions about both their colleagues and their students – as expressed in examination reports, committee minutes and peer review papers – are confidential and will not be seen by their subjects. The fact that this is no longer the case threatens a cultural upheaval that will be painful and deeply disruptive for some institutions. Lawsuits seem inevitable.
- c. The proper application of elements of the Data Protection Act 1998 (and the Freedom of Information Act 2000) will be extremely resource-intensive for institutions.
- d. Providing comprehensive staff training is difficult. Getting clear, simple instructions out to staff set at the level at which they need to understand the legislation is problematic. Many administrative and support staff will resent additional duties enforced by the law as an unwarranted burden and may ignore the Act's requirements. Where training is not properly directed, staff may apply misinterpretations of the Act to their work and this could lead to serious transgressions of the law.
- e. Institutions' relationships with some outside bodies, and with each other, may become more complicated and/or more formal. The informal sharing of information (including research data) may become impractical.
- f. Institutions' relationships with student bodies, notably students' unions but also possibly student societies and junior common rooms, will need careful redefinition. In many cases, institutions may find themselves having to take responsibility for processing carried out by students even where they may have little practical control over that processing.
- g. Most institutions in the HE sector have the consolation of working with a compliant public. The number of data processing related complaints arising from the HE sector is tiny compared to those coming from bodies such as the social services. However, this situation is unlikely to be maintained in the long-term, as students become more aware of their rights and as (arguably) society becomes more litigious. Conflict between institutions and their students over records, and the opinions contained within them, seems bound to increase.

Active risk management for higher education (ARMED)

Reference	GMP235
Lead organisation	University of Bristol
Funding awarded	£220,000
Web-site	http://armed.ilt.bristol.ac.uk/
Observer	Ian Parry, Audit and Risk Consultant, HEFCE
Objectives	Help HEIs undertake risk management in areas of law and compliance in relation to staff and students
Project leader	Dr Katherine McKenzie, University Secretary
Address	University of Bristol, Senate House, Tyndall Avenue, BRISTOL BS8 1TH
Telephone	0117 928 8093
e-mail	kate.mckenzie@bristol.ac.uk

Introduction

The project will help HEIs undertake risk management in areas of law and compliance in relation to staff and students.

Objectives

The project will:

- provide HEIs with advice, procedures and guidelines on good practice
- assist heads of department with proactive management
- help governors and managers identify, measure and control risk.

Details

With the participation of university secretaries and a leading law firm, the Active Risk Management in Education (ARMED) project will produce a web-site with 26 units giving advice on a range of legal risks relating to staff and students. Each unit explains why preventive action is necessary, outlines the relevant legal provisions, gives general advice and offers specimen policies.

The units cover:

- academic assessment and appeals
- consultants and agency staff
- fixed-term contracts and contract research staff
- public interest disclosure
- sickness absence
- staff grievances
- student computer use
- student discipline and
- bullying and harassment
- equal opportunities and disability
- outside work
- redundancy
- staff discipline and dismissal
- student accommodation contracts
- student contracts and charters
- student placements and
- children, maternity, paternity
- equal pay and grading systems
- part-time staff and flexible working
- research misconduct
- staff employment contracts
- student complaints procedures
- student debt
- student unions and clubs

- fitness to practise
- stress
- overseas study
- work permits and visas

The project is due for completion in July 2002; only six units are currently on the web-site. Institutions will have a quick way of ensuring that their policies and procedures are adequate and up-to-date, and if they are not, to improve them by using the advice and specimen policies given in the units.

It may be possible to work towards a national standard policy – for example, in the collection of student debt, or in the implementation of fitness to practise policies (which ensure that medical students are fit to practise as doctors). In each case a standard policy would contribute to a feeling among students that procedures were fair.

The feedback provision on the web-site enables colleagues in all HEIs to give information about their own experiences, which can be immediately incorporated into the unit. For example on the first day the site was advertised, a colleague who had read the unit on student discipline sent a message to the site to say that his university was being taken to judicial review, on the basis that any internal appeal against a student disciplinary decision must involve a complete rehearing of the case. The project authors' understanding had been that an appeal need only consider whether the original hearing was fairly conducted and all relevant matters had been taken into account.

Annex A

The Special Management Advisory Panel

Role of the panel

The panel advises the HEFCE chief executive on how the programme's funds can best be applied to achieve benefits for higher education institutions.

Membership of the panel

Chair

Sir Howard Newby, Chief Executive, HEFCE (from 1 October 2001)

Sir Brian Fender, former Chief Executive, HEFCE (from the inception of the programme to 30 September 2001)

Members

Professor John Brooks, Vice-Chancellor, University of Wolverhampton

Dr John Cater, Chief Executive, Edge Hill College of Higher Education

Steve Egan, Director of Finance and Corporate Resources, HEFCE

Eddie Newcomb OBE, Registrar and Secretary, University of Manchester

Professor Adrian Smith, Principal, Queen Mary, University of London

Dr David Smith CBE, Consultant, Whatman plc

Secretariat

Programme manager	John Rushforth Head of Infrastructure and Management Improvement, HEFCE
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Programme administrator	Pramod Philip Consultant, Management Improvement Group, HEFCE
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Programme assistant	Alistair Townsend Associate Consultant, Management Improvement Group, HEFCE
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List of abbreviations

AUA	Association of University Administrators
EFQM	European Foundation for Quality Management
ERP	Enterprise resource planning
EU	European Union
FE	Further education
GMP	Good Management Practice
HE	Higher education
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
HEI	Higher education institution
HESDA	Higher Education Staff Development Agency
IP	Intellectual property
JISC	Joint Information Systems Committee
NATFHE	National Association of Teachers in Further and Higher Education
NVQ	National Vocational Qualification
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
SCONUL	Society of College, National and University Libraries
SCOP	Standing Conference of Principals
UCISA	Universities and Colleges Information Systems Association