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# A Case Study of Business & Community Engagement (BCE)

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at The University of Glamorgan

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*Evidence from the JISC BCE User Needs, CRM and IPR studies has shown that institutions need help in understanding how to achieve alignment and integration of different processes, systems and operations in support of the developing BCE capability and infrastructure, especially within the information, administration and IT services. This project will gather evidence of current levels of integration and identify models of cross-institutional business processes impacting on BCE activity. It will identify good practice and ways for improving processes to better integrate BCE with core activities.*

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## Executive Summary

Staff at the University of Glamorgan took part in the Embedding BCE through Business Process Improvement and Internal Engagement Project in 2009, analysing the efficiency of the institution's business processes with respect to BCE. The study found that there was a huge diversity of BCE work at Glamorgan, the impact of which is significant both internally and across the broader community. The University's BCE strategy is rooted in a long-standing commitment to engagement and understanding the needs of the local and regional community. There is a current focus to create strategic partnerships to promote community links and build social capital, for example in links to FE colleges to create seamless provision and flexibility of access to education.

Glamorgan Commercial Services Office (CSO) is the main gateway for external engagement. Commercial contracts and obligations are managed through a subsidiary company, UGCS Ltd., which sits within the CSO. A cross institution forum, including representatives from each faculty, promotes and develops the BCE agenda. However, in spite of this institution-level planning, most engagement activities are self-directed, or emergent, with a large proportion of activity resulting from the interests and efforts of a small number of enthusiasts.

The CSO operates knowledge transfer and the provision of business services and commercial programmes. Collaboration between the CSO and faculty based engagement activities ranges from small scale consultancy to larger, long term initiatives. Established centres at the university have numerous external links generating significant income. A key enabler to the success of the centres is the ability to align internal processes to the needs of the varied external partners. Operating through the CSO is the preferred model, however many staff and faculties make their own arrangements.

The need to retain and reinforce the currency, relevance and credibility of the curriculum relies on maintaining continuous professional engagement with external practitioners. Working creatively, the Glamorgan CSO has grown its commercial training portfolio into a successful business with high demand courses accredited by professional bodies. From an IT perspective engagement is often seen as an additional challenge. The CSO operates a client management system, which although not cross institution, does record all contacts they make. Internally an intranet, Inform, is used to maintain information flow, though better utilisation could stimulate further BCE input.

Marketing is well established, resulting in a professional approach. Feedback concerning finance was positive, with recognition that requirements will be diverse. Although CSO takes a 40% overhead from individuals and projects, collaboration offers indemnity insurance and an opportunity to use the Glamorgan brand to charge a higher rate. HR processes are reasonably well aligned with the requirements of external engagement. BCE practitioners need to foster good relationships internally with all central services.

The university has prioritised the establishment of a strategic partnering approach in pursuit of its BCE and corporate goals, resulting in collaborations which are enablers of BCE activity. However, criticism was raised about cross institutional awareness of activities. A lack of sharing of best practice is seen as a barrier to extending BCE. The proportion of staff involved in BCE is relatively small (c.15%), in part as there is no parity of recognition for this work. As with other case studies, practitioners are largely self-selecting, and of the right personality for BCE work. Knowledge, expertise and credibility in the sector were thought necessary, with an independent mindset, as well as effective communication skills. The view is that there is greater capacity to be unleashed at Glamorgan than is currently utilised.

The institution has established a range of measures to track the performance of specific BCE activity; however, aggregating information about community engagement is more difficult. Overall it was felt that the strategic priority and positive emphasis given to BCE has created a strong community focus.

## Overview

### Statement of Importance

Evidence from the JISC BCE User Needs, CRM and IPR studies<sup>1</sup> has shown that institutions need help in understanding how to achieve alignment and integration of different processes, systems and operations in support of the developing BCE capability and infrastructure, especially within the information, administration and IT services. These internal services are often not as responsive to BCE as they are to teaching and research because of uncertainty about policy, a perception of relatively reduced importance and the simple fact that BCE is not yet embedded in most institutions' organisational design, policies and practices.

Other related JISC projects<sup>2</sup> have sought to identify top level institutional business processes and functions, and the international e-Framework<sup>3</sup> has process identification and improvement as its underpinning rationale, to enable technical interoperability and an internal service orientated approach.

The BCE Customer Relationship management (CRM) project<sup>4</sup> is deriving process mapping and self-analysis tools to help institutions manage an enterprise-wide approach to CRM, before delivering some pilots to test effective approaches to CRM. Managing relationships, contacts and business intelligence is clearly core to BCE operations, so the CRM work is important in the context of this project, but here the focus is much more on the business processes implicated in all BCE operations, so interoperability with core institutional functions is main area of investigation.

Strategic change of the type spearheaded through BCE brings with it, not only the operational changes referred to above, but also changes in resources and resource profiles. BCE requires new and distinctive skill-sets, which include negotiation, high-level communication skills, brokerage skills and legal knowledge, as well as an understanding and experience of both business and academic sectors. The training and staff development needs are therefore considerable; a parallel BCE Programme activity 'Supporting Training, CPD and Staff Exchange for BCE Practitioners'<sup>5</sup> is focussed on providing process, system and technology enhancements for existing training programmes, delivered by AURIL-CPD, PRAXIS, the UK Universities CPD Network and others.

The increasing professionalisation of institutional Knowledge Transfer and workforce development practitioners, through professional bodies like the Institute of Knowledge Transfer and networks like the UK Universities CPD Network, adds to the gathering momentum of BCE activities. This makes it more critical that effective processes to support these activities are identified, integrated and communicated and effective change management processes adopted to minimise risk, ensure sustainability and ensure that the institutions have the operations suitably configured to deliver their strategies.

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.jisc.ac.uk/home/whatwedo/themes/business\\_community\\_engagement.aspx](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/home/whatwedo/themes/business_community_engagement.aspx)

<sup>2</sup> Notably: [http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/programme\\_jos/project\\_hilda.aspx](http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/programme_jos/project_hilda.aspx)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.e-framework.org/>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.jisc.ac.uk/media/documents/funding/2008/03/circular308appendixg.doc>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/bce/bcesupportingtraining.aspx>

## The Project

The Embedding BCE through Business Process Improvement and Internal Engagement project is one of four projects managed by the Advisory Services of JISC. The project is being managed by JISC infoNet (<http://www.jiscinfonet.ac.uk>), based at the University of Northumbria, with John Burke, Senior Adviser at JISC infoNet as Project Manager and Clive Alderson as Project Consultant.

Aims and Objectives of the project are:

1. Identifying the key business processes and system implications involved and analysing the related coherence and efficiency of these. This will be achieved through information gathering from a range of institutions across the sector, including some FE institutions and some from the devolved administrations;
2. Producing case studies which illustrate different models and degrees of business integration for different approaches to BCE. This will be achieved by working with a small representative sample of five institutions (including one English FE, one Scottish HE and one Welsh HE institution) to examine and document the 'as-is' state of business processes around BCE activities;
3. Devising change plans in each of the five cases to enable BCE functions to be more effectively embedded by identifying areas for process improvement, actions, resources and change agents needed in each of the five cases which would result in better integrated strategic BCE operations;
4. Producing an infoKit which distils the learning from the above activities and highlights recommended business process improvement steps and methods for better integration of BCE operations within institutions;
5. Base-lining and developing the level and nature of engagement between central functions, (including libraries, administration and information management/IT) and BCE operations;
6. Producing an infoKit for managers of the central functions within an institution, with advice and guidance on BCE and how to support it. This will demonstrate the benefits for the institution and promote enhanced internal engagement and better integrated BCE.

## The Context

The University of Glamorgan is situated within the Unitary Authority of Rhondda Cynon Taf in South Wales. The area has a population of approximately 231000 (2001 census) and includes the towns of Clydach Vale (the Authority's administrative Centre) and Pontypridd. Formerly an important coal mining area, traditional industries have declined over the past 20 years. More recently, a variety of light industries have been attracted to the area and the economy is continuing to diversify to include automotive, plastics and electronics manufacturing companies. There are two major industrial estates, one at Treforest near Pontypridd, and the other at Hirwaun near Aberdare. These now attract many workers from the traditional coal mining villages and towns

The University was founded in 1913 as a school of mines based in Treforest, Pontypridd. It later became Glamorgan Polytechnic before becoming The University of Glamorgan in 1992. It presently serves around 21500 students, with approximately 10250 full time undergraduate students and 1400 full time postgraduate students.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> <http://profile.glam.ac.uk>

## The BCE Landscape at Glamorgan

The comments and feedback contained in this case study should be prefaced with an acknowledgement of the breadth, variety and richness of the engagement activity being undertaken at Glamorgan. The impact of this work, both internally within the institution and externally across the broader community, is significant. Although not exhaustive, the following are some of the activities and initiatives identified during discussions and interviews with members of the university:

- The Welsh Beacon for Public Engagement. A collaborative project with Cardiff University, the National Museum of Wales, the BBC, and Techniquet.
- Industrial research and problem solving through the activities of the Centre for Electronic Product Engineering including knowledge transfer partnerships and projects funded through the Welsh Assembly Government.
- The First Campus initiative. A partnership of higher education, further education and schools in South East Wales to raise awareness of higher education opportunities and raise academic aspirations among the regions young people.
- The work of the Centre for Engineering Research and Environmental Applications (CEREA) on engagement with local communities to establish sustainable building projects such as community housing in collaboration with the local authority.
- Community engagement through sports and recreation. Numerous initiatives including summer sports camps, the “Climbing Higher” initiative, Coach Education week, Welsh Language initiative, plus broadening access to university facilities for local dance groups and sports clubs.
- Generating income streams from sports facilities including rental of sports facilities to a wide range of users e.g. 9 professional or semi-professional clubs (such as the Cardiff Blues rugby club), 14 community clubs, and a local dance academy.
- Graduate tele-working initiative GTI, providing small businesses with incubation units based at Navigation Park.
- Glamorgan Knowledge Transfer Programme supported by the Commercial Services Office (CSO) which includes programmes funded by Academics for Business (A4B), Technology Strategy Board, Welsh Assembly Government, and private industry engaging with around 100 companies in R & D projects each year. CSO also provides commercialisation support for licensing of IPR and spinout creation.
- RUMM Ltd a recent example of a Glamorgan spin out company which helps businesses to lower the costs of their utility bills. The company has been shortlisted for the UK - wide Impact Awards, organised by UNICO.
- Faculty of Advanced Technology includes world class collaborative research activity in energy saving production in collaboration with major players from the European steel industry such as E.On, Corus, and Mittal.
- The Roland Music Academy. A joint venture with the Roland Corporation.
- Science Shops. Providing support and expertise for community-based research and problem solving.
- Membership of and support to the Community Race Relations Group. Working in collaboration and partnership with local community stakeholders to facilitate cohesion and harmony in the community. This is one of a number of activities which have led to the university being recognised as a best practice university for community relations.
- The opening of the Myfanwy Theatre. An initiative co ordinated by Merthyr College as part of a £750000 investment for the arts in Merthyr Tydfil.

- Managing community audits and contract research work with community housing projects.
- Consultancy activities with both commercial clients and for government funded initiatives. This includes a broad range of activities from the provision of web-site design and development expertise to providing materials testing services for local and international clients.
- The Strategic Insights Programme. A HEFCW funded initiative for academic staff including the provision of placements in the work context and facilitating engagement and partnership development with industry and external organisations.
- A £2M investment in the Hydrogen Demonstration Centre at the Baglan Energy Park.
- An £8M investment in analytical testing laboratories which will be accessible to industry.
- A £40M investment in the Atrium - a state of the art facility to support the cultural and creative industries, based in Cardiff.

### The Enquiry Process

The review of BCE activities at the University of Glamorgan was structured around a series of one to one interviews with a cross section of staff drawn from across the institution. The approach was conversational and responses were noted down and have been aggregated to form the basis of this case study. Comments and feedback have been anonymised.

A self-assessment tool in the form of a workbook was also developed (based on the format of the EQFM Beta model) to facilitate a half-day group workshop/discussion which was held at the end of the interview schedule. A small representative group were invited to this event. The aim was to stimulate comment and debate around some of the fundamental issues associated with how the University structures, manages and measures its' BCE plans and activities. The key points raised during this event are noted in [Appendix B](#).

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## Findings

The findings and feedback have been aggregated under the following headings:

- strategy and policy;
- processes and business systems;
- partnerships and collaborations;
- roles and skills;
- and customer perceptions and Key performance measures.

The findings have been informed by the views expressed by staff during interviews and the self evaluation workshop facilitated by the JISC infoNet project team. A full list of participants is provided at [Appendix A](#).



## Strategy & Policy

### Strategy & Policy at Glamorgan

The University of Glamorgan describes its strategy for BCE (Third Mission) as “...activities that stimulate and direct the application and exploitation of knowledge to the benefit of social, cultural and economic development of our society.” This strategy is rooted in the heritage of the institution and a long - standing commitment to engagement with the local and regional community. It is evident from the feedback received during one to one interviews with members of staff that BCE is an embedded feature of the University’s vision and strategic framework.

The current strategy identifies seven core themes:

- services to the community;
- the civic role of the university;
- support for enhancing social capital;
- services to business;
- developing a skilled workforce;
- knowledge transfer;
- and support for entrepreneurship;

And two cross-cutting themes:

- Internationalisation;
- and education for sustainable development and global citizenship.

The institution wide strategy is formulated following consultation with a wide stakeholder group. The community engagement plan and widening access plan are embedded within the overall strategy for the university. As may be expected, many of the university’s strategic themes are aligned with government policies and priorities, and the availability of funding and financial support. Nevertheless, the university is outward looking and proactively seeks to establish what the needs of key stakeholders and community partners are.

An important element of the current strategy is the focus on creating strategic partnerships and alliances to promote and activate community links and build social capital. A successful example of this is the establishment of partnerships with FE providers to create a seamless provision and encourage community involvement (and the recruitment of non-traditional types of learners) through flexibility of access to education and the university.

Another central feature of the engagement strategy is the work of the Centre for Life Long Learning (CELL). With a remit to stimulate community involvement and broaden access, the Centre is at the core of many initiatives to raise the educational aspirations of both young and old, and generate awareness about the opportunities available within Further and Higher education. Their work is a mixture of both unilateral and partnership activity, with some of the most effective and impressive results achieved when performing the lead role in developing, organising and harnessing the combined talents of community networks and collaborations.

An initiative being implemented at the moment is “Universities that Count”. This is a framework for assessing and evaluating corporate social responsibility. This development activity reinforces and complements the outlook of the institution as an integral feature of the civic landscape.

Overall strategic responsibility for BCE resides with the Pro Vice Chancellor (Research). The role has a wide ranging brief which includes line management responsibility for the Glamorgan Commercial Services Office (CSO) and chairing the cross institution Enterprise Steering Group.

The CSO provides the main gateway for external engagement with the university. The office manages the client Management System and plays the lead role in recording and reporting on Third Mission activity and results. Commercial contracts and obligations are managed through the university's wholly owned subsidiary company, UGCS, Ltd., which sits within the CSO.

The Enterprise Steering Group is a cross institution forum to promote and develop the enterprise agenda within the university. The group is comprised of representatives from each faculty with a remit to generate interest and involvement in enterprise initiatives and activities, as well as provide input to strategy and plans.

The degree to which strategy translates directly into action is a mixed picture. The commercial activities of the CSO, and the promotion of initiatives through the Centre for Lifelong Learning are strategy led with a definite link between the institution-level plan and the nature and direction of operational activities. Similarly, there are a number of important initiatives and projects resulting from top-down, directed action and funding support. However, a large part of mainstream engagement activities can more accurately be characterised as self-directed and emergent in nature. A large proportion of activity germinates as a result of the interests and efforts of a relatively small number of activists and groups (taken as a proportion of the total number of staff in the university).

Activities also tend to be faculty centric, and collaboration results from internal networks which have evolved organically over time rather than as a result of deliberate policy led initiatives. This reflects the dual impact of the devolved structure of the university allied to a powerful culture of academic freedom. This results in a disparate picture with no institution wide, formal measurement or capture of BCE activity and impact, and an incomplete picture of the BCE landscape.

Nevertheless, the strategic priority and positive emphasis given to external engagement and civic responsibility has created a strong community focus and facilitative environment for BCE at Glamorgan.

## Processes & Business Systems

### Commercial and Income Generation Processes

The Commercial Services Office is the central hub for managing commercial activity within the university. It provides an integrated management service covering the complete service delivery process incorporating support for bid and tender preparation, administrative coordination, reporting and financial management. An internal charge is levied for privately funded projects which utilise the CSO service, but not for publicly funded projects.

The CSO operates two major streams of activity, knowledge transfer and the provision of business services and commercial programmes. The Knowledge Transfer stream includes a broad base of activities including KTP's, Collaborative research, Studentships, IP protection, contracting, commercialisation of IP, spin-out creation, business networks, corporate fundraising, and generating and developing strategic partnerships. The CSO's Business Services arm looks to exploit commercial opportunities in the areas of training and consultancy. This includes a varied prospectus of part time professional courses in areas such as Project Management and Quality Management, as well as targeted MBA programmes and other CPD provision. In addition to local and regional provision, there is a growing international customer base for courses, with an expanding presence in the Middle and Far East markets.

Collaboration between faculty based engagement activities and the CSO ranges from smaller scale, emergent knowledge transfer consultancy and industry based research projects to larger, longer term and strategic initiatives. Established centres such as the Centre for Electronics Product Engineering, the Centre for Engineering Research and Environmental Application, and the Centre for Lifelong Learning are all successful, long term initiatives which are involved in numerous external engagements generating significant income streams totalling millions of pounds per annum. Each of the Centres operates in collaboration with the CSO.

The Centre for Electronics Product Engineering is involved in projects related to electronic product design and application. It secures funding from a range of sources including the Welsh Assembly Government, Industrial Research organisations, and commercial fee paying customers. It manages programmes, consultancy contracts, and knowledge transfer partnership projects, currently running 80% of the total university KTP output (it has also used Regional Funding to establish an electronics Knowledge Transfer Network project). Activities and engagements are generated through the establishment of networks and self help groupings, with an emphasis on relationship building as opposed to pure selling.

The Centre for Engineering Research and Environmental Application (CEREA) was established in 2000 to serve the needs of industry and communities. In terms of industrial liaison, the Centre engages with 25 - 30 companies a month, across all sectors. It is involved in a range of activities including product development, renewable energy project and the provision of specific commercial services such as compliance testing for concrete products. The Centre is also active in the field of community regeneration, providing holistic solutions involving the community residents and other stakeholders. Significant consultancy fees are generated for this work.

There is also a major international dimension to the work of CEREA. This work includes developing regeneration strategies and central facilities for the nomadic people in Mongolia, and renewable energy projects in Iran, Albania, Syria, and Zambia. Consultancy fee based funding through United Nations (UNIDA) funding streams is generated for this work.

CEREA uses its own internal pool of experienced staff, augmented by external personnel when specialist or technical skills are required, or if additional capacity is needed to support project delivery.

The Centre for Lifelong Learning (CELL) works closely with the CSO to inform the community element of the Third Mission strategy, and to promote and develop the institutions Work Based Learning agenda. As well as the work involved in activating and delivering the Widening Access Plan including outreach provision in community centres and community schools, CELL also works with charities, social enterprises and voluntary organisations. The activities of the Centre are mainstreamed and draw on the expertise of Faculties. This approach generally works well, with only the occasional issue when referrals to faculties are made.

Providing a service to the community which is flexible, accessible and relevant does pose a number of process and system issues. Drop outs, inconsistent attendance, small group numbers, and the need to provide part time, informal and non accredited learning, (all of which are common features of community work), tend to penalise funding and are not always attractive from a financial and measurement point of view. It is therefore a major commitment to maintain CELL's operational activities and continue to invest in the access and excellence strategy with all its inherent process implications.

The long term consistent success of all these initiatives is largely down to the energy, commitment and expertise of managers and project team staff. However, another key enabler is the ability to align internal processes and mechanisms to the needs of the varied external customers and partners. This results from a successful model of collaboration between projects and the CSO who provide a central facility and support key processes including bid preparation, contact management, financial management and record keeping, and other administrative functions.

The CSO operates to ISO 9001:2000 standards for quality management systems and operates to an agreed framework of processes and protocols. The Office operates and maintains a customer relationship management system, with records of all contacts, enquiries and engagements operated through the CSO. This is not an institution wide system, with faculties and different projects managing their own contact records and activity files.

The CSO also operates a sales team who have day to day engagement with numerous external organisations across all sectors. This provides current and constantly updated information about the external environment as well as a steady stream of feedback from existing and prospective customers and users.

Although collaboration and operating through the CSO is the preferred model, faculties and staff are not compelled to administer external engagements through the Office and can make their own arrangements for commercial work. Apart from resulting in engagement which isn't formally recorded for capture and measurement purposes, having different arrangements for commercial work across the faculties can cause a number of potential issues and risks. For example, without making provision for adequate professional indemnity insurance cover (a service performed by the CSO), some staff, and possibly the university by association, are exposed to potential liability should a claim for professional negligence be made by an external customer/partner.

Nevertheless many projects and initiatives are self managing, without collaborating with the CSO, and in some cases have developed into long term significant enterprises. One example of this is Science Shops Glamorgan which is involved in community based research and is part of a worldwide chain of centres (there are currently approximately 190 centres around the world). The work of Science Shops Glamorgan is mainly focussed on projects to mitigate against climate change and to support sustainability. The Centre operates a brokerage model

to match practitioners and researchers to the needs and specific requirements of individual projects. Science Shops is currently working to set up stronger engagement structures internally within the university to improve access to expertise within the faculties. They have their own management and administrative structure and employ a team of 8 including 3 full time and 1 part time development officers who engage directly with prospective and existing users/partners, and develop external relationships, project ideas and funding opportunities.

Another example of commercial engagement is the widening of access to the university's sports and leisure facilities. Over the past 10 years the campus has become more of a community resource and now manages an increasing number of fee paying customers using the indoor sports centre and outdoor pitches. These facilities now host over 600 participants a week with users including 9 professional/semi-professional clubs per week, 14 community clubs per week, and a dance academy on site, all operated on a commercial basis.

Facilities are open throughout the year, not just in term time, and include the provision of summer sports camps (7400 places sold to date), and initiatives like the Coach Education Week which brings people from the community and develops the skills and qualifications required to help them to deliver sports in their local leagues and community centres. Other engagement includes the "First Campus" initiative, which is designed to open up the university to people who then have the opportunity to experience the Higher Education environment and hopefully feel empowered to become involved as students. The "Climbing Higher" initiative is another attempt to raise aspiration amongst young people and the local community. There is also the Welsh Language Project, which promotes and develops the use of the language through sport. All instructions, coaching and conversation is conducted in Welsh.

Income streams are generated through commercial charges for the use of facilities, as well as project funding from sources including the Welsh Assembly Government. The facilities are managed and resourced by the university, and student volunteers are employed to support the running of many of the community projects including summer sports camps and work in schools (the role of students as a vehicle for engagement is an important feature of community engagement in the sporting context). It is vital to ensure that all operational processes are managed and facilitated with a professional and commercial approach. This can exert pressure on central systems, particularly in the area of organising CRB checks on staff/coaches/volunteers, the accounting systems and the collection of money, and the arrangement and administration of insurances.

Some hybrid projects exist, where elements of their activities are administered through CSO, but other aspects of their work is self-managed. The Regeneration Hub is an example of this structure. The centre is involved in a range of community based engagements including delivering training and awards, consultancy, and applied research projects. A major core activity and area of expertise is the design, implementation and interpretation of community audits, and contract research in the public sector and with charities and voluntary organisations. The consultancy and training elements of the centres output is administered through the CSO.

There are currently a Professor plus 4 staff in the centre, with 2 staff half funded by the university with the centre responsible for generating the income to fund the other half of the staff costs. Attempts are made to use internal staff from the faculties, however it is necessary to resource projects with associates for certain skills and to acquire the required capacity. A significant proportion of the work is undertaken outside of normal office hours and often involves engagement in difficult environments such as deprived neighbourhoods and run down estates etc. This can prove to be a major barrier to recruiting staff and project team members.

Feedback from across the various projects and initiatives reinforced the view that external engagement requires effective processes which are aligned to the needs and expectations of the multi types of users, customers and partners. In general, delivery and management processes have been the result of gradual evolution and learning, and the development of internal relationships between the projects and central services such as finance, HR, marketing and the CSO. Inevitably tensions do surface from time to time as the demands of external partners cause activity cycles to become compressed resulting in central services having to work outside of normal operating parameters. However, the majority of comments acknowledged the difficulties associated with dealing with disparate stakeholders, and viewed the challenges of BCE as being a price worth paying for the satisfaction gained from the work and the outputs and results generated.

### **Academic and Curriculum Development Processes**

There are two major dimensions to the influence of BCE on academic processes. Firstly the degree to which external engagement has led to curriculum change and how knowledge and learning harvested from projects and initiatives is applied in the classroom. Secondly, the degree to which curriculum and pedagogy is customised to meet the needs of the different contexts and environments in which learning and engagement takes place.

In the first instance, a powerful argument repeated by many interviewees is the need to retain and reinforce the currency, relevance and credibility of the curriculum. In many subject areas and disciplines this relies on academics maintaining continuous professional engagement with their related sectors and professions, and ideally some form of contact and on-going involvement with external practitioners and organisations. This is particularly important where the curriculum has a strong vocational or professional emphasis, and where the qualifications provide a perceived route to employment. In this context BCE can be seen as a vehicle of change and curriculum development.

Many of the knowledge transfer practitioners involved in the interviews pointed to projects and external activity being the source of “live” learning environments where findings and outputs can add real experience to the curriculum. Examples of this includes the work of CERE where findings and empirical evidence are generated and applied back into the learning environment, also the effects of external input into qualifications such as the DBA for public service managers offered by the Business School. Similarly, programmes have been developed for the Police which draw heavily on the intelligence and information gained from external engagement. One interviewee mentioned that funding has been made available to allow his school to look at ways to maximise the use of KTP’s in teaching and learning.

It is also apparent that current focus is being given to the theme of employability within the curriculum and to look at what is needed to embed this within courses. One way this is being achieved is through the greater integration of learning with workplace and community based experience. For example in Sports Studies, (Business School), all students spend time in the community working on the practical application of skills and building up real experience of the workplace. Each student spends 15 hours working in a community environment, 1 hour per week x 15 weeks, and last year this related to an aggregate 2000 hours of direct engagement.

The Foundation Degree in rugby coaching takes engagement and the development of employability even further, with the requirement on students to spend a total of 360 hours in placement within the community and/or the sports related sector. Other awards also have employability and placements built into the curriculum, such as the Sports Management qualification.

The structure and demands of Foundation Degrees have forced the issue of engagement and generating and managing placements for students across a number of schools within the university. This has called for new skills amongst staff, as well as the need for supporting systems and processes to coordinate, control and maintain relationships with partners. One commentator explained that following an initial period of discomfort and lack of knowledge, skills and experience, the school had learned by “doing” and had gradually developed a methodology and policies to support this type of student centred external engagement. To what degree experience has been shared between schools was debateable.

In terms of the second dimension, to what extent has curriculum and pedagogy changed and evolved in order to successfully engage with learners in different contexts, the work of CELL and the CSO in particular is highlighted. The community based learning promoted and managed by CELL places a number of demands on the courses they provide. To be attractive to learners often means working creatively to adhere to the established criteria surrounding accreditation, assessment and curriculum delivery. The system works against small, part time courses and is based upon a points system for gaining accreditation. The need for flexibility is paramount, and providing entry at all levels is a key issue.

CELL offers a variety of awards including foundation studies courses designed to attract learners into higher education and provide a critical stepping stone into further study. Support processes such as curriculum design, measurement and assessment must therefore be provided within a customised framework. CELL staff work to facilitate these processes across the faculties, and to provide additional targeted support when required. A variety of innovative schemes have been implemented to support engagement, including the use of a mobile classroom which takes learning directly into the community where no facilities or provision is normally available.

The CSO has grown its commercial training and education portfolio into a successful business with high demand courses accredited through recognised professional bodies such as the Institute of Directors, the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply, the Chartered Quality Institute, the Institute of Safety and Health, as well as being an Accredited Training Organisation for PRINCE2 and Managing Successful Programmes. The CSO also offers NVQ programmes in leadership, business development, personnel management and support, and management in collaboration with the Business School.

Course delivery is varied across the different programmes ranging from traditional facilitation and group activities to practical work-based projects. This blended learning approach provides flexibility for learners, including e-learning which allows participants to work at the office and direct learning to times that are most convenient to them. The venues and locations used for group delivery are not limited to university facilities. The IOD courses for example are located at the convention centre at the Celtic Manor Resort Hotel. This is more in keeping with a commercial training organisation. Courses are also delivered in-company to meet specific delegate group requirements.

Many of the programmes offer progression routes into other qualifications offered by the CSO and university, and are a potential recruiting ground for the wider institution. The courses are largely resourced by internal staff from the faculties such as the Business School, with associates and sub-contractors utilised for specialist areas or where internal resources are not available

## IT Processes

The use of IT systems is an important element in the engagement and delivery chain. The university web site is becoming the primary gateway for incoming requests and method of navigation to specific departments and

contacts. Use of the internet is also a growing feature of curriculum delivery and as a tool for disseminating and receiving data and information from projects, both local and international. The CERE project in Mongolia is one example where the internet is widely used to report activities and provide guidance and support. E-learning packages are used in a number of the programmes offered by the CSO and Business School, mentioned earlier in this section, as part of a blended learning approach.

The CSO operates a client management system which contains files and records of clients, contacts and activity histories. This covers all engagements which have been managed and administered through the office, but is not a cross institution system. The risk of duplication of contact, although arguably small, does exist and interviewees did recount experiences where staff from different departments were talking simultaneously to the same external organisation without any knowledge of the others presence.

Internally, the use of the intranet system, Inform, is usefully employed to maintain information flow and provide up to date details about staff involvement in projects, resident expertise, and funding opportunities. The general view is that the system offers a powerful tool, but could be better utilised to support the engagement agenda and stimulate wider involvement.

From the IT teams perspective external engagement activities are often seen as an additional challenge over and above the core funding responsibilities associated with teaching/learning and research. A frustration voiced by a number of participants is that platforms for communication don't involve IT early enough in the planning stage, resulting in contact later in the process when they can't influence direction, and when problems have often already been encountered. This causes many issues and results in a situation where emergent, inconsistent, and sometimes off-structure activities like external engagement is difficult to systemise and therefore affects the ability of the institution to embed support for this type of work. In turn, this can lead to tension and conflict between practitioner and IT and other central process teams.

There are many IT related initiatives underway including collaboration and partnerships with schools and other learning institutions which involve VLE development on systems different to those of the university. Development work using Moodle is also ongoing, bringing exciting but challenging work to the IT teams. The ICT strategy overall is being reviewed to consider issues such as interoperability of internal and external partner systems, and delivery to mobile devices etc.

## Marketing Processes

Marketing processes operate at different levels within the university. The institution has a central marketing function with a professional team responsible for the development and implementation of the institutional marketing plan. All faculties identify a member of staff with responsibility for marketing, who in turn liaise and collaborate with the central team. The CSO manages its own sales and marketing team and operates as both a stand alone unit and as a major contributor to the central marketing strategy. Individual projects and initiatives may also have their own marketing strategy, and will be responsible for external communications and business development.

The marketing function is well established with mature systems for planning and dissemination. There are numerous platforms and forums for communicating plans and priorities and the approach is professional and high quality. This is reflected in the corporate and faculty literature, publicity materials, website, and "house style" for communicating with external contacts.



Projects and initiatives have access to the CSO marketing resources which are supplied as part of the service on offer to collaborating faculties. The CSO has a very active team dedicated to the functions of business development, publicity and PR. This is operated in the same way as any commercial organisation, with targets and measures in place.

### Finance Processes

The CSO has its own finance capability that manages all the accounting functions for activity administered through the office. This includes credit control, purchasing/vendor approval, invoicing and payments. This dedicated facility helps to insulate the projects and faculties from dealing with central processes and systems and is structured around the needs and expectations of external engagements.

For projects and programmes which run through the CSO there is a charge for the services and facilities they use. The normal charging framework is based on top slicing the project budget as follows:

Project or individual	60%
Faculty	20%
CSO	20%

The 40% overhead is sometimes given as a reason for not putting external engagement work through the CSO. In some cases individuals with private consultancy work for example, feel that giving up 40% of the fee is too costly. However, it has also been pointed out that operating in collaboration with CSO offers opportunities to do business under the Glamorgan brand at a higher commercial rate than they would normally obtain, plus they would be covered for professional indemnity which comes with the CSO umbrella, and results in a more professional approach.

There were other comments with respect to financial systems and procedures, including:

- VAT on costs can be headache;
- central finance systems can hold up decision-making, e.g. if you want to use a suppliers who isn't in the system and haven't been vetted;
- we have had some complaints from associates who are used to being paid on shorter credit terms;
- gaining authorisations for payment are occasionally a barrier;
- and collecting money and cash handling can be problematical.

Overall, feedback concerning operating through central finance is positive with recognition that managing the diverse requirements of some initiatives will inevitably challenge the systems of a large organisation like a university.

### HR Processes

The HR department at Glamorgan contains a number of specialist personnel covering the broad spectrum of the function including recruitment and selection, remuneration and conditions, pensions, and equality. Direct support is available to the CSO and individual projects and centres. Services include advice with bids and funding applications as well as mainstream assistance with employment contracts for staff and associates. The Equalities Manager, for example, also provides support directly to people working in the community.

Based on feedback, the perception is that HR processes are reasonably well aligned with the requirements of projects and other practitioners in external engagement. The major criteria for appointing new staff, including project staff, is that evidence of funding for the specific post is in place, and then the normal recruitment and selection process is followed. Similarly, any employee relations issues are dealt with in accordance with established procedures. Time delays in being able to appoint is potentially an issue when projects are funded on strict timescales and the normal (RD1) procedures for advertising, drawing up short lists, interviewing and selection etc. are on different cycle times. However only brief and isolated references were made to this. In general, it appears that HR processes run smoothly. This may be in part due to the fact that members within HR are themselves active participants in a number of community interactions. For example, the Equalities Manager sits on the Community Race Relations Group, and works with community businesses on diversity policy and in collaboration with the Police to reduce racial tension/improve community cohesion. HR is also involved in supporting students/staff working or on placement in the community. Training is offered on working in external organisations, and HR staff are involved in making sure that people are healthy and safe when on outside placement, playing a role in monitoring and assessing working conditions and environment. The intranet system, Inform, is used to facilitate and host the staff training and development support.

### Other Central Processes

Library Services are available to all staff and registered students, however this does not automatically include external partners and participants in projects and other engagement activities. Although established processes are in place for academic development and research, the processes are not so robust for engagement or emergent activities such as projects. The university does have different membership types and lending rates, with a system to identify individual, company, and charity members. This can encompass some external engagement participants and partners. However, access to electronic resources is more difficult due to certain licences disallowing users other than learners and staff thus limiting their availability. Nevertheless, the library service provides essential repository and cataloguing facilities for project and applied research findings and reports.

Estates/Campus Services have a direct involvement in BCE, particularly through the management of sports facilities and the 60 place day centre which is open to local community parents as well as staff and students. Additional involvement is largely through their role of facilities management and maintaining the fabric of the university campus. This can appear to be a nebulous issue, however presentation and access are important considerations when thinking about the wide range of users and their different expectations. Providing services like parking, comfortable eating facilities, cleaning, security etc play a huge part in the value chain of customer perception.

**Comment:** A common observation from interviewees is the need for BCE practitioners to be proactive at developing relationships and a working understanding with internal central services and process providers. It is easy to find fault with people operating the large central systems and procedures, however in most cases if an effort is made it ultimately comes down to dealing with people.

## Partnerships and collaboration

### Partnerships and Collaboration at Glamorgan

The university has prioritised the establishment of a more strategic partnering approach in the pursuit of its' BCE and corporate goals. At the top level this has led to strategic mergers and alliances with Merthyr College and the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. Both of these key partnerships support the university's commitment to their role as a landmark civic organisation.

There are many other collaborations and partnerships within the university's portfolio of external engagements which are significant enablers of BCE activity. The following are some examples:

The Welsh Beacon for Public Engagement, a collaboration between Glamorgan, Cardiff University, The National Museum of Wales, BBC Wales and Techniquet. The Beacon principles are embedded within a number of initiatives across the university.

There are a number of partnerships with schools, created to support a variety of initiatives including "First Campus", "Climb Higher", sports and fitness, and the facilitation of transition and widening access goals.

In an attempt to engage with the community and provide a seamless provision, the university has worked closely with the F.E. sector to offer entry to education at all levels, and raise aspirations amongst all age groups. The university has also developed specialised partner colleges, for example Barry College for aeronautical engineering.

The opening of the Atrium complex in Cardiff in 2007, housing the Cardiff School of Creative and Cultural Industries, has created an important hub for media, drama and music. The facility is a generator for both community and industrial liaisons such as the Roland Academy, a joint venture with the Roland Corporation.

The creation of the Universities Police Sciences Institute is a partnership with Cardiff University and South Wales Police. The Glamorgan BSc in Police Sciences is the only one of its kind in the UK.

The university has also forged links with local authorities, the Welsh Assembly Government, local community businesses, charities (such as the Wallich), as well as numerous private companies in the UK and overseas through KTP's (such as Blackbox-AV) and collaborative industrial research.

Glamorgan also has links with other universities both in the UK and internationally. This provides a vehicle for collaboration and access to consortia funding such as pan European applied research projects.

Other key partnerships include those with professional bodies and accreditation authorities. This is a large and diverse group including the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors, Institute of Directors, and others (see section on academic processes page 13). As well as providing the licences and accreditations to offer industry recognised CPD and commercial training courses, these associations maintain important links with industry and practitioners.

A major strategic partnership project currently being developed is the embryonic University of the Heads of the Valleys. This is a collaborative venture with Newport University which could have a major impact on the model for community engagement and widening access in the local region. Establishing a new institution with flexible provision, the life long learning agenda would be significantly enhanced, and a segmented learning framework could be extended to a catchment area currently under represented.

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As well as external partnerships, it is essential to facilitate, encourage and support the myriad of internal collaborations required to maintain the existing and future rich and varied BCE activities and provision. A frequent comment from interviewees was a lack of awareness about the availability and location of expertise, and the work and activities going on across the institution. Efforts are being made by different practitioners to improve internal contacts and networks in order to facilitate greater access to colleagues across the faculties. The perceived lack of formal platforms for practitioners to share knowledge and best practice is seen as a major barrier to extending external engagement activities.

## Roles & Skills

### Roles & Skills at Glamorgan

The proportion of academic staff involved in BCE is still relatively small (estimated at 15%). This is not surprising since pay scales and contracts continue to reflect the traditional teaching/learning and research emphasis of the academic role, with no mention of engagement (or knowledge transfer) in the majority of job descriptions. In a formal sense therefore, there is no directed mechanism for external engagement, nor is there parity of recognition for this type of work. These perceived barriers, lack of reward and recognition, are making recruitment to the engagement agenda difficult.

Nevertheless, there are numerous roles involved in the delivery of BCE at Glamorgan. The interconnectivity of these roles is strong where activities are planned and formalised through processes and systems operated by units such as the CSO. In less formalised contexts, like many community-based engagements, activity is driven purely by the interests and commitment of motivated practitioners, often acting independently. In these environments, roles are not as strongly aligned and collaborative mechanisms and relationships with central functions may be non-existent.

For a number of specific roles and functions, such as sales and marketing, bid and tender preparation, and the management of other central processes, the skill sets are well established. In a professional office such as CSO and other established centres, people are recruited directly to these roles and are normally focused on them exclusively. This ensures that standards of performance are consistent and delivered within a planned and controlled framework. This is not always the case, and in smaller projects working independently it may be necessary for team members to multi-task and perform numerous duties outside their normal job role. Indeed, this may be one of the attractions of BCE for some people - variety, and the unpredictable nature of some engagements.

In terms of operating at the interface with clients, stakeholders, and partners, there is a general view that practitioners are largely self-selecting. Many interviewees identified personality and attitude as the two main prerequisites, and pointed out that it is not automatic that academics can become consultants or project team workers. The issues noted earlier regarding the overriding focus on teaching/learning and research being the default domain for academics does suggest that personal drive and interest is a fundamental requirement for involvement in BCE. However, a number of generic characteristics, attributes and skills were also identified. The need to have knowledge, expertise and credibility within the sector or subject specific arena in which you are operating is universally quoted as a main requirement, particularly when operating with commercial business clients. The ability to attract funding or fees necessitates a robust, credible bid or tender highlighting the strength of expertise being made available, and the evidence of previous success and experience. Further to this, a common perception is that many BCE practitioners have an almost maverick approach, quite comfortable operating outside of normal structures, with an independent and problem-solving mindset.

Other elements of the skill-set required include project management skills, the ability to communicate effectively in different contexts, and the ability to translate concepts and theoretical frameworks into practical applications. Empathy was a descriptor used often by practitioners. Other requirements include planning and organisational skills and the ability to lead and create momentum by building effective coalitions amongst partners and clients. As with any project-based activity, the need to manage expectations, often across disparate groups of

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stakeholders is a critical activity, requiring consistency and clarity of purpose and the ability to apply influencing and negotiation skills.

As a package, there is a high skill level required to operate successfully in many engagement contexts. This type of work is often challenging and for some will inevitably represent a distraction from their comfort zone and normal practice. However, the view amongst interviewees is that there is much greater capacity available at Glamorgan than is currently being utilised, and that unleashing the talent must be the goal.

There is therefore a need to plan for more comprehensive programmes of skills development which encompasses BCE related competences and attributes. One suggested initiative is to proactively identify and recruit a core of 3-5 people from each faculty to become more involved. This cohort would then receive mentorship and development from experienced BCE practitioners with a view to them taking a greater role within existing and future projects and initiatives. This would build capacity, broaden involvement and generate interest across the university.

An existing development initiative is the Strategic Insights Programme, funded through HEFCW, which provides financial support for academic staff to spend up to ten days on placement with a company or external organisation. This provides real experience and engagement and the opportunity to undertake work based learning.

## Performance Measurement & Evaluation

### Performance Measurement and Evaluation at Glamorgan

Overall, the institution has established a comprehensive range of measures to track the performance of specific elements of BCE activity. In particular, for business engagement and commercial training and the delivery of CPD programmes there is data to illustrate the volume of business, the revenue generated, the direct costs incurred, areas of growth and contraction, the types of engagement, and the margin achieved across the portfolio. CSO maintains these records and prepares the annual report for the BCE (Third Mission) activities. The format and approach to reporting activity and performance is driven by the requirements and protocols of the different funding agencies and to the specific targets and emphasis the funders are focussing on. Results and records have been compiled for a number of years; therefore trends can be traced for different elements of activity. The university conducts a formal strategic review, where information about BCE is evaluated and applied as part of the continuous planning cycle.

Other commercial engagement activities such as the hiring of sports facilities and sports related initiatives are subject to detailed records including numbers of users, spectator volumes, income generated, and the resources allocated to different income streams and projects. Similarly, Science Shops Glamorgan, CEREAs and CEPEs, along with other centres maintain financial and activity records.

In terms of community engagement, records and measurements are not consistent and aggregating information is more difficult. The activities of CELL are recorded in detail and summarised for inclusion in Third Mission returns however other individual projects keep the information required by their funding bodies, but this information isn't generally circulated or held in a central repository. The ability to improve and learn is impaired due to a lack of knowledge sharing and information exchange. The perception is that measurement and evaluation can be characterised as an activity undertaken in silos with no platform or process for cross interrogation, comparison and corporate learning. This weakness has been acknowledged and a key objective of the university is to identify a records management system which will facilitate the logging of all engagement activity. This can then be refined to provide measures and reporting arrangements which allow meaningful evaluation and improvement planning.

Having third party accreditation to the ISO 9001:2000 standard for quality management systems require that the GCSO acquires and monitors customer feedback. It undertakes this via the use of customer surveys and evaluation sheets. Commercial training activities are all subject to internal evaluation and the acquisition of customer and learner feedback. Measures for customer retention and loyalty, repeat business and feedback on service levels and quality of provision. GCSO has internal records of customer complaints as well as accolades and other areas of feedback. Evidence shows that the university is high scoring in terms of customer feedback and positive customer perception, with results showing positive trends over a number of years. The results of staff appraisals are also used to better understand issues associated with customer perceptions and feedback.

## Appendices

### Appendix A – Interviewees and participants

Professor Hobbs (Project Director); Alun Cox (Project Manager); Dave Adamson; Clive Thomas; Dimitri Djalli; Danny Saunders; Huw Coombs; Rob Griffiths; Julie Bellamy; David H Jenkins; Paul Carr; David Jackson; Steve Wilcox; Simon Brookes; Tudor Williams; Jeremy Atkinson; Kim Fitzgerald; Beverley Bentley Webb; Mike Cheeseman; Alun Hughes; Gary Packham; Rob Baker; Martin Greenaway.

### Appendix B – Self-Evaluation Workshop Results

#### 1. Policy & Strategy

##### Statement:

*We have a formal documented strategic plan with clear objectives for our BCE activities*

##### Strengths:

- There is an institution-wide Strategic Plan resulting from consultation with a wide stakeholder group.
- There is a top level Third Mission (BCE) strategic document which identifies the priorities and goals of the external engagement plan.
- It is recognised that BCE can be a catalyst for change and development across the traditional areas of the University’s activities (teaching, learning and research).

##### Weaknesses:

- There are significant areas of “unrecorded” activity, particularly in voluntary and wider community engagement. This knowledge and intelligence is not captured and is therefore not integrated within the strategic planning process.
- Community based activities are more often the result of emergent rather than planned strategy. This is a responsive approach but makes it difficult to plan for and manage growth.

##### Ideas for Change:

- Re-focus existing platforms and forums to ensure all activities are captured and recorded to ensure a fully inclusive strategy.

##### Statement:

*We ensure that we put in place the support mechanisms we need to make our plans work*

##### Strengths:

- The CSO pull the strategy together and have direct and formal communication with the Directorate through Prof. Hobbs.



- The CSO provide support and assistance to projects from tender to completion, including financial management, reporting, and evaluation.
- There are many forums for raising the profile of BCE e.g. the Beacon Project.
- The Enterprise Steering Group ensures that BCE remains on the agenda across all faculties.
- There are funding streams available to support community engagement and promote and accelerate the public engagement agenda.

**Weaknesses:**

- Many activities and requests from the community are not funded and are reliant on the motivation and commitment of people who will undertake the work voluntarily. To some extent this is inevitable; however resource issues can be a barrier.
- Most strategic aims are planned on a three year timescale but funding (e.g. Access Funding and Premium Funding) tends to be allocated on an annual cycle.
- Opportunities for academic staff to engage with the public are not promoted widely enough.

**Ideas for Change:**

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**Statement:**

***We have effective platforms and processes to support the dissemination of our strategic and operational plans for BCE***

**Strengths**

- The Third Mission Plan is cross-referenced to the Teaching and Learning Strategy, Research Strategy and Faculty Plans
- A champion of Enterprise has been appointed/nominated in each faculty whose remit is to encourage engagement.
- Every department and faculty has a copy of the Strategic Plan and BCE priorities.

**Weaknesses**

- Whether the wider university population read the strategy for engagement is questionable. Therefore it is not automatic that everyone can identify how they contribute to the Enterprise/BCE agenda.
- Activities are not always fully recognised or appreciated. Anecdotal feedback included statements like ...." I had to inform my superior that I was spending time attending meetings as part of my remit within a particular project". This reinforces the fact that there is no formal method for recording all community and business engagement.

**Ideas for change**

- To ensure total university buy-in and improved awareness, performance objectives with respect to BCE support and development could be established within each faculty and central support departments (incorporating both individual and joint responsibilities).
- BCE could be identified as a standard agenda item for all Faculty and departmental meetings. Any agreed strategies or initiatives could then be cascaded through the institution using existing platforms for communication

**Statement:**

***Our strategic plan for BCE is based on robust, up to date market intelligence and information***

**Strengths**

- There are a number of high profile examples of where vision and strategy are driving the agenda and activities on the ground e.g. University of the Heads of The Valley.
- Market intelligence is gathered and informs the work of the GCSO.
- We have representation on many local, regional and national bodies and committees. This information assists the institution to remain up to date and current.
- We are recognised as a committed community player and receive numerous requests to become involved, including at policy level.

**Weaknesses**

- Market intelligence is not formalised or systemised therefore not collected and utilised in any standardised way.
- Lack of institutional-wide CRM systems.
- You can't strategise on issue and areas for which no information is formally captured. Therefore strategy is only based on that proportion of engagement we are aware of.

**Ideas for change**

- Action could be taken to establish formal systems for sharing market intelligence both internally between faculties and projects, and externally with strategic partners and associates.
- Further development of shared CRM systems.

**Statement:**

***We base our plans for BCE on a clear evaluation of the institution's current position.***

**Strengths**

- The CSO are constantly scanning the market to establish trends and opportunities.
- Current strategy is focussed on delivering holistic solutions and identifying ways to bring different skills and knowledge together to solve problems.

**Weaknesses**

- We have our own vision but need to be realistic about how much we can do.

**Ideas for change**

- To constantly review the strategic planning process to ensure that all stages in the strategy to action loop are integrated and involve input from across the institution with respect to capacity and capability

**Statement:**

*We take steps to improve our strategic and operational plans for BCE.*

**Strengths**

- We have a Strategy Office, and perform an annual formal strategic review to ensure that plans remain current and effective.
- Part of the remit of the Enterprise Steering Group and Enterprise Management Groups is to evaluate activities and plans to identify areas for change and development within the overall plan.
- The institution prepares monitoring statements to HEFCW within an agreed framework. This assists and informs the updating and improvement process.
- We have established, formal risk management processes.

**Weaknesses**

- Although we have a robust process of review and improvement planning, we don't necessarily engage with everyone to check that our strategic plans are understood.

**Ideas for change**

**2. Processes & Business Systems**

**Statement:**

*Our BCE activities are targeted at delivering the products and services that our customers and partners want.*

**Strengths**

- The sales teams within CSO have day to day contact and engagement with existing and potential customers/partners.
- We collect on-going feedback and record issues and contacts throughout the year. This helps to inform the development of products and services we deliver.
- CELL and CSO focus on enterprise and the community environment.
- We look for the best ways to match available expertise and services to the needs of the community

- Each faculty has a marketing officer who will review the needs and demands of our external customers and users. This has led to initiatives such as flexible learning programmes, and other curriculum developments to respond to the needs of different learners.
- The MSR research and analyse league tables to draw comparisons between ourselves and regional competitors. This inputs to decisions regarding the development of curriculum and research.

#### Weaknesses

- Although we do look for commercial opportunities, most engagement is funding driven.
- Although we try, it can be difficult to identify our unique selling points other than location.

#### Ideas for change

- Review and development of a centralised system for gathering, recording and retrieving market intelligence and research information.

#### Statement:

***We build and manage strong relationships with employers, and all our customers. (We are easy to do business with).***

#### Strengths

- We have central points of contact.
- Our brand is recognised within the community and business sectors.
- Front of house knowledge and skills. Receptionists have become adept at understanding the needs of callers, even when information is sketchy and vague.
- We are recognised as “the friendly university”.
- Our quality management system (ISO 9000:2000 registered) ensures that customer feedback is collected and actioned. Current feedback reports that 99% of customers would work with us again.

#### Weaknesses

- There is always room for improvement in proactively seeking new partners and customers.

#### Ideas for change

- We could improve the dissemination of feedback from external partners and customers to provide cross institutional information.
- On going development of account management and customer relationship management processes

#### Statement:

***Our BCE processes are integrated within our normal ways of working***

#### Strengths

- BCE processes are becoming increasingly integrated.
- The CSO provides a coordinating and facilitation function which is closely involved with all faculties.

- Central functions such as HR, Finance, Marketing, and Estates are increasingly involved in external engagement issues and activities.
- Community focus is an over arching strategy which permeates across the institution.

#### **Weaknesses**

- Cross institution systems don't always respond to the needs of practitioners involved in external engagement.
- Some mechanisms and cultures are not aligned with the demands and expectations of external partners and customers.
- In some instances, barriers are encountered where activities are not the norm.
- Engagement isn't always given the recognition it deserves. The traditional focus on teaching and learning, and research inevitably relegates the perception of external engagement to being additional, supplementary and less important work.

#### **Ideas for change**

- Continuous development of the use of ICT to support engagement and delivery (e.g. Moodle, blogs etc).

#### **Statement:**

***Our BCE processes are managed to achieve agreed quality and service delivery standards***

#### **Strengths**

- Quality processes are in place within the CSO which is registered and third party accredited to the ISO 9000:2000 standard.
- We have QA benchmarks for curriculum and academic standards. HEFCW monitors standards of teaching which can be compared with the assessments of other HE institutions. This does have some links to BCE as a vehicle for curriculum development.
- The VPN (Virtual Private Network) allows users to log onto the university network over the internet giving remote access to corporate systems.

#### **Weaknesses**

- Standards are not yet defined for the citizen and sustainability areas.
- Some processes such as vendor/supplier approval are not universally applied.
- Some areas of engagement aren't centrally measured and therefore by definition we can't be sure that they are operating to agreed quality and service delivery standards.
- Currently no formal institutional system for checking that service delivery meets the needs of customers

#### **Ideas for change**

- Consider the establishment of a continuous improvement strategy, including the identification of formal service and delivery standards for all engagement

- Establishing a staff development programme to build effective improvement teams from across the university.

### 3. Partnerships & Resources

#### Statement:

*We manage our partnerships with other institutions/organisations*

#### Strengths

- One of the university's strategic objectives is to develop and build key strategic partnerships. There are agreed measures and targets set against this
- The partnerships with the FE sector, particularly with Merthyr College, will help to deliver a seamless provision for the community.
- The Atrium development facilitates greater collaboration across the arts and music. The Roland Academy is an early example of this.
- We have a number of collaborative activities with other universities both nationally and internationally.
- The ground breaking work we do in the public sector with institutions such as the Police Service and in the Health Service are based upon strong long term relationships and partnerships.
- The CSO is well connected across many sectors which provide both short term commercial opportunities as well as the potential for longer term strategic developments.
- Faculties include the development and growth of strategic partnerships within the formal Faculty Strategic Plans.

#### Weaknesses

- Where we are the lead partner, we tend to take all the major risks.
- Attempts are made to share knowledge with partners but this is not always well structured and tends to be ad hoc.
- We sometimes aren't aware of what other faculties are doing with the same external partners; this can lead to various relationship management problems and can damage our credibility.
- Due to gaps in knowledge sharing across the university, we probably aren't maximising the opportunities available with some of our partnerships.
- It isn't always easy to gain a holistic view of our partnership arrangements.

#### Ideas for change

- We should review our processes for knowledge sharing both internally and with our partners in order to present a professional image and also to protect our IP and be more effective at exploiting the commercial opportunities available.
- CRM systems could be improved to manage key partnerships more effectively.

**Statement:**

*We proactively manage our ideas and knowledge*

**Strengths**

- We do hold broad information in university repositories. This tends to be in support of teaching and learning and research rather than for wider engagement.
- We do support enterprise activity and have had success in commercialisation of ideas and spin out projects and businesses.

**Weaknesses**

- People working within the wider community don't identify strongly with Intellectual property retention or the need to protect it.
- Knowledge sharing across the institution could be improved.

**Ideas for change**

- Sharing best practice internally needs to be addressed

**Statement:**

*We plan our use of partnerships to support our strategic and operational plans*

**Strengths**

- We hold partnership reviews to consider our associations with other universities and colleges.
- We have closed a number of partnerships recently e.g. franchise partners such as distant FE colleges.
- We have partners at both strategic and operational levels. We have lots of partnerships with local authority teaching and learning groups at faculty level.
- We have developed numerous product-based partnerships e.g. Foundation Degrees need to develop effective ways of delivering the learning process which includes significant engagement with employers/work based experience.

**Weaknesses**

- There is a need to liaise and share knowledge of operational partnerships internally.

**Ideas for change**

- More proactive activity to identify who we should be partnering with to support our external activity plans – i.e. a faculty level partnership development plan.

**Statement:**

*We plan our use of resources to support our BCE plans*

**Strengths**

- At university level this is undertaken, it may not be as proactively pursued at faculty level.

- Funding is used to pump prime community engagement activities.
- The strategic priorities are supported including the priority given to strategic partnerships.

#### Weaknesses

- We can sometimes create artificial cost centres which create barriers - e.g. “whose students are these?”
- There can be issues with the internal partnerships we operate.

#### Ideas for change

- Constant review of risks associated with external partners and operational activities such as student placements.

### Statement:

*We regularly review our partnerships and resources to see that they are working effectively*

#### Strengths

- At university level we undertake reviews to assess how well partnerships and collaborations are working
- There is a process for assessing partners, associates and other stakeholders. There are mature systems for risk assessment utilised for major projects.
- We have effective financial controls which are subject to regular review.
- We have formal feedback mechanisms to let our partners know how we feel about performance

#### Weaknesses

- There will always be issues around prioritising resources, particularly with engagement activity.
- The perception is that people don't recognise the university as part of a supply chain, they only see their small part of it.

#### Ideas for change

- X

## 4. Roles & Skills

### Statement:

*We identify the roles and skills we need to develop and implement our BCE plans*

#### Strengths

- We have robust, professional processes for marketing, financial management, and quality control.
- There are clear assigned roles and responsibilities within GCSO and at project/initiative level



**Weaknesses**

- There is a need to improve peoples understanding of business areas.

**Ideas for change**

- Establishing more robust targets and goals for BCE at faculty level
- Including references to engagement and knowledge transfer within academic staff job descriptions

**Statement:**

*We have a structured people plan and staff development policy*

**Strengths**

- The staff appraisal system and the identification of development needs
- Staff development and continuing professional development plans
- Broad skill sets and depth of expertise
- Existing initiatives like the Strategic Insights Programme

**Weaknesses**

- There is much more capacity available than is being utilised

**Ideas for change**

- Define competence requirements for BCE activity.
- Create plans for more comprehensive programmes of skills development including BCE competences

**Statement:**

*We regularly review our management and organisational structure to see that they are working effectively*

**Strengths**

- Recently brought together the External Funding Advisory Group and Consultancy and Enterprise Group to work more closely and effectively.
- A key change to the role of the VC (Research) to now include responsibility for Engagement

**Weaknesses**

- Emphasis on engagement is inconsistent across the faculties

**Ideas for change**

- Using the Inform system to improve Knowledge sharing and communication regarding BCE across the institution.

**Statement:**

*We apply what we learn to perform more effectively*

**Strengths**

- We have gained a lot of experience of working with partners and associates which will assist us when planning for further growth and expansion of engagement activities
- Our development activities with Managers contribute to the broader BCE agenda
- The Inform intranet system is a powerful tool to support information sharing and archiving

**Weaknesses**

- Our mechanisms for communications and improvement planning are not fully effective
- Our evaluation mechanisms could be more robust.

**Ideas for change**

- There is a need for a cross institution continuous improvement programme for BCE knowledge share.

## 5. Customer Perceptions & Key Performance Results

**Statement:**

*We have a range of methods to measure customer perceptions*

**Strengths**

- We have a powerful brand - UGCS is well known and respected
- We measure customer retention and satisfaction levels
- We look for critical feedback in order to learn

**Weaknesses**

- We have a weak formal system for gathering feedback on issues such as public image, presentation and market positioning

**Ideas for change**

- To review our processes for gathering and evaluating customer feedback. This activity must be based on a cost/benefit basis to establish what additional measures and information would add real value to the existing detailed records we maintain.

**Statement:**

*We have a number of internal measures to show what we are achieving for our customers*

**Strengths**

- Complaints and accolades are both logged and stored. The complaints procedure has recently been reviewed and BCE now actively integrated into normal business process.
- We review at all levels and use staff appraisals to gain more detail about our customer contact and perception.
- The GCSO tracks sales growth/contraction every three months

**Weaknesses**

- On the community side the records are not complete for all activities. There are difficulties in measuring satisfaction - we can measure funding coming in and to some extent the number of projects, but measuring impact on the community is difficult. Who and how many do you ask?

**Ideas for change**

- On going continuous improvement of the records management system for community engagement activities.

**Statement:**

*Our results show positive trends over a number of years*

**Strengths**

- We have kept records for a number of years and results are consistently excellent. Our complaints are zero.
- We are supplier of 1<sup>st</sup> choice for many of our clients. Repeat business is commonplace.
- We have grown the business in GCSO consistently over time, both adding new clients as well as retaining the majority.

**Weaknesses**

- On the community engagement side the records are incomplete and therefore improvement planning is impaired.

**Ideas for change**

- Activity capture for all engagement (particularly community work)

**Statement:**

*We can identify and explain areas of good and poor performance*

**Strengths**

- SMT have a standing item of “continuous improvement”.

#### Weaknesses

- We tend to have soft information only on large parts of the community engagement landscape.

#### Ideas for change

- X

## Key Performance Results

### Statement:

*We have a range of performance measures which show how we are performing in relation to BCE activities*

#### Strengths

- On the business side we have detailed measures and records including revenue volumes, costs, new business volume, number of engagements, type of engagement, cash flow history etc.
- We have excellent, well established systems for measuring performance within the GCSO

#### Weaknesses

- Sometimes very difficult to measure on the community side (particularly measuring impact for some projects)
- We have no real ability to measure market share. Would it be worth the effort?

#### Ideas for change

- There is a constant need to remind people across the organisation about the importance of external engagement and commercial activity.

### Statement:

*Our performance in BCE activity over the last three years shows positive trends*

#### Strengths

- Overall trends are significantly positive over many years.
- The Tribal Consultants report which benchmarked the GCSO performance against other universities showed that out of 20 universities Glamorgan is the only one to make a profit from commercial activities

#### Weaknesses

- Due to incomplete records for community side of BCE we can't provide totally robust information to make a claim about improvements or trends.

#### Ideas for change

- There needs to be a joined-up strategy for community engagement which encompasses more activity.

**Comments**

- There is a need to be realistic as to how performance is aggregated from the different elements of community engagement.

**Statement:**

*We check how our performance in BCE activities compares to other institutions*

**Strengths**

- See earlier comment regarding results of Tribal Consultants report.
- The Universities that Count initiative will provide benchmarking information which will be ongoing.

**Weaknesses**

- We don't perform formal benchmarking to assess our performance against competitors/other providers
- We have gaps in our market intelligence

**Ideas for change**

- x

**Comments**

- There is a question regarding the usefulness of national benchmarks.