

## Case Study

# Reviewing Student Administration at the University of Hertfordshire

University of Hertfordshire **UH**

SUMS Consulting

### The challenge

Historically, the University of Hertfordshire's nine schools were each running student administration in different ways. This created potential issues for data quality and service consistency. With student administration becoming ever more complex, staff were covering a growing range of services. As a result, staff felt overloaded by the range of services they had to deliver.

### What happened?

The University decided to review its approach to student administration. Gill Sadler, who led the project, used an engagement-led approach that involved stakeholders in every aspect of the review, from diagnosing issues to designing solutions. SUMS helped by assessing the approach used for the review and by running a session on student administration best practice. This research gave details

of how other institutions manage student administration, against which Hertfordshire could compare their emerging findings. SUMS also drew out insights from University staff who had worked in other institutions. Throughout the review, SUMS consultant Claire Taylor acted as a critical friend. She provided an objective view and posed pertinent questions to ensure the team's analysis was robust.

### The outcome

SUMS was critical to ensuring the University completed the review

efficiently and effectively.

The sector benchmarking allowed Hertfordshire to pick different elements of various models to create a bespoke solution that met their needs. This will consolidate student administration into a single service, delivered through three new student-facing hubs situated across the University. The work is helping to ensure the right people are delivering the right activities to best meet student needs. SUMS' work was helpful for the Senior Management Team (SMT),

who accepted the review recommendations in full. The SMT was impressed by the thorough investigation and analysis that SUMS support had enabled.

SUMS has since conducted a post implementation review of the engagement-led approach to design the new structure and proposed a framework for the review of the implementation phase. SUMS continues to support the new service, working with the Service Director and her management team.

**Running a review can be very intense and you are often too close to the subject to see everything clearly. It was invaluable to have someone like Claire, who knows HE inside out, to challenge our thinking. Articulating to her how we reached our conclusions helped us later sell the proposals to senior management. This process and the work involved has been incredibly important as it will ultimately help us make sure our staff are best positioned to provide an optimal service to our students.**



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