A Case Study of Business & Community Engagement (BCE)

at Keele University

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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 Keele 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 Keele, this was viewed to be both strategically important, and a key way to achieve corporate growth. The university conference centre hosts a lot of conferences, resulting in income of £4M p.a., but "there is not much cross over… [of] staff attending".

BCE is termed "Enterprise" at Keele, and some teams are almost entirely concerned with BCE activities. The university also supports staff involved in voluntary activities. Academics felt that they do not want to concentrate on the commercial exploitation of ideas and IP. There is an Enterprise strategy, and challenging targets have been set to increase activity; however, in spite of its prioritised status, Enterprise is not widely understood across the institution and there is no employer engagement strategy. In common with other institutions in the study, there is a perception that BCE work has lower prestige than either research or teaching. However, where staff are involved in both CPD work and internal teaching, then no perceived diminishment in their value to their department is observed. In some cases it is felt that Enterprise work can bring greater visibility to research.

Keele's central source of expertise and support is the Research and Enterprise Services (RES) team, who manage contracts, develop business, actively encourage academics to engage and carry out market research. Currently the relationship of this central service to the academic schools and research institutes (RIs) is ad-hoc. The RES staff see part of their role to be concerned with internal knowledge transfer and promoting good practice; but as yet there is a perception that internal communication is a weakness. Currently the RES has a strong relationship with the Science and Health faculties, and intends to build its links to the Humanities faculty.

In contrast with some other institutions, HR did not appear to be embedded in Enterprise activities; however, IT services does not differentiate or identify work carried out or services provided to Enterprise activities or mainstream work, so it is completely embedded. The perception is that some finance procedures are inflexible, and Full Economic Costing is still not widely understood. Keele makes use of the pFACT software system (project, Financial, Accounting and Costing Tool), but comments about this indicated that training in Web2.0 and other technologies could meet the need for something richer to aid planning and internal and external discourse around BCE activities. The current CRM system is limited, but is being replaced within the RES; managers agreed a need to share information on Enterprise activities.

The university's strategic partnerships afford it some involvement in regional and national policy development, particularly in terms of regeneration and improving skills. Post graduate training has led to partnerships with employers. CPD has facilitated engagement with local councils, schools and charitable and other organisations. The increased involvement of communities helps to shape the curriculum.

There is a perceived need for further training in the skills and attitude required for BCE. It was felt that Enterprise work has benefitted cross-institutional collaboration. However, "the consistency of the interface can affect our reputation" so better CRM was needed. Many of the crucial skills for Enterprise – contextual knowledge, sensitivity to partner needs, creativity and problem solving – are not that far removed from existing academic skills, but the need to consider costs and deadlines often put academics out of their comfort zone.

There are no centralised arrangements for formal feedback to monitor staff perceptions or partner satisfaction, although ad-hoc feedback shows that the university is well regarded. Managers acknowledge that performance measurement should lead to improvement.

Overview

Statement of Importance

Evidence from the JISC BCE User Needs, CRM and IPR studies[1] 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[2] have sought to identify top level institutional business processes and functions, and the international e-Framework[3] 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[4] 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'[5] 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.

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[1] http://www.jisc.ac.uk/home/whatwedo/themes/business_community_engagement.aspx
[2] Notably: http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/programme_jos/project_hilda.aspx
[3] http://www.e-framework.org/
[4] http://www.jisc.ac.uk/media/documents/funding/2008/03/circular308appendixg.doc
[5] 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 specifically by JISC infoNet (http://www.jsicinfonet.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 demonstrates the benefits for the institution and promote enhanced internal engagement and better integrated BCE.

The Context

Keele University is a campus-based university situated near the village of Keele in the Potteries region of Staffordshire, between the M6 motorway and Newcastle-Under-Lyme and being 5 miles from Stoke-on-Trent.

The University is structured into three faculties:

- **Faculty of Health**

  Schools:

  - School of Nursing and Midwifery
  - School of Pharmacy

  Research Institutes

  - Institute for Primary Care and Health Services
  - Institute for Science and Technology in Medicine

- **Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences**

  Schools:

  - Keele Management School

  - School of Humanities

  - School of Law

  - School of Politics, International Relations and Philosophy (SPIRE)

  - School of Public Policy and Professional Practice

  - School of Sociology and Criminology

  Research Institutes

  - Institute for Humanities

  - Institute for Law, Politics and Justice

  - Institute for Life Course Studies

  - Institute for Public Policy and Management

- **Faculty of Natural Sciences**

  Schools:

  - School of Computing and Mathematics

  - School of Life Sciences

  - School of Physical and Geographical Sciences

  Research Institutes

  - Institute for The Environment, Physical Sciences and Applied Mathematics

Whilst Keele mostly operates from a single campus university, there are some Schools within the Faculty of Humanities based at University Hospital North Staffs and some other health-related activities off-site (e.g. a research centre at the hospital).

The Enquiry Process

A self-assessment tool was developed using the EQFM Beta model to assist the university in assessing the perceptions of staff of the university's performance under six main headings. This took the form of a workbook (Appendix A) with graded answers to a series of set questions related to the main headings and the workbook was completed by members of senior staff at a facilitated half-day workshop towards the end of the university's involvement with the project.

Prior to this workshop, the review of activity at Keele took the form of a number of interviews with key members of Keele University staff by the JISC infoNet project staff. The responses to these interviews have been anonymised where possible and collated under the main headings of the self-assessment tool to confirm or challenge the perceptions of those who undertook the workshop activity.

The Keele Project Structure

Project Manager
Dr Katherine Birch

Project Consultants
Clive Alderson
John Burke
Janette Hillicks

Project Interviewees
Sue Allingham
Dr Shanta Aphale
Clare Appleby
Dr Andy Brooks
Dr Dave Carson
Jenny Cowpe
Kylie Cross
Graeme Easdown
Ros Gallagher
Adam Goldberg
Dr Peter Hooper
Dr Alan Howells
Prof Peter Jones
Eric Kelsall
Caroline Mairs
Krys Manifold
Kevin Mattinson
Dr Dave Miller
Rosi Monkan
Prof Mike Murray
Prof Chris Phillipson
Dr Mark Smith
Becky Taylor
Rama Thirunamachandran
Dr John White

Findings

In the following sections the major headings from the self-evaluation tool will be used.

Under each heading comment will be informed by the views and information gathered during the interview process undertaken by the JISC infoNet project team. These have been anonymised except where identification of the interviewee is relevant to the weight that can be attributed to the statement and the statement itself is not contentious.

Questions from the self-evaluation exercise, with the university's own grading, strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement, identified by university staff during the workshop are given as appendices to this case study. These present a picture of the perceptions of those involved in the workshop, who were drawn from the above list of interviewees at Keele.

The BCE Landscape within Keele University

BCE is termed 'Enterprise' at Keele and the university has three priority areas that they are addressing:

- Active Aging

- The Environment and Sustainability

- Regeneration – Urban and Societal

The university has seven Research Institutes, headed by Research Institute Managers who report to the Institute Director.

A key issue for the university at a point where they are both national and international facing, is how they address and serve the local area.

Keele has a high level strategy to become the Ultimate Campus University in 2011. The campus is already open to the public who are able to use facilities in the Sports Centre, restaurants and Library and a number of events held by the University, such as public lectures and conferences, are open to members of the public.

There is an incubator unit for companies formed by students within the Science Park.

A number of teams are almost or entirely concerned with Enterprise Activities. Clinical Leadership & Management, for instance, has transferred into a new school within the Faculty of Humanities which is strongly supportive of the Enterprise work which they do.

Work within the Voluntary Sector is also encouraged. The university supports staff to become involved in voluntary activities and can suggest posts that staff may be interested in.

Knowledge Transfer Partnerships

Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTP) are formed between the University and a charity or other organisation. It is a 3-way partnership between an academic, corporate and a KTP Partnership Associate. The Associates are employed by the university, but embedded within a company on strategic projects for a period of 1-3 years, during which time they are supervised by both academic and employer supervisors.

The academic spends one half day per week in with the employer which aside from allowing academic supervision of the Associate also adds to the knowledge of the academic member of staff which is valuable to the university.

Associates can come from anywhere, but work usually at Board level within the company on high profile projects and therefore require a lot of knowledge. The average age of people involved in this activity is 28.

An example of this type of work is an Associate sub-contracted to a sheet metal manufacturer where the main task is to develop a shop floor management system in order to support growing procedures. The main benefit is to the company but the Associate is employed by the University. It is usually expected that in this sort of scenario that the Associate may be offered full time employment within the company. Associates are recruited as a result of a Government drive that has emerged from the Sainsbury Review, since which the funding available for this activity has increased.

Wolverhampton University have put forward a KTP project that would increase by 210 Associates over 2 years. As partners, Keele has agreed to take up 10 of the Associates. '*This is quite an undertaking. Older universities are currently becoming much more engaged in the KT agenda. Keele has a bit of work to do. There's a new business*

link model – the projects are coming through from Wolverhampton co-ordinated via an organisation called Advantage West Midlands (AWM).

'*It is a very administration-heavy process, involving four meetings per year. The contract with the Associate will shadow that of the firm involved – the Associate is Keele's employee but works for company. It's much more than a placement, it involves experienced workers.*

'*The whole situation sits somewhat outside the normal HR procedures to some extent. The KTP contract is different to standard academic/support contracts, it took hours for RES and HR to sit down and work out the contract to include the subtleties required, but it seems to have worked. The colleague from HR has actually left but the procedure and the related information is well-documented*.'

Spin-off Companies and Innovation Centres

'...whilst we do a lot of R&D, there's a lot of R but not much D.' Many interviewees felt that it was difficult to fully exploit knowledge into practical outputs. '*Few academics are blessed with business acumen*,' was one comment.

Another problem that came up repeatedly was that academics do not often want to stop being academics in order to exploit ideas commercially. They would rather continue to research and explore. Whilst IP could be sold it was difficult to put realistic values on knowledge.

There are currently four Innovation Centres on the campus housing companies. The buildings are more than just business incubation units with companies expected to stay and expand. The buildings are equipped with high specification IT networks and two of the four centres are Medical Technology focussed.

Whilst the University IT Department provided initial advice for the Science Park, the Commercial Facilities team has its own IT team and can supply HR and Finance services to companies if needed. Resident companies have to source their own Internet access, though two of the companies housed provide that service commercially. There is a huge amount of effort put in to exploit IP.

'*We need to understand the business and then put them in touch with academics, other companies and grant opportunities. This requires a good knowledge of the university structure and a foundation of trust from both companies and university staff*.'

Conference business at the Conference Centre has built into a £4M business. Whilst hosting '*a lot*' of academic conferences it was reported that there was '*not much cross-over – academic staff attending as delegates*.'

Widening Participation Projects

The *Keele Link* brand is used in association with a number of short-term projects and approx 170 partnerships with schools and universities. The work is aimed at raising aspirations to gain degrees within both potential students and with employers, some of whom undervalue degrees.

Policy & Strategy

Overview

A strategy helps communicate the priorities of an organisation and sets out the strategic direction that the organisation needs to take in order to grow or continue to exist. Whilst a separate strategy for each identifiable area of work is not strictly necessary, an assessment of areas of work in terms of their importance and how they address an organisation's strategic objectives, within the pages of a strategy can give a strong message to all levels of the organisation.

For this to happen, the strategy must be clear, focussed and, above all, communicated. Target setting, aligned to strategic objectives can be used within appraisal procedures, for example, to drive strategic vision and turn it into directed action.

Policy & Strategy at Keele

Terminology differs from institution to institution and at Keele, BCE activity is referred to as Enterprise activity. There is an Enterprise Strategy. A project was started in September 2007 to map out different kinds of activity and investigate how it linked to funding and to the funders' own strategies.

Challenging targets have been set to increase activity. However BCE/Enterprise is not understood by all academics – or even all managers. The questions '*Who has overall responsibility for Enterprise*?' brought forth a variety of answers from people at various levels and from different teams.

'*We are a small university however, and that makes internal communication easier.*' Enterprise activity has moved from just a Research Institute activity to a cross-institutional activity which includes teaching and learning. A focus on staff and student exchange opens it out to the wider university departments.

There is a policy statement covering Conflicts of Interest and a Register of Interests is kept.

There is a clear acknowledgement at senior levels that BCE work is strategically important and a key way of achieving corporate growth.

A Research & Enterprise Services (RES) team have been created as a central resource of expertise in contract negotiation and other services. The role of the RES is further explained in the section on Processes and Business Systems, but their existence gives a clear signal that Enterprise is a prioritised activity.

The RES have a current project to raise awareness of their role and hence increase their own use by the rest of the institution. The focus of this is Employer Engagement and Internal Knowledge Exchange, to which end Keele are using teaching staff to raise awareness of Enterprise activities during formal CPD training. This enables a widening knowledge base and embeds the perception that Enterprise is a core part of the business.

The Research Committee of Deans, Research Institute Managers and representatives and RES set the overall strategy for Research and Enterprise and reports to Senate and annual councils. There is a '*regular cycle of reports on Enterprise. To do this we have had to identify a number of KPIs showing increased income and maximised funding due to Enterprise and increase numbers of PhD students. The HEIF funding is a major driver*.'

One interviewee thought that there 'is a very strong overall framework but still not an embedded idea of what Enterprise means.'

There are mixed attitudes to Enterprise work and differing views of its priority. One interviewee said, '*We can as easily get £0.5M research grant as raise £10k through Enterprise work.*' Another said, '*If they could see it as opening up funding for participants then some colleagues might become more actively involved – (in certain speciality areas) staff are interested in "subjects" that they can do things* to *rather than* with*. There's a different language used.*'

Another interviewee thought '*(The willingness to be involved in Enterprise activity) partly depends on leadership and the expectation of Heads of Department but Heads of Department can only go so far – it's about institutional and professional expectations – the No.1 priority is research, No.2 is teaching and the community work is much lower with respect to having any prestige.*'

One area had undertaken some staff development on '*what we mean by research, breaking down the differences between pure and applied.*'

Despite the existence of a strategy it was more difficult to see how the strategy was utilised in the planning of activities. One RI Manager described the RIs as '*almost virtual*'. Academic freedom, the freedom to seek out areas for further study in a self-directed manner allows individuals to define their own roles to a certain extent and is more in evidence than any top-down allocation or prioritisation, although some staff were able to make links back to the strategy from their chosen area of work.

'*There are different opportunities depending on (our) discipline and the needs of society perhaps – e.g. the agenda for maths in schools. We don't have a policy that stops these things – which may happen in other institutions*.' The concern that prescriptive control of areas of work might have a detrimental and demoralising effect was raised (and has been voiced in other institutional partners also).

'*There has been some change of culture but the culture of self-direction and discipline is very strong.*'

Some work comes from the RES or cross-institutional work can come from other RIs or Schools. Not all suggested work is appropriate to the areas it is directed to and one RI Manager thought there needed to be a greater understanding of the subject areas falling under the responsibility of the RIs.

Processes & Business Systems

Overview

The structures, processes, communications and use of technology to support the delivery of BCE activities. The project was to assess how closely BCE activities were embedded with mainstream processes and the impact of any different ways of working on mainstream activities and vice-versa.

Processes & Business Systems at Keele

A special unit – Research & Enterprise Services – has been created as a central source of expertise and support for Enterprise activities. It manages contracts (as described below) and has close links to Finance and HR.

Research and Enterprise Services			
Enterprise and Innovation (Originally Tech Transfer, IP and Exploitation)	Grants – Advice on Research Funding	Research Policy and Governance	Post Graduate Research

The RES has around 22 staff with a business development role, actively encouraging academics to engage and carrying out market research and other activities. There is an understood need (within the RES) to avoid overselling, which would cause over-stretching of resources and have an impact on customer perceptions; internally of the reputation of the RES itself and externally of the reputation and capacity of the University.

Contract work includes:

- Knowledge Transfer Partnerships
- Consultancy
- Studentships
- Collaborative agreements
- Consortium agreements (EU)
- Technology licences
- Terms and conditions for bespoke short courses
- Secondment agreements
- Supervisory agreements

RES staff work with RI managers and can provide expert advice on contracts and broader support. The RES is also marketed via its web pages and by presentations to research staff and administration units. This work is also increasing within Teaching &Learning as the Skills Agenda and Employer Engagement become more important and prioritised. The RES is also involved in the current restructuring of the School of Management.

Schools and RI engagement with the RES is ad-hoc and discretionary. However several interviewees cited especially the contract negotiation skills of the RES as an asset and all acknowledge the need for a centre of central expertise.

'*Technically everything has to go through RES, there isn't any flexibility as such although there can sometimes be a little latitude shown.*'

There was a desire expressed from one interviewee for more involvement in the RES at the contract negotiation stage as it was felt that the resulting contracts were occasionally disadvantageous or lacked an understanding of the subject area.

Staff within the RES strongly perceive a part of their role to be concerned with internal Knowledge Transfer and promoting good practice across areas. However, as a developing unit there are some risks to sustainability whilst their own processes are embedded. Some staff carry the procedures and IP within their heads, there are no formal written procedures for all posts.

Enterprise/BCE Processes

Each of the three faculties has a senior Enterprise academic to support the development of Enterprise grant bids. They also each have a Business Manager post with a remit to exploit knowledge by increased licensing for use and to encourage CPD activities.

The Student Entrepreneurship Group has 1 to 1.5 people aligning student placements, administering the SPEED initiative (through which Under Graduate students can get a grant to develop a business idea) and assists with the creation of staff spinout companies which have access to accommodation (space permitting) within the Science Park.

Research is being undertaken into the ethics of research and a Policy Group has been established. There is some marketing being undertaken internally to raise awareness in the support functions of the RES.

The Graduate School is an administrative function with priorities to increase income, increase the numbers of Post-Graduate students and a role in identifying future engagement partners within the business community.

Currently the faculties of Science and Health are both very engaged with the RES with Humanities having more of a theoretical bias. However the Faculty of Humanities is due to start some (unspecified) engagement activities from Sept 2009.

One school-based team runs a programme of 2 - 3-day, non-award-based CPD courses in management and leadership skills for the Public Sector, with a mix of some national programmes from the relevant Government Department and some bespoke work for individual clients. The courses are marketed to both organisations and to senior post holders individually, although the lack of a marketing budget is an issue for the team. The activity requires a significant amount of administrative support for booking venues, rooms, catering, accommodation for delegates, speakers and creation and distribution of materials.

The Academic teams running the CPD courses are not resourced to obtain inward marketing intelligence and therefore any need identified by the customer usually requires a time constrained response. There is a strong need for speed in resource development and specialist knowledge is critical. Whilst initial scoping and clarification of need is not charged, development work involved in programmes is chargeable. This type of work has been allowed to develop outside the mainstream curriculum, though the team are also involved in running modules on Masters programmes. This involvement with Masters programmes has meant that there is no issue with managers not valuing the non-award based programmes, though the team is aware that other academic staff within the faculty may under-value it compared to under-graduate and post-graduate work.

Several interviewees mentioned the extreme time constraints on this type of work and the need to operate like a commercial organisation, understanding that their customers need answers *now*.

'*There is a culture clash when dealing with employers. There is the perception that we can do things immediately. Universities and business work on different timetables – often Universities can't do short-term, immediate stuff -*

they're not able to react that quickly. The RES tries to bridge that gap. It's about managing the expectation – using RES as a gateway. RES is the "added value" department.'

There is a huge diversity of Enterprise activity at Keele. CPD and Post Graduate Training, Knowledge Transfer Partnerships and research-oriented work, Capacity creation and the provision of facilities through the Innovation Centres and Science Park are each large enough categories of activity to require a much larger project than this current project to fully map out the detail and scope of Enterprise activity at the university. Thus the project consultants acknowledge that it has been impossible to speak to everyone involved and that therefore there may be some omissions in the viewpoints and evidence that we have gathered.

'*There is lots of interest in Social Enterprise and Employer Engagement – how do you encourage social responsibility in terms of facilitating employers' development of their own thinking and policy. There is a role for universities in encouraging businesses to take up this agenda so that they are allowed to identify their own measures fir corporate social responsibility. We need to find new ways to express it and to identify ways in which companies engage with the public on this subject*.'

The *Ultimate University Campus* initiative is intended to open the campus more fully to the public and wider community. The Library is an open reading library and available for reference by the public and a number of public lectures are staged in the Conference Centre.

Academic Processes

Teaching & Learning and Research are totally separate, so researchers have to be bought in as a separate resource. A significant number are part time as full time qualified/organised researchers are an expensive resource. The accepted and normal process of delivery of Teaching & Learning is that classes are timetabled to provide some regularity and therefore teaching staff have fixed times for classes which can make them inflexible in terms of being free to take up sporadic Enterprise or research activity.

The view of Research Managers can be that the Heads of Schools are not willing to release staff from teaching commitments. Some Research Institutes find it difficult to source researchers from the workplace. One interviewee thought that Clinicians, as an example, find it difficult to get approval to take time off work to undertake research due to a perception that they would lose their clinical edge. However another pointed out that the nature of the research would give clinical experience anyway. The clinicians' vocation, however, means their priority is in healing patients, not in researching and understanding the detail of diseases. The eventual profitability of research is not an issue to them as they earn far more than academics anyway. Enterprise is not a priority to them.

One School was looking for ways to introduce Taster Credits worth 15 points into CPD sessions in order to encourage people to do more, but had not found a mechanism to make it work. Keele works with Wolverhampton and Staffordshire and the School would like to be able to encourage the transferability of modules across the institutions but this is also very challenging.

One interviewee also felt that some academic attitudes have fallen out of synch with modern practice, citing the following example. '*Examples of the intransigency that is apparent in the system include comments by one senior academic that students on PG level Leadership and Management CPD courses need to have first degrees. That it should be a requirement – when accepted practice across the sector is that this sort of professional qualification usually attracts both graduates and those who do not have degrees but nonetheless have appropriate management or professional experience*.'

One RI Manager felt that Enterprise work brought much greater visibility to research. '*Previously there was little academic leadership for research in some parts of the university. We were missing the mentorship of staff and students new to the research arena.*'

Post-award administration was highlighted as a problem area. '*It is something of a mess – it's quite depressing. The bureaucracy can be quite stifling, there have been projects where work's been done before the paperwork has been completed – processes include setting up account codes, budgets, etc, recruitment of staff can't go ahead until the paperwork is signed and this can take a lot of time to get things through the process.*'

There was a need to make more background information available on Full Economic Costing (FEC). '*Some academics think that this makes activity more expensive.*'

Intellectual Property (IP)

'*At Keele the IPR belongs to the university for both T&L and Research. By agreement we may create shared ownership. We are not necessarily geared up for academics who wish to move to another institution. There is a case by case review. Should the IP be sold to the academic or bought from the academic? If we buy and they further develop the work elsewhere that has issues. Patent law exists but re-selling of IP can be an issue. If bespoke work is jointly developed with a company, whether that was CPD or a product, the IP would traditionally belong to the company. However a lot of the experience would have other potential.*'

HR Processes

Staff involved in Enterprise feel that recognition and reward for staff is not catered for within the standard procedure, which is designed to support Teaching & Learning and Research. The case was cited of a staff member who is very enterprising, contributes a great deal to enterprise activity, giving time outside of the standard Monday to Friday timetable, including working on Saturdays, but who is given no reward. It was felt that there is no incentive for staff to get involved in Enterprise activity; it does not help further careers – regardless of whether or not it's a strategic aim of the institution.

'*The incentives for staff to get involved in enterprise activity aren't there. Given the way that the sector operates with regard to research activity, teaching activity and 'ticking boxes' to meet professional milestones, Enterprise activity does not have an appropriate box to tick. It's about annual appraisals and what's in it for me?*'

This lack of recognition leads researchers to more closely embrace the traditional outlet of research – the journal article. This can lead to a more solitary work method being seen as more important and reduce the seeking out of collaborative partnerships. '*Staff don't see the potential or the benefits of community working. We need to make it clear what the benefits are, making it part of academic responsibilities*.'

One interviewee thought there should be an element of '*a carrot and stick approach*'. '*There should be a requirement to undertake some Enterprise activity*.'

'*Getting the incentives scheme right is important – the "Why Should I?" question – why should I engage? It's about getting incentives right.*

'*Buying time out of teaching for those involved in enterprise has been made harder within the institution – all salary costs go to the Schools – the Research Institutes can't influence where it goes and we can't make the Schools spend money on extra capacity. It has seriously weakened incentives. Also, I'm not sure what can be done regarding personal incentives. The "T" account doesn't always cover it, not sure you can do it, it's not written down, it needs clarity.*'

The 'T' account is an informal pot of money that is used for conference attendance, new PCs or other equipment, etc. but it emerged that the procedures controlling its use are either not easily accessible to users or they are not understood well and consequently it is thought of as unstructured and is operated on a custom and practice footing.

It was reported that speculative appointments were difficult to make. '*It's the HR policy re recruitment. There is external money to fund a post, it's available, it's clear and transparent, yet we have to demonstrate course take-up. We cannot advertise until we know it can go ahead – and that means having the staff available to teach it.*'

'*HE can be very risk averse. We want to see funding before appointing – no speculation is allowed. The HR team are very good though. People get a job description but often we change what people do and then we are not good at communicating with HR and Finance about the need to change. There should be more opportunities for us to do this though as we are a smaller university. Short-term contracts are no problem but joint contracts where people spend time both with us and within the private sector are not easy for either party – the university or the employer. The HR policies are not comparative. In the private sector contracts tend to be much tougher and cultures vary.*'

Another interviewee felt that recruitment processes in HR '*seem to change regularly*'.

Other staffing-related issues included the availability of staff time. '*(We get) tenders with short deadlines. We don't know they're going to come in, so it's difficult to schedule staff time to deal with them and sometimes you can't delegate work to others because of the specialised nature of the work. Often the staff involved have to overwork for a few months – i.e. do the Enterprise activity on top of their own job and then carry forward lieu time into the next year. But what usually happens is that they can't always take the time off– the practicalities tend to be that something else turns up in the meantime that they commit their time to.*'

The attitudes of teaching and research staff towards Enterprise activity was reported to be an issue in some areas – this probably mainly related to the incentives issue reported above but it was also reported that some staff saw Enterprise activity as '*dumbing down*'.

The lack of mentoring by senior staff has been identified as an issue with the response that there is not the capacity at senior level to undertake such work. This has led to some frustrations amongst junior and middle level staff. '*There's a serious issue in the work allocation model and guidance for junior staff – although it is recognised that whilst some senior members of staff may be good role models, others may not.*' There was a suggestion that to be successful you may need to have had quite a narrow focus.

The HR Department do not themselves differentiate between Enterprise and other work. They are simply concerned that funding is available if someone is to be recruited. This has led to a perception in other staff that HR can be inflexible and that processes designed for core staff are too slow for the needs of Enterprise work.

The HR Director had been to a presentation about Enterprise activities at an Executive Meeting but was not aware of an Enterprise Strategy and had not been asked to contribute towards it. The HR Department had not identified any patterns emerging from core systems such as complaints or disciplinary/grievance systems that suggested Enterprise work should be identified separately for purposes of review of processes.

Finance Processes

There are some instances of frustration where local arrangements made by Schools with employers regarding payment have fallen outside normal Finance practice and led to embarrassment because the Finance Department have followed standard procedure and chased payment. These flexible arrangements have been made with a

view to employers spreading the payment of high-cost provision or where payment has been via a third party and the business would not have materialised without the arrangement.

Whilst no one would want to suggest that breaking procedures should be allowed, the perception is that the procedures are inflexible and should be reassessed to allow for some flexibility in payment terms to be offered in order to secure high-cost work. However one interviewee asserted that the '*Finance and other bureaucracy can be cut through if needs be, to ensure things happen*' which may suggest lack of consistency, or perhaps the need for a senior manager to make the decision as to where flexibility is needed.

An interviewee with a central role felt as challenged by the thought of flexibility as some practitioners felt frustrated by the lack of it: '*Full Economic Costing (FEC) is the procedure used within Keele but there are occasions when Humanities staff do not use this approach, which is frustrating and is outside of accepted practice. Mixed messages can be an issue – where senior managers may let enterprise activity go ahead that is not strictly "by the book" so FEC isn't used because the particular staff involved don't want to "scare away" customers.*'

The same person did recognise that sometimes resources needed to be put in for little gain in order to '*build up goodwill and potential for involvement as and when future opportunities arise*'. From an external point of view, it sounded as though there was a need to clarify the position regarding strict adherence vs flexibility and to ensure that any instance of flexibility was cleared at senior level. There is a widespread perception amongst academic staff that FEC would cause the university to become uncompetitive in terms of cost to potential Enterprise customers.

One interviewee reported some confusion with procedures: '*Sometimes Finance change their processes and don't communicate the changes.*'

Another reported that in-house information systems had had to be written and that data was being kept in a stand-alone MS Access database because '*We can't expect Finance to keep issuing new codes so that we can track costs at project level.*' It wasn't clear whether that assertion had been tested with the Finance team.

It was also asserted that Full Economic Costing (FEC) was not widely understood, with some academics thinking that FEC makes activity more expensive.

'*Getting all the administrative elements to join up to resource the rigorous monitoring required by European funding is so difficult it puts people off applying for European money. It's hard for Finance as they have to understand how and why funding bids were written. The different levels of required information make that difficult. With private sector partners the information required of them can be challenging. Number of employees is one thing, but growth and bottom line costs are hard to quantify.*'

IT and Computerised Information Systems

The central IT service reports to the Finance Department and has a staffing compliment of 35. It is responsible for data networks, telephone networks and computerised information systems including corporate database systems, email and desk support.

 Of the corporate database systems, the HR system is an in-house development whilst the Finance and Student Record systems were bought in, but have in-house developed web functionality.

The IT Department does not differentiate between, or even identify, work carried out, or service provided, for Enterprise activities or mainstream work. Consequently Enterprise is regarded as fully embedded and not recognised as anything different to normal provision of service.

IT was not directly involved in the formation of the Enterprise Strategy although it is represented on working groups advocating systems and therefore has some input to the strategic process. Where systems are to be procured the budget normally goes to others but the maintenance function and staffing for that function usually comes to IT.

There is no requirement for departments or RIs to work on centrally hosted and controlled server equipment and the IT team report some past issues with units who have gone their own way. '*We have supported them with advice but many have then run into issues and have returned to the central IT unit to host or run their systems.*'

For instance, the IT team made some recommendations for the infrastructure for the Science Park and Innovation Centres without being responsible for installation and maintenance.

From other interviews it appears that one of the problems is that the need for new systems usually starts low key and can be met by use of a spreadsheet or a simple database, created at point of need using MS Access or similar. By the time that the need for a larger system becomes apparent, there can be a large data store needing to be preserved and converted and validated against similar central data which can cause issues for IT. However, there is a perception amongst academic staff that the IT Department would not want to be consulted for every fledgling project that might grow into the need for a larger system, or might prove unsuccessful or unsustainable and which might therefore be seen to have wasted development time.

'*Our systems are not supplying all of the information needed externally, but the scale of activity is still such that it is possible to collect information in other ways. Thus we have not yet had the discussions about necessary infrastructure to support Enterprise. It "toddles on".*'

'*Faculty level administrators control the flow of information from the major systems. It's unclear as to who has access. It's hard to get information aggregated to the level required. Management information is covered by informal processes and protocols.*'

The IT Department '*want to ensure data only needs to be entered once and held in a single place accessible to those who need to use it.*'

More than one interviewee mentioned the pFACT software system (project, Financial, Accounting and Costing Tool) as being the main financial costing tool. It has links directly into HR business system and was perceived as a good system, with a choice of a variety of funding rules, report templates and formats. '*Information from the system can be generated and circulated very quickly. Some other institutions have pFACT too and it's much easier to work with – Keele's Finance and HR systems are not terribly useful.*'

The desire was expressed for '*...a Project Management system with a repository of documentation and blog of notes, comments, etc., so that all of the information can be easily accessed and understood. Something richer than pFACT – where you'd be able to see everything related to a particular project including correspondence, contracts, etc.*' There is perhaps in this, an identifiable need for some training in the use of existing technologies or the use of Web2.0 applications such as wikis that may go some way to meeting this need.

Virtual Private Networks (VPN) and mobile technologies are in use, although VPN access, to allow access to the University's IT network and information management systems externally, is not yet in place for all staff and is causing frustration, as the lack of access to network drives from outside the campus was an issue mentioned by several interviewees, mainly by academic staff.

The IT Department currently have no formal system for gathering feedback from users other than occasional surveys when new systems are installed (such as to students in Halls of Residence) and the logging of Helpdesk calls.

A Customer Relationship Management system (CRM) with limited access and functionality and some other information systems such as the repository and publications database were developed in-house. A Research and Grant Maintenance system is planned.

Both the HR and Finance information systems are in-house ORACLE-based developments. Whilst there is a central repository for teaching materials there is no central research repository.

The RES uses a database linked to the in-house ORACLE-based Finance system. A project exists to make the systems more centralised and user-friendly. There are around four MS Access-based database systems developed outside the central IT function currently in use. A cross-institutional CRM system is being brought in as part of the project. The lack of a CRM is problematic in that a map of all student placements is unavailable. The CRM will either be placed in RES or within Marketing.

There is currently no database of expertise within university staff, although the Marketing Department has a register of expertise to enable handling of media requests for comment. There is a database of publications with a grading system attaching value according to the journal if the publication is in the form of an article rather than a book.

There seems to be little exploitation of Information Technology for the purposes of research. Few if any research staff mentioned it until questioned specifically and one commented, 'Our IP is mostly stored via publication in scientific journals.' If this is in fact true and research data and knowledge is not stored via technology, further development, the contacting of authors from external sources and exploitation of the IP would be that much more difficult. Further, the university's own access to the IP, if only stored in published journals, would be limited to the number of journals held, and would have already cost the university financially to store its own information, through the subscription charges for the journal.

Keele has an institution-wide Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) known as the Keele Learning Environment (KLE). Emphasis is given in the Teaching & Learning Strategy to enhancing the student experience though the use of a range of technologies.

The large majority of Under Graduate and a growing number of Post Graduate courses use the KLE to some extent to support Teaching & Learning at Keele. However, for participants on CPD programmes or other Enterprise activities, access to the KLE is problematic since it is dependant on a login tied to a registered student name.

Some good practice was reported within the teacher training courses including interactive discussion lists. Information for these courses was also distributed on CD and memory stick and where students did not have access to computing facilities hard copy materials were available as was access to PCs and printers within the Library.

Where access to the KLE by students is problematic because of the login difficulties reported above, staff have created stand-alone web sites as a source of material for students. However a senior member of staff thought that '*Post Graduate courses would be difficult to develop without the VLE*'.

In particular there is little evidence of any assessment or take-up of Web2.0 facilities for networking, communication or to encourage discourse either internally or externally. However as an example of the increase

in use of technology bringing benefits to other areas, one interviewee reported that staff had become '*more interested in text book design, through exposure to web page design.*'

One interviewee thought '*Keele has been a bit slower to adopt technology wise. External access to email was awful less than 2 years ago – it was webmail but it's now client-based so users can open folders, etc. VPN access is needed and a CRM system would be useful. People are generally comfortable about sharing information, but (some) are not so. IT systems are only as good as the people using them*.'

From another interviewee: '*The flow of internal information can be frustrating. Systems are only as good as the information they hold and there is a problem with keeping them up to date. CRM is very difficult. The principles are brilliant but the time involved in doing it is horrendous and impractical. It needs something simple that could scan email traffic and automatically pick out updates to the CRM.*

Conversely, several people ringing the same business person makes us look sloppy and unprofessional. We need cross-institutional information.'

Sustainability and Green Issues

This agenda is a strong driver for the Ultimate Campus Initiative, which has incorporated solar energy and use of car parks as energy sources in its plans. This has gained national coverage in construction and sustainability periodicals. The development has also been used as a way of interacting with young professional developers by way of a competition.

Virtual server technology has been implemented more as a business continuity measure than for sustainability reasons. Stored data increases roughly 5x every 3 years.

Marketing

There was a perception that a specific prospectus was needed for the external market and, in particular, the private sector. The current standard brochures tend to have illustrations of science lab pictures, which it was felt might alienate much of the private sector. '*There is much more to research than science-lab based activity (we need a) brochure completely free of subject specific information which gives a broader perspective e.g. this is our approach to contract research, these are the terms, how to get someone else to subsidise. Explanations of ESRC funding - £4000 per year can bring in £20000 ESRC funding; raising the understanding of PhDs from the university – it doesn't have to be theoretical or non-practical stuff – it can be related to the real world.*'

'*We need to exploit the potential for Research and Development tax credits and similar initiatives to help people to work with Keele. (I) would like to see a new Marketing person doing this sort of work – we need to get out there and interact more and we should be keen to work with others, not just public sector activities.*'

One school is marketing CPD courses to both employers and directly to their workforces. The school undertakes most of its own marketing including a significant amount of direct mailing. The use of fairs to which potential clients are invited is another method being used. Staff have also been to the Think Tank in Birmingham for an event to market the school. Some 'mystery shopping' has been carried out to see what others are doing in the same field. Subscriptions to specialised course listings are also used to promote the university's CPD courses.

There is evidence of exploitation of current public interest in the fields of forensic science, criminology and pharmacy.

There was some frustration identified with the slow speed at which online marketing pages are updated on the web site. The example quoted was outstanding after three weeks, though it is not known whether this was an exception.

School Managers have acknowledged the need to share information on activities to reduce the risk of organisations being contacted multiple times by different areas of the university. *'There is internal knowledge exchange, the School Managers are always talking, and informal links are in place. They have weekly lunches where they keep each other informed of activities in their respective areas.'*

Partnerships & Resources

Overview

The way the institution plans and manages external partnerships and internal resources is integral to the success of the BCE strategy.

In this section we have reviewed how the University structures and manages its supply chains and maximises the benefits from its partnership arrangements. This includes looking at how the institution defines, measures and controls the activities of partners and how supplier arrangements are organised. We have also reviewed the way Keele University manages its internal resources such as buildings, equipment, and finances to support the BCE agenda.

Partnerships & Resources at Keele

The University has established a number of strategically important partnerships to support the undertaking of research (a key example would be the NHS) and to facilitate the funding of projects that fall outside the criteria of more traditional funding bodies and grants.

The Regional Development Agency in Birmingham, Business Link and Local Authorities within the region were all mentioned as examples of strategic partners. The university is also a patron of the Chamber of Commerce. These strategic partnerships afford the university some Involvement in policy development regionally and nationally, in terms of how the university helps inform and shape outside and internal policy; economic development and regeneration, skills development etc.

There has been strong collaboration historically on working with the Education Sector. There is a collaborative partnership with other regional universities and Keele are planning to do something locally in Stoke under the *Every Child Matters* initiative.

The university is also setting up collaborative partnerships with local and regional government to address Modern Apprenticeships. '*These partnerships form the interface between the needs of the community and practical-based activity*.'

The Heartshill Medical Institute has a political link with the medical school at the partner hospital. The hospital uses the link with the university to attract medical staff to the region. There is a joint office to facilitate work between the university and hospital with current efforts to recruit a joint director.

A lot of clinicians want to do some research but there is little opportunity within the NHS for this. Keele University provides that opportunity. Under half the staff of the Institute are based at the Research facility at the hospital with the others being housed on the main campus and 6 staff based at other hospitals.

There are some clashes of objective between the NHS and Keele in that Keele are interested in research whilst the objectives of the NHS are to benefit patients within the region.

9% of the institute's work is industry-based research with company partners. Research into medical engineering covers examples like stem cell research, magnetic manipulation of cells, cancer research, imaging and diagnostics. Some of this work is acknowledged as world class. Research is meant to cover "bench to bedside", being long-term research projects from initial idea to clinical trial on patients.

Partners often assume Keele to be working only with local partners but this is not always possible due to the extreme specialist nature of the work. However at least one area has found that even where the nature of the

work permitted, there was a lack of knowledge of local potential partners. The lack of contacts in Stoke had led to work being undertaken in Manchester through the support of Manchester City Council. The lack of contacts with the local community is being addressed with students playing a part in engaging in work within the local communities and inviting contacts into the university to meetings where contact with university staff can be facilitated.

Post Graduate Training work can lead to partnerships with employers, however this is driven by topical need on the employers' side.

With regard to consultancy in the private sector by staff one interviewee perceived some resistance, sometimes related to ethical and ideological reasons. '*Keele doesn't have the flexibility or capacity of commercial research bodies. It's difficult to compete with the private sector (and the question needs to be asked, should we?).*'

'*There is a mechanism for placements – service users are brought in on an interview process, in the classroom too.*'

There is CPD engagement with local councils – Staffordshire and Stoke, also strong CPD activity with schools and charitable and other organisations – e.g. Age Concern, Help the Aged, etc. Some of the CPD activity in schools creates capacity in nationally strategically important subject areas such as mathematics and earth sciences.

Through the Further Mathematics Network, the university increases the capacity of local schools to offer further mathematics to Year 12-13 pupils.

One interviewee reported the '*increasing involvement of communities in shaping the curriculum. It is becoming less the case that our curriculum is driven by the research interests of academic staff*.' This has to be seen against comments made earlier about academic freedom and the risk of resistance to direction towards prioritising areas of work. However, the comment was made against the context of recognising that the modern environment was one of competition with other universities and the need for matching activities to local, regional and national expectations and requirements and acknowledging the need for marketing information and branding of services and activities.

Another interviewee gave an example of this where a Memorandum of Agreement had been entered into with a local general engineering consultant to be involved with course design and research on a long-term basis.

Roles & Skills

Overview

A key enabler for effective engagement with the business and community sectors is the degree to which internal mechanisms and supply chains are structured and aligned with the demands, needs and expectations of the customer base. This can be a challenge to traditional staffing arrangements, the way roles are constructed and organised, and matching skills and expertise to the BCE strategy.

In this section we have reviewed how Keele University has modelled its organisation structure, management team, and HR policies to activate and deliver its BCE strategy. This has included a review of roles, responsibilities, key skills and expertise, and the organisation and structure of the service delivery chain.

Roles & Skills at Keele

A number of interviewees mentioned the need for a team of administrators servicing the teams who were delivering at a distance, particularly those where the university was the host for delivery events.

The ability to understand and use the appropriate business or sector language and terminology was stressed by several interviewees. Use of academic language and jargon can lead to distrust and a feeling of being talked down to.

There is a perceived need for more staff to be trained in skills, attitude and, particularly, costing, although the central office (RES) has skills to deal with contract negotiation. One interviewee thought that many staff were too willing to quote too low a price for costly work. '*Many staff don't understand profit. When they get it right sometimes it's only because they have been driven to it by desperation!*'

However this may be linked to a point made by another interviewee who thought that academic staff are not sufficiently skilled at estimating capacity or the time necessary to design and deliver services when such services may only form a part of the full workload. '*It is important that enterprise work is not carried out at the detriment of teaching. A lot of this is foreign to academics – "can we do what we say we will do" is not always a concept that is recognised.*'

It was also felt that there were issues with the need to engage with international students who are unfamiliar with research funding in the UK. '*We experience culture clashes sometimes because of being unable to grasp how funding can be obtained in other countries – it's a huge issue.*' This issue would be best addressed centrally and may point to a need for a new advisory role for the RES.

It was felt that Enterprise work has benefitted cross-institutional collaboration. '*Keele prides itself on interdisciplinary working. Too often in the past there has not been much communicating across areas. The Research Institutes help the conversations to happen through common RI seminars, interdisciplinary events – grant and schemes that can be passed on; it all helps get people together. An example of areas that can benefit from an interdisciplinary approach: Research into Food policy can be of interest to Science, Marketing, Psychology, Social* Sciences, study into human behaviour and Health.*'

One interviewee spoke of the importance of having a well-trained, knowledgeable and approachable administrative team to front CPD activities. '*They are usually the first port of call when it comes to dealing with issues – on the telephone, at the front desk, etc. There are procedures in place to deal with both criticisms and compliments. The team is strong and people tend to stay in their posts for long periods of time which is indicative*

of their positive feelings about their work. They are all very experienced with a high skill level and are well briefed on data protection and customer relations.'

Another interviewee also mentioned the importance of front line skills: '*The consistency of the interface can affect our reputation – customers get frustrated at multi-team approaches. It calls for an account manager approach that can be foreign to HE.*'

The TDA (Training and Development Agency) employs 'mystery shoppers' to check up on the information that is given out by teacher training providers. It is vital that information being given is correct – otherwise quality and reputation is tarnished – another example of the importance of having appropriately trained and knowledgeable administrative staff.

IP was another area identified as one where some staff development was needed.

'*Intellectual Property (IP) management is an issue, academics in Health, it could be argued, are more used to working in this sort of area and are more clued up about the consequences of getting it wrong, procedures for protecting it whilst making it available to those who need access, etc. whereas those involved in other areas may need more support, a little more "hand holding". There are different IP issues and it's important that there is a clear understanding of implications. Commercially valuable IP also has different issues to what academics are used to, so the whole area can be something of a challenge.*'

One interviewee thought that many of the crucial skills for Enterprise – contextual knowledge, sensitivity to partner needs, diagnostic skills, creativity and problem solving – were not that far removed from existing academic skills, but that the need to consider costs and the bottom line often put academics beyond their comfort zone.

The importance of having knowledge of the customer or target customer base was emphasised by several interviewees. In particular, staff engaged in working within schools, colleges and with employers in trying to raise aspirations mentioned the need for a thorough understanding of environmental and community statistics and circumstances and a consistent approach. '*We need to know the sector, what's going on in schools, what the finance systems are that might provide assistance. We need to be able to empathise with people – a lot of the time we are dealing with parental perceptions that universities are not for the likes of their families.*'

Performance Measurement & Reporting

Overview

Robust performance measures and records are an essential part of the forward planning and improvement process. The results from current and past performance allow us to test whether our current plans are working and provide a clear picture of strengths and weaknesses as well as supplying the necessary information to inform future strategy and tactics.

In this section we have reviewed how the institution sets, measures, records and reports on key performance targets for BCE and how Customer Perception is measured and reviewed.

Key Performance Results at Keele

Targets and measures are set by faculties in conjunction with the RES. However this remains a difficult area:

'*An example is the number of spin-off companies. But it's a value at a date and is unaffected by whether the spin-off is sustainable or profitable. There is an added issue here of whether the academic concerned remains an academic or jumps ship to run the company or do we sell the company?*'

RES income is measured – split into collaborative and contractual work.

Enterprise Income is split to identify Consultancy, equity in spinout companies and licensing income.

There are no centralised or procedural arrangements for formal feedback mechanisms to monitor either perceptions of university staff or customer/partner satisfaction and such monitoring is sparse, with the general feeling that it requires too much in the way of resourcing to justify the value of such feedback.

By far the most widely collected measurements are participatory figures – numbers on courses, attendance at conferences and public lectures etc. There are some instances of repeat business being measured (or at least acknowledged) and it is used as an indicator as to satisfaction levels.

In terms of mathematics work, activity with pupils in schools has had a positive effect on admissions. '*Some students have enrolled on undergraduate studies as a result of being involved in the programme. Experience shows that most of these students are actually people who would not have enrolled otherwise – they did not have university as part of their plans. This fits in well with the widening participation agenda*.'

It is hard to measure or get feedback on impact. People are enthused and inspired on workshops but any evidence of impact following workshops is only anecdotal and limited to conditions at the place of delegates' work. Increasing management or leadership skills in, for example, the Health sector or increasing the skills and knowledge of school science teachers can require a long time before there is impact on the general health of the Community or increased admissions of science students to the university and the causes of such impacts are hard to attribute.

Where many partners are involved and the work is complex there is a difficulty in attribution as well as identifying benefits that may accrue several years hence. '*How can you measure when you're the middle man? It's difficult. However we are moving away from income as the sole measure and identifying value from other things too.*'

'*Keele is much more proactive now and is building up a profile of where students come from in order to target these areas and open up and build new partnerships in those areas. Building relationships with schools in targeted areas helps for future activity and future admissions, etc.*'

However one senior manager thought that performance measurement was '*still in its infancy and ad hoc. We gather enough data to satisfy external demands but not enough hard evidence internally to support decision making.*'

In some areas qualitative measures are agreed with partners and monitored. Lessons learned logs are kept and used to provide a record of continual improvement.

Customer Perceptions at Keele

Sign-off agreements that work is complete, final reports and communication were mentioned as methods for gauging customer satisfaction. Few interviewees felt that there was systematic surveying of customers to gauge satisfaction with the majority of external feedback being counts of participation.

In some areas it was obvious that the area had identified customer perceptions and experience as being important for repeat business but in general the occurrence of repeat business seemed to be the measure of perceptions rather than any formal attempt to gather feedback.

However, ad hoc feedback from employers about contract negotiation and from academics in general shows that the university externally and RES internally are well regarded in that respect.

Where surveys of satisfaction had been carried out, it was felt that results were generally very positive.

Managing expectations was reported to be important to ensure a positive perception. '*Often funders will have unrealistic expectations and don't understand (university ways of working).*' It was felt important therefore to have written agreements and specification, although '...*academics involved are generally not interested in the processes surrounding the activity; their focus is on the Enterprise/research activity itself.*'

One interviewee mentioned the need to shield customers from any internal hiccups or bureaucratic time delays. A potential issue was identified by one interviewee: '*Keele has a reputation locally as being rather aloof. Staffordshire has a reputation of being much more engaged and more local. The activism of the 70s has cast long shadows and some locals still see (Keele) as "the Kremlin on the Hill".*'

Appendix A – Self-Evaluation Workshop Results

The workshop was held on 18 June 2009 with 8 representative staff members of the University, using the Diagnostic and Evaluation Workbook.

The workshop was facilitated by JISC infoNet representatives John Burke and Clive Alderson.

All content under the headings Strengths, Weaknesses, Areas for Improvement and Comments are taken from the discussions that ensued from reading the statements and examples within the workbook and as such are the consensual perceptions of those involved following discussion. Where no content is given against the heading it is because no content was volunteered. In some cases all delegates to the workshop agreed on a grading without identifying content for the headings.

1. Policy & Strategy

Statement:

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

Grade: 2 (Making a Start)

Strengths

• Enterprise Strategy

• Three Activity Streams

• Development work around Post-Graduate Taught Programmes and CPD

Weaknesses

• No strategy for Employer Engagement Strategy

Areas for Improvement

• Need to build Enterprise into the core Strategic Plan (starting now for the next 5 years)

• Need to improve incentives for academic teams

Comments

• Environment is moving ahead with plans

Statement:

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

Grade: 2.75 (2=Making a Start, 3=It's our Normal Practice)

Strengths

• The Enterprise Strategy mentions ways in which we seek to improve

• Number of Fellowships across the University

Weaknesses

• In Learning & Teaching we look at the quality of what we offer – not at what should be on offer

- Internal CPD could be advanced

- Competitors do much more market research, asking what their customers need

- The mindset in traditional areas can be "*how does (Enterprise) fit in?*"

Areas for Improvement

- Currently looking at whether RIs need to be more pro-active

- We need to develop our Widening Participation work and look at where do we want students to come from

- Move from MRes to MA

- We need to be able to recognise and resource flexible timing and the need to work different hours

- We need to offer more on a part time basis to gain students from further away

- We need to maintain links with Alumni and offer discounts for new courses

- Improve marketing to International markets

- Need to spin out information into internal CPD

Comments

Statement:

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

Grade: 2

Strengths

- Research Committee debates the merits of pure and applied research – though it is unclear how this is filtered down

- Sharing of knowledge between RES and RI – though could be improved

Weaknesses

- There's a difference between strategy and activity

Areas for Improvement

- There's a need to understand the culture and work to provide opportunities rather than try to force activity

- Need to identify key answers – *what staff need to know* and *who they need to ask*

- Need to identify ways to support new staff

- Need to provide an overview of who the RIs are and what they do

- Need to address the perception of applied research as something that is watered down or bad

Comments

- Is the RI role to support members with what they want to do or be pro-active in pushing them towards the three priority areas?

Statement:

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

Grade: 2

Strengths

- New Marketing post has been resourced with Enterprise as a (small) part of their remit

Weaknesses

- Has been less formally structured

Areas for Improvement

- Start to identify the information required

Comments

Statement:

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

Grade: 3

Strengths

- This is a constant – we review and it filters down
- A new VC is appointed in September and strategic plans will be reviewed at that point

Weaknesses

- There is no formal strategic review process – though the strategy is new

Areas for Improvement

- RES considering formation of an Enterprise Advisory Group

Comments

2. Process & Business Systems

Statement:

Our BCE activities are targeted at delivering the products and services that the customers want

Grade: 2 (but growing)

Strengths

- Some areas of good practice
- A lot of improvement already taking place

Weaknesses

- This is not consistent across areas

Areas for Improvement

- Build on current work

- Need to disseminate what good practice exists and enable it to spread

Comments

- There is a link to the previous point about the new Marketing post providing this kind of information

Statement:

We build and manage strong relationships with employers, and the community

Grade: Varies 2 – 4 (2=Making a Start, 4=We are Sector Leaders)

Strengths

Weaknesses

Areas for Improvement

- Looking at formal account managers

Comments

Statement:

Our BCE processes are integrated within our normal ways of working

Grade: 2

Strengths

Weaknesses

- Still a lot of misunderstanding about what Enterprise is

Areas for Improvement

- Need for mutual understanding of systems between RES and RIs

- Need to build links between teams

- Need to have published procedures

- Need to identify pros and cons of having no differentiation – if embedded processes cause friction there needs to be alternative processes in place

Comments

- In core teams there is not always differentiation

Statement:

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

Grade: 1.8 (1=Nothing is Happening, 2=Making a Start)

Strengths

- Lots of data collected

Weaknesses

- Not all data recorded

- Lots of data not collected – e.g. who do we send prospectuses to?

- Communications – Strategy is challenged by capacity to use data to inform decisions

- MIS not resourced enough to keep data up-to-date or developed

Areas for Improvement

- SLAs for (inward) consultancy has been mooted but not yet in place

Comments

3. Partnerships & Resources

Statement:

We manage our partnerships with other institutions/organisations

Grade: 3-4

Strengths

- Elements of good practice are excellent

Weaknesses

- In some classically academic areas they have not identified (or may even want) partners

Areas for Improvement

- There is more we can do in terms of ongoing links to funding opportunities – marketing opportunities that lead to longer term and repeat work

- There's an opportunity to partner with other accrediting organisations. Our Marketing and HR degrees are not currently recognised by the standard organisations

Comments

Statement:

We proactively manage our ideas and knowledge

Grade: 2.5-3

Strengths

- Tech Transfer work

- A lot of knowledge from CPD activities could be useful to other courses

Weaknesses

- There's a lot of information but people have to go looking for it as it's not disseminated

- Internally hosted conferences attract mostly external delegates

Areas for Improvement

- Market conferences internally

- We are looking at an institutional repository for research information

- We need to push for dissemination of stored information

Comments

Statement:

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

Grade: 2.8

Strengths

Weaknesses

Areas for Improvement

Comments

Statement:

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

Grade: 2.8

Strengths

Weaknesses

Areas for Improvement

Comments

4. Roles & Skills

Statement:

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

Grade: not scored

Strengths

Weaknesses

Areas for Improvement

Comments

Statement:

We have a structured people plan and staff development policy

Grade: 2-3

Strengths

- The current scale of activity is catered for by those with the necessary skills

Weaknesses

- Academics are challenged in terms of costing and delivering tenders

Areas for Improvement

- There is an opportunity for the RES to provide Enterprise training via the Medici Fellowships

- We need to provide opportunities for new and young staff to get involved

Comments

- CRM contacts are and will be crucial

- How do we gather people together? i.e. inside or outside of teaching hours? how will it be resourced? How will we deliver training? Can we use podcasts?

Statement:

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

Grade: 3 for core teams, but weaker across the institution

Strengths

- SPRE (Staff Performance Review & Evaluation) system

Weaknesses

Areas for Improvement

Comments

Statement:

We apply what we learn to perform more effectively

Grade: 3

Strengths

- RES

- RI Managers' Meetings

Weaknesses

Areas for Improvement

Comments

5. Customer Perceptions & Key Performance Results

The grading system for Sections 5 and 6 relate to how many of the quoted examples in the workbook are presently used in the organisation against each statement:

1 = None, 2 = Some, 3 = Many, 4 = All

Statement:

We have a range of methods to measure customer perceptions

Grade: Bulk of Enterprise work = 1, Some CPD work would score 3-4

Strengths

- This is increasing.

Weaknesses

Areas for Improvement

Comments

- This can be very costly

Statement:

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

Grade: 3

Strengths

Weaknesses

Areas for Improvement

Comments

Statement:

Our results show positive trends over a number of years

Grade: 2-3

Strengths

- Internal customers happy with RES

Weaknesses

- Targets are around income more than customer service

Areas for Improvement

- We are already heading towards putting SLAs into place

Comments

Statement:

We can identify and explain areas of good and poor performance

Grade: 1

Strengths

Weaknesses

- We don't have the quality of data

Areas for Improvement

Comments

6. Key Performance Results

Statement:

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

Grade: 3

Strengths

• HEBCES

Weaknesses

• We don't currently benchmark any other way

Areas for Improvement

Comments

Statement:

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

Grade: 3

Strengths

• Positive trends on most measures

Weaknesses

Areas for Improvement

Comments

Statement:

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

Grade: 3

Strengths

• We significantly outperform on licensing

Weaknesses

• We underperform in terms of PGR students

Areas for Improvement

Comments

Statement:

We can identify and explain areas of good and poor performance

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Grade: 4

Strengths

- We have a broad range of data measures

Weaknesses

Areas for Improvement

Comments