

Designing a better future for HE: SUMS Consulting Annual Review

December 2023



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Prepare for an exciting future

The Higher Education sector may feel as if it continues to face a perfect storm of funding uncertainty, inflationary pressures, increased competition and a challenging regulatory environment. But there are significant opportunities for ambitious institutions in an evolving domestic and global context. Technological revolution and societal change are already changing the landscape of university education.

Over the last year we have seen universities committing to explore their challenges and opportunities through a future-focussed lens. Strategic development, process review and streamlining, and student experience have all been high on institutions' priorities.

SUMS consultants bring together consultancy expertise, Higher

Education specialisms and a not-for-profit model that puts universities' needs at the heart of everything we do. We remain the dedicated partner, supporting ambitious institutions to address their current issues and leverage future opportunities. We work with our members at scale, understanding and aligning with their sector values and direction.

Throughout this year's Annual Review, you will see how we have been working in partnership with institutions across the UK – and internationally. Whether it is exploring your target operating model to ensure your university is financially fit for the future, helping you embrace digital transformation, optimising your student journey, or helping you take practical steps to achieve Carbon Net Zero, we are here for you.



SUMS Consulting: your specialist HE partner

SUMS Consulting is the specialist higher education consultancy. We're fuelled by a team of experts, drawn from within and outside the HE sector, passionate about supporting universities to be as efficient and effective as they can be. In addition to HE-specific insight, we bring innovation and world-leading best practice from other sectors to expand your horizons and drive innovation.

As part of the SUMS Group, our collective reach extends beyond 50% of the UK Higher Education sector. We are a membership organisation dedicated to sharing best practice to benefit the sector and our members include a true cross-section of UK HE – research intensive, teaching orientated, small specialists and private institutions – as well as international clients.

We understand universities and work across all areas of professional support, strategy and change. Our in-depth knowledge of universities sets us apart from other consultancies. We know how to engage positively with academic areas and bring together their needs with those of professional services. We understand how all areas of a university must work together and be strategically aligned if the institution is to deliver on its strategic goals and enhance the student experience and research.

A not-for-profit owned by our member institutions, we have been helping universities to solve complex problems for over 60 years.



Strategy, Planning & Performance

- Vision and strategy development
- Governance, risk and compliance
- Strategic planning
- Marketing and student recruitment
- Sustainability services (in partnership with EAUC)
- Procurement and value for money
- Cost optimisation and efficiencies

Change & Transformation

- Target Operating Model design
- Business architecture
- Business process improvement
- Managing change
- Digital transformation and cyber security
- Benchmarking, business intelligence and horizon scanning
- Service maturity assessment

People, Culture & Values

- Leadership, coaching and professional development

- Culture reviews, organisational design and development
- Equality, diversity, inclusion and staff wellbeing

Learning & Teaching

- Space management and timetabling
- Portfolio and curriculum development
- Academic quality, assessment and governance

Research, Innovation & Impact

- Research and innovation strategy
- Research culture and environment
- Research management and process improvement

Student Experience

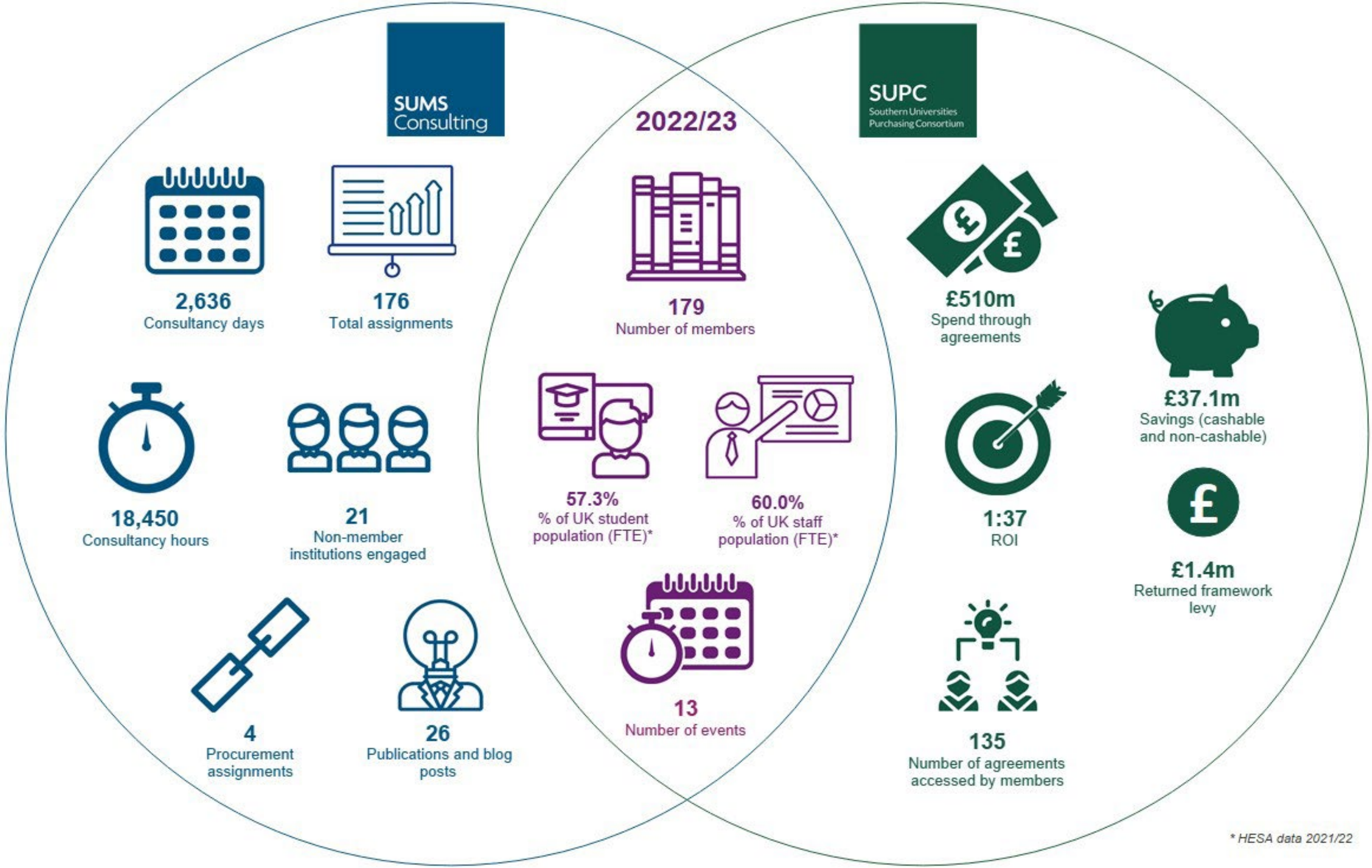
- Student support services improvement
- Student journey mapping and transitions
- Student conduct, community and belonging
- Whole university approach to supporting mental health and wellbeing
- Impact evaluation

Our members



Our clients





* HESA data 2021/22

Why Become a Member?

Our unique membership model offers great value-for-money. SUMS members benefit from:

- > **Member-specific consultancy assignments**, tailored to individual institutions' needs
- > **Participation in collaborative assignments that tackle topical issues** and provide insight for the sector on trends and activities
- > **Support from our expert staff**, who have extensive experience and knowledge of the HE sector
- > **Specialist sector benchmarking and data insights** to help inform your decision making
- > **Access to our accumulated experience and knowledge** of Higher Education institutions and developments
- > **Access to our member base of universities across the UK**, representing the breadth of UK mission groups, for networking and knowledge sharing
- > **Free member events** including an [annual conference](#), seminars and workshops to learn about the latest insights from SUMS' membership and beyond
- > **Community of Practice Groups to discuss discipline-specific issues** in a collaborative and supportive environment with like-minded colleagues.
- > **Professional development support** to help senior leaders operate at peak performance within new or evolving roles
- > **Knowledge exchange through a series of free publications** including briefing papers, best practice guides and case studies
- > **Flexible membership options and preferential consultancy rates** for any work completed once an institution has used its full complement of membership days.

Contact us at sums@reading.ac.uk to find out how your institution can benefit.



Your team

Our core team of expert consultants is supported by a network of more than a hundred carefully selected Associate Consultants, so that we can draw on specialist expertise that is relevant for each specific assignment. You can trust that we choose only to work with associates who understand the HE sector and the challenges and opportunities you face.

Business Insights Team
Business insights, data analysis and data visualisation is a critical part of our service. Over the last few years we have been investing significantly in building our team of experts in the SUMS Group Business Intelligence team, to help ensure our findings and recommendations – and your decisions - are informed by robust data.



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SENIOR INSIGHT SPECIALIST

Turning your ambitious strategy into reality

It has never been more important for universities to have a robust, ambitious strategy which provides clarity for all stakeholders on the direction the institution takes during challenging times. SUMS Consulting works with institutions to apply a holistic and grounded approach to:

- > Develop their strategy
- > Turn it into reality through effective planning and coordination of their ongoing activities and change initiatives
- > Take stock of their strategy's progress and adjust as required.

We recognise that universities are balancing their own strategic

FINANCIAL AWARDS REVIEW – UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM

With the help of SUMS consultants, the University was able to review how best to administer their financial awards scheme to ensure maximum return on spend and impact for students.



ambitions, greater regulation from the Office for Students and the context of a challenging financial climate in order to deliver their promises. This requires robust planning at both a macro and micro level. This year we have worked on cross-institutional, faculty-focused and service specific strategy programmes.

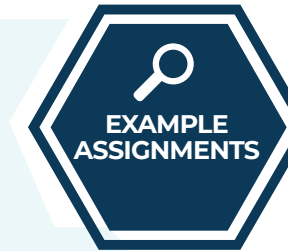
Our flexible approach has enabled us to partner with institutions on an in-depth or lighter-touch basis, depending on their requirements and budget. Some are looking for a specific fix; others have made longer-term commitments to review and transform their whole university. Our strategic and planning support has ranged from developing costing models to building long-term visions.

Financial pressures

SUMS consultants are working with institutions to review their strategic

PERFORMANCE BENCHMARKING – UNIVERSITY OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE

Provision of bespoke insight and analytics to guide the University in understanding its opportunity areas for both cost control and target operating model development.



ambitions in the context of challenging financial circumstances where, thanks to post-pandemic inflationary pressures and the long-term cap on domestic undergraduate fees, income does not keep pace with expenditure.

Many institutions are stretched financially. They are considering areas such as:

- > How to assess value for money and return on investment of their professional services
- > Where to improve and redesign processes so that they deliver cost efficiency without compromising service quality



- > How to manage their investment in their access and participation plan (APP) so that students are supported appropriately

> How their financial award schemes support students in their studies

> Horizon scanning to diversify.
- work to underpin delivery. We are supporting institutions to consider areas such as:

> Integrated working across planning and other parts of the university

> Resource benchmarking to look at getting the best results by comparison with other universities

> The relationship between the institution and the Student Union, looking at the role of the Union and how the relationship can be leveraged to improve both financial return and student experience.

Robust planning and effective delivery

We work with institutions to set up their strategy for success and develop a plan which allows them to clearly define, control and evaluate delivery. Our consultants review planning models, including structures, processes and frameworks, and recommend improvements for optimum performance.

Connections and relationships are central to the way planning models

Our support to individuals involved in strategic planning includes our academic registrars' group and webinars.



COLLABORATIVE WORKING
– GOLDSMITHS, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

SUMS consultants facilitated workshops with the HR and strategic planning teams to identify integrated ways of working, a chance to ensure a more effective approach for strategy delivery.

Strategy development and review

We understand that universities are complex organisations with multiple activities and stakeholders. SUMS consultants partner with members to follow our five-step process for developing and measuring their long-term strategy. We also provide a Rapid Strategy Stocktake, a lighter option to focus on the most important issues and engage the right people.

It is not enough simply to develop a strategy; a vital element of its

success is effective communication and engagement with internal and external stakeholders. SUMS Consultants have supported leaders by:

- > Providing coaching in effective internal engagement and communication
- > Identifying their institution's points of differentiation
- > Developing a marketing approach that makes the strategy meaningful, relevant and accessible.



Case study: financial awards review

The University of Birmingham asked SUMS for support with assessing and comparing their current financial awards scheme. In particular they were keen to understand:

- > The impact and value of a financial award scheme
- > The importance of the name of the scheme in its use and impact
- > Whether students would find a wider support package more beneficial

Our approach

SUMS consultants used publicly available data and a series of interviews to develop a comparison with similar schemes offered by comparator institutions. We carried out internal focus groups involving staff and students to gather insight on:

- > How effectively the current financial award scheme supports strategic delivery for the University

- > The benefit of the current scheme for recipients in supporting completion of their studies.

The impact of the scheme on student progression and outcomes was also evaluated using internal data and analysis.

The difference it made

SUMS consultants put together an action plan to support the University with future activities by:

- > Developing proposals for a new scheme based on student personas, new eligibility criteria, and a balance of financial and wider student support
- > Developing a phased support strategy designed to trigger interventions at different points in the student journey
- > Developing a roadmap for the new scheme with associated evaluation framework
- > Investing in the development of

an additional support offer by creating headroom in existing funding.

We believe that this plan will enable the University to launch a revised scheme which supports student participation and outcomes, with a balance of financial support and a wider offer.



Optimising operations to leverage future opportunities

Most universities are experiencing an array of pressures across the system and cannot continue to operate in the same way. Transformational change is challenging but can also deliver significant competitive advantage when developed through a longer-term lens. Increasingly, universities are coming to SUMS Consulting for support to:

- > Address immediate cost pressures caused by the combination of flat income and rising expenditure
- > Leverage the benefits of operating model redesign with the future in mind, aiming to be flexible and responsive.

Operational efficiency is vital for a seamless, joined up experience that meets current and future student expectations. As academic and research portfolios evolve, the professional services infrastructure needs to evolve to support them.

Co-created transformational change

SUMS consultants are working on large, cross-university assignments to review and co-create Target Operating Models at scale, as well as on reviews of specific functions. Our bespoke methodology draws on a suite of models and tools that allow a university to explore

challenges and opportunities that relate to its current and future performance.

We partner with institutions every step of the way and apply a structured approach to:

- > Carry out diagnostic analysis of their current situation and pain points
- > Draw on insights and analytics, including the independent insight of benchmarking against other institutions of their size and type
- > Analyse gaps and build the case for change
- > Design proposed solutions and principles to aid decision-making
- > Implement effective and long-lasting change.

Solutions are wide-ranging and appropriate to the institutional context. We have seen members address areas including:



PROFESSIONAL SERVICES TARGET OPERATING MODEL – UNIVERSITY OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE

SUMS consultants partnered with internal teams on a large scale programme to scope, develop and implement a new operating model. We supported them to balance cost efficiency and service optimisation through major change.



- > Re-engineered, streamlined processes, particularly in the transitions between services and deployment of capabilities
- > Enhancements to their existing technology and integration of existing systems, improving insight and automation, and reducing manual workarounds
- > More meaningful use of student records and data to support the student journey
- > Diversifying income streams.

Data-led decision-making

At SUMS Consulting we know the importance of ensuring that change



STRATEGIC CHANGE
AND PERFORMANCE
IMPROVEMENT –
UNIVERSITY OF
NOTTINGHAM

SUMS consultants used a tailored methodology to pinpoint areas for improvement across the delivery of strategic ambitions. Data gathering, bespoke data dashboards, listening exercises and application of a change management framework were key components.



is evidence-based. We have significantly expanded the SUMS Group Business Intelligence team to support our members in gathering, analysing and applying meaningful insight from data. We also work with universities to make better use of their internal data, often by supporting them to bring together existing information sources in usable ways.

We have supported institutions with:

- > Bespoke benchmarking activities, looking within the sector and beyond at comparator institutions and organisations
- > Analysing metrics as diverse as spend on service area per student, efficient process markers and student outcomes

- > Gathering qualitative data showing the impact on student and staff experiences of models, processes and systems.

Gathering robust data is enabling institutions to better understand their challenges and opportunities for improvement, testing perceptions and assumptions. In turn this facilitates an informed approach to option assessment and decision-making.

Objective partners

We recognise that it can be difficult to balance the demands of business as usual and transforming the way you operate. That's why SUMS consultants work alongside institutions as partners and critical friends who understand the unique circumstances of the HE environment. We facilitate the work to identify optimum solutions, supporting and not imposing.

Our position enables us to:

- > Carry out listening exercises with the community and hold granular conversations that are not always possible with internal facilitators
 - > Support cross-university conversations to build buy-in and commitment to change, exploring the implications of changing or remaining the same
 - > Use a performance wheel to identify the perspectives of service users and those who deliver the service
 - > Make connections between institutions to facilitate peer learning and support.
- Benefits realised from Target Operating Model and efficiency reviews across a range of institutions include:
- > Following a diagnostic analysis of professional services efficiency: introduction of zero-based budgeting approach to service functions; development of agreed design principles for a new operating model; identification of savings of c£15m
 - > Following business process redesign work: 94% of enquiries resolved at first point of contact (up from 83%), 500+ days staff capacity released through improved processes;
 - > Following redesign of a university's website: Firm acceptances to study up by 6%, with 67% increase in course landing page views, 8% decrease in bounce rates, 15% increase in live chats, 27% increase in enquiries.



The power of a well-designed operating model

Written by Joel Arber, SUMS Group Managing Director, and David Becker, Managing Consultant

It feels as if – once again – the Higher Education sector is facing something of a perfect storm.

The cost of running our institutions is growing rapidly, thanks to sector pay increases of between 5 and 8 per cent alongside inflationary pressures and supply chain issues driving up non-pay spend.

On the income side, there's ongoing uncertainty around research funding, plus the freeze of domestic undergraduate fees – with £9,250 worth little more in real terms than half the value of a decade ago – causing many universities to run that activity at a loss and rely increasingly on international student fee income.

We're seeing the impact of this at SUMS where we're doing more work in the areas of efficiencies, transformation and change than ever before. The challenges do vary by institution, but nearly

always cross over into culture, leadership, systems, structure, processes, data quality, and staff and student experience.

If you have the collective will and appetite, then a well-designed, evidence-based and fully executed Target Operating Model (TOM) could improve your delivery to a greater level than you ever thought possible. But genuine TOM design and implementation is not a quick fix, nor is it a journey for the faint-hearted.

A TOM is a description of an organisation's ideal state. It's how you want to do business. You can visualise it as the destination at the end of the bridge your university needs to cross to get from its current location (its 'as is') to its desired new one (its 'to be'). A physical bridge is supported by engineering infrastructure that makes it safe and roadworthy. In the same way, the stability of an organisational

'bridge' is dependent on your people, their capabilities, the business processes and IT systems, and structures that hold everything together.

Whilst the TOM design and implementation process will certainly lead to leaner business processes and increased satisfaction metrics, it will also accelerate delivery of your strategy. Every aspect of your infrastructure will have been specifically designed to support it, rather than simply being a by-product of decades of individual preference, constant structural changes and ad-hoc sticking plasters.

A good TOM will transform your operations. IF you can win the long-term battle against preference for the status quo. IF you ensure you partner the design with meaningful implementation. And IF you acknowledge that a sound approach to TOM design means the journey never really ends.



Joel Arber



David Becker

Transformational change through co-creation of a Target Operating Model

Cardiff University commissioned SUMS to partner with its internal teams in scoping, developing and implementing a new operating model for professional services. The challenges the University was facing included:

- > Financial and regulatory pressures on operations.
- > Balancing cost efficiency with service optimisation.
- > Effective implementation of major change.

Our approach

Our team began by conducting bespoke benchmarking, analysing metrics as diverse as spend on service areas per student through to comparative income derived. We combined this with a listening exercise across all academic schools and professional services to better understand the challenges and opportunities.

We have delivered workshops and events with stakeholders from the Executive Team through to front-line

staff. Through these, we have defined and agreed a new set of design principles and held target state development events. The outputs have already informed refocusing of professional services to enhance effectiveness and efficiency at a critical time for the University.

In parallel, our consultants are supporting the HR Leadership Team and the Strategic Planning Leadership Team in components such as organisation design and data-driven strategic planning.

The difference it made

This collaborative approach with SUMS has led to:

- > A deeper understanding of the University, its sector position, challenges and opportunities
- > Engaged staff, aware of the issues and actively involved in generating solutions
- > Bespoke benchmarking and insight into comparator institutions across the globe

- > Shaping and delivery of a fully comprehensive target operating model programme, including design principles and comprehensive stakeholder engagement
- > Facilitation of a TOM blueprinting exercise engaging functional leaders and the wider University community.



"I regard SUMS as a trusted and responsive partner that consistently and reliably delivers value to the institution.

We first engaged with them during 2020/21. The team ran sessions for our professional services leaders on approaches to organisation design in a federated environment, with particular emphasis on the development of target operating models and the benefits and risks attached. We then formally commissioned their support in developing such an operating model. The engagement to date has been wholly positive. The team is professional and responsive and has proved skilled in navigating a highly complex stakeholder environment."

CLAIRE SANDERS

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER, CARDIFF UNIVERSITY



© Cardiff University

Designing and implementing effective people change

For change programmes to prepare and truly transform institutions for future success, people must adapt their behaviours, practices and choices. And these new ways of operating must become embedded and permanent. People change is therefore at the core of the bigger picture for universities.

At SUMS Consulting our flexible approach to supporting transformational change is tailored to the needs of each university, in particular the culture and readiness for change:

- > For some institutions, our consultants act as critical friends, reviewing and advising on the plans they are developing themselves
- > For others our support is more hands-on, working closely with PMOs, supporting governance structures, driving discussions, coaching leaders, and developing models, tools and frameworks.

This recognition of cultural values means people feel empowered to drive change that recognises what is important to them and is not simply imposed on them.

Engaging with stakeholders

Communications and engagement with stakeholders are important elements of successful change. SUMS consultants build and support strong relationships with stakeholders, in specific programme areas and across the university community. We are working with institutions across a wide range of communication and engagement activities, including:

- > Support to assess business readiness for change
- > Identifying root causes of problems and what is needed to drive long lasting, truly embedded transformation
- > Engaging with different communities across the institution, allowing for the different ways they think, behave and accept change
- > Building morale and the motivation of teams to do what is required.

Activities that enable change

A strong case for change and stakeholder engagement are just the start of successful transformation. A well-designed programme of

SUPPORT FOR AN INTEGRATED STAFF STRATEGY – UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD – DEPARTMENT FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION

SUMS provided support with strategy initiation and implementation, setting up project and change management governance, as well as assessing change impact and business readiness, to inform stakeholder engagement activities.



initiatives should enable and facilitate the required behaviour change. Whether your institution already has an articulated change case or not, SUMS consultants can help.

Our work includes working with institutions to:

- > Establish and support programme governance
- > Design and implement engagement initiatives
- > Facilitate the design and rollout of organisational culture
- > Build a compelling narrative and stories, based on a clear, collectively developed vision.

In addition, SUMS also supports universities with capacity and/or capability gaps in all aspects of managing and implementing change.

INTERNAL ENGAGEMENT WITH ENHANCED WORKFLOWS – UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE – INSTITUTE FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION

SUMS supported with extensive internal engagement activity to enhance process workflows from post-student admissions through to course completion. The aim was to provide clarity around interdependencies, ownership and accountability.



Measuring impact

The path to long-term change is not linear. You need to review, reflect and test as you go. At SUMS we understand the importance of demonstrating the value delivered to the university and its stakeholders. It is essential to measure efficacy and impact against defined change objectives, to build momentum, show progress and monitor alignment with operational delivery.

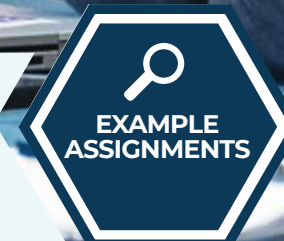
Our expertise in this area sees us:

- > Provide guidance on potential quantitative and qualitative key performance indicators
- > Analyse change impact
- > Carry out competitor positioning and benchmarking analysis
- > Build portfolios of evidence to predict and prove impact.

In addition, SUMS ensures that good practice is disseminated across the HE sector through our Change Community of Practice. The group brings together diverse change specialists to share challenges and learning, and to devise solutions.

BUSINESS CHANGE MATURITY ASSESSMENT – UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND BRISTOL(UWE)

Consultants are supporting the University to define the components of business change capability across the institution. They want to assess levels of maturity and develop options to ensure an effective and efficient business change function that is fit for the future.



Making change stick

Written by Dr Fola Ikpehai, Principal Consultant

A working group of the SUMS Change Community of Practice came together to reflect on the enablers that make change stick in the sector. Facilitating sessions with the network, they posed questions about how to demonstrate positive measures taken, using the appropriate tools to make change stick, and the metrics that could be used to show the journey travelled.

One of the biggest challenges that project/programme delivery teams face working in Higher Education is that the clients and key stakeholders often view change as burdensome – another task on an already heavy workload. Many institutions also suffer from change fatigue – jaded by the experience of ‘transformation’ and fearful that it will lead to job losses. Others are marred by change blight, where a proliferation of change programmes running in parallel makes it hard for colleagues to see the wood for the trees: what is the top priority because we can’t do it all?

The working group from Goldsmiths University, University of the West of England, Bristol and University of Cambridge, worked with SUMS Associate Consultant, Gretel Stonebridge to facilitate a series of sessions with the network to consider longevity of change, impact, and proving impact – pulling together a useful resource for the community to reflect on.

Sessions considered ‘making change stick’ across stakeholder groups – Operations, Professional Services and the Academic Community; and types of change – compliance, learning and teaching outcomes, and process improvement.

An overview of key learnings show:

1. The need to build relationships by engaging in a spirit of open enquiry with as many stakeholders as possible; collecting intelligence and offering bespoke support relevant to different stakeholders needs. Visibility of engagement is critical - with examples of “walking the campus to proactively seek intelligence where stakeholders are - as opposed to just waiting for feedback”.
2. The importance of using iterative, and regular feedback loops to gather, validate and distribute information – including establishing check-in routines between managers and their teams, and managers and their change teams. There is a fundamental requirement to define readiness measures early on in the process with continual monitoring and reporting on these. Routines for reflection and learning are critical to success.
3. Maintaining continuity is key – including building on benefits realised. There is a requirement to maintain

connections with those involved and impacted by the change - establishing an overarching narrative that extends well beyond the close of the project/programme. Universities are complex organisations and there is often a need to vary approaches and language to suit local cultures at College, Faculty, School, and Department levels. The benefits of customisation of the narrative cannot be over emphasised.

4. Baselining relevant business readiness criteria is key to success – providing a record of progress pre-, during, and post-change initiatives. A change thermometer built from insights from forums, surveys, observations can demonstrate the journey travelled and as evidence of benefits realised.

Ultimately, ‘making change stick’ is about engagement, clarity – and consistency – of message, and clear measures of success. The path to long-term change is not linear - it often requires the need to reflect on and embrace setbacks as learning opportunities while making time and effort to recognise incremental progress.

Members of the SUMS Change Community of Practice provide each other with a support framework and learning environment where both the challenges and successes of change can be discussed and celebrated.



Dr Fola
Ikpehai

Change management support during a Business School merger

The University of St Andrews took the decision to merge the existing School of Management and School of Economics and Finance to create the University of St Andrews Business School. The University commissioned SUMS consultants to support the interim Dean of the Business School and the Heads of the two Schools during the transition period to ensure business readiness for change.

Our approach

The SUMS consultants focused on building strong relationships with stakeholders within the Schools to be merged and across the University. The ultimate aim of this support was to bring to life the positive messages in the business case developed by the University.

SUMS support was wide-ranging and covered areas such as:

- > Establishing and supporting programme governance
- > Supporting visioning, strategy

development and engagement initiatives for a Business School that is uniquely St Andrews

- > Acting as a critical friend and providing an external perspective
- > Facilitating discussions to ensure both business continuity and business readiness for change
- > Organisational structure options
- > Undertaking a competitor positioning analysis exercise, inclusive of engagement with other Schools at St. Andrews.

The difference it made

SUMS' support was critical in setting up programme governance, establishing workstreams, facilitating engagement, and enabling business readiness for launch. By recognising and working with the expertise in the Schools being merged, SUMS was able to ensure that academic and professional services stakeholders were empowered and supported throughout.



© University of St Andrews



“The leadership and support provided by SUMS have been invaluable. We could not have reached this critical milestone without their insights, expert challenge, and commitment to driving change. We look forward to their continued input as we move through our transition year to full launch in August 2024.”

BRAD MACKAY

INTERIM DEAN, UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS BUSINESS SCHOOL

Delivering long-term value through your people strategy

Spend on their people is a significant investment for HE institutions, typically making up 55% of their total costs. The skillsets and roles needed to operate successfully continue to evolve at pace, so it has perhaps never been more important to deploy that spend strategically and effectively.

In recognition of the growing importance of this area to our members, SUMS Consulting partners with institutions on a broad range of people-related assignments, from strategic planning and review to tactical delivery. Our consultants have significant

experience influencing and driving transformational change.

In addition to our sector understanding, we bring experience and insight of best practice outside of HE and the UK to support our members to become competitively advantageous. We have strong strategic relationships with other HR membership organisations, think tanks and international institutions to ensure alignment.

HR operating models

We help our members to realign their functions to meet future institutional goals. Many HR leaders are

reconsidering their internal operations. SUMS consultants are supporting them to redefine their operating model and focus on providing a true strategic and value-adding service for their institution. They are prioritising:


- > Enabling people strategies
- > Resource-related efficiencies, focussing expensive resource on strategic rather than transactional activity
- > Underpinning enablers such as data and system architecture.

New models often require cross-institutional capabilities, led by HR specialists, from operational activities to strategic workforce planning. SUMS are supporting with skills development, toolkits and knowledge transfer for HR and business leaders.

In addition to improved skills development, HR leaders are seeking more input around data and institutional

STRATEGIC WORKFORCE PLANNING – UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

SUMS consultants worked with the institution to develop a standardised approach and processes for strategic workforce planning, supporting them with an initial pilot and longer-term move to cross-institutional roll-out



EXAMPLE ASSIGNMENTS

WORKFORCE PLANNING SUPPORT – GOLDSMITHS, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

SUMS consultants supported the institution to move forward with a more robust approach to workforce planning. This included end-to-end recruitment process reviews, implementation skills transfer and review of future planning processes



EXAMPLE ASSIGNMENTS





LONDON CAMPUS PEOPLE PLANNING – SHEFFIELD HALLAM UNIVERSITY

SUMS, in collaboration with its strategic partner Gatenby Sanderson, is supporting the University to assess its staffing model, skills needs and recruit talent to its new London campus.

metrics for people-related decision making. We advise on optimised HR systems, data-led teams and manager capabilities.

We provide a maturity matrix for HR Directors to assess where they are at in terms of strategic HR at their institution and identify how to get where they want to be.

Optimising the value of true organisation design

Good, strategic Organisation Design (OD) has huge financial and operational opportunities, driving efficiencies and enabling future-focus. Many institutions have begun to build some sort of OD function but the sector lacks expertise and dedicated resources. Universities now need to develop a more strategic OD skillset in order to truly deliver cross-institutional transformation.

SUMS consultants provide bespoke support, tailoring to the individual institution and its future ambitions. We have also set up a Community of Practice group which brings together a community of non-experts to enhance skills, share best practice and engage in masterclasses.

Staff recruitment, engagement and retention

Talent acquisition, retention and the meaningful engagement of staff is particularly critical in the current economic and social climate. We are working with members to understand how they can:

- > Better reward and recognise high performers
- > Develop great leaders
- > Differentiate from competitors in a sector where reward generally is similar.



NEWCASTLE CAREER FRAMEWORK – NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY

SUMS consultants carried out a review of the University’s career frameworks, pathways and development initiatives, supported by external benchmarking, to inform a programme plan to drive performance and retention.

The launch of our senior salary survey this year has provided specific, relevant and meaningful insight on pay.

Institutions are also looking at how they can better use the skill sets they already have. This is beneficial for cost efficiency and for career development. We support them to identify ways to work collaboratively and bring skills together flexibly. Our SUMS Group Business Intelligence team can support them to use data and insight for decision-making, including for automation and value-adding areas.

TALENT MANAGEMENT BENCHMARKING – UCL

UCL sought to redevelop their talent management framework and asked SUMS to provide UK and international benchmarks of best practice. This work enabled the institution to focus and prioritise their own efforts.

HR SYSTEMS REVIEW – UNIVERSITY OF PORTSMOUTH

The university enlisted SUMS consultants to review critical HR processes and the use of their system. SUMS identified areas for improvement and made recommendations to realise efficiency and financial benefits through system optimisation.



EXAMPLE
ASSIGNMENTS



Intentional organisation design to support high performance

Written by David Becker, Managing Consultant, and Emma Ogden, Consultant

Good organisation design should be put front and centre of the pursuit to become a high performing, happy and healthy institution. But the reality for most universities currently is that the impact they achieve is often in spite of, rather than because of, the quality of their internal design.

But imagine what might be possible if universities were able to take all the passion, commitment and skill of their staff and ally it to an organisation where all the component parts worked in harmony, rather than as disconnected or competing units.

This is a world where business processes run smoothly across functional lines, where accountabilities and responsibilities are clear, and where all aspects of the operation are set up in a way which helps accelerate strategy. Where staff, students and stakeholders are happy and where nothing feels like harder work than it should be.

For a university looking to improve its design

and achieve this nirvana, there are a few key points to bear in mind.

The sector abounds with time-limited programmes and projects which have specific end goals and outputs. But the best design is not and cannot be static. An optimal design in 2033 is clearly going to be different to what optimal design is in 2023. A designer should be linked in sufficiently with strategy and planning to ensure that good design takes place continuously and is not regarded as something with a beginning and a definitive end.

A fairly intractable issue with organisation design in HE is that a great many people have had little previous exposure to what good design is, how it manifests itself and, most crucially of all, what their role is in extracting its benefits. A large part of being a successful designer in this sector is your level of skill in understanding the personalities, drivers, levels of influence and levels of interest of each member of your senior team. If part of your role is to maximise their chances of success,

then a priority must be to find a seat at the table and influence from there.

The responsibility for making change happen should not sit solely within the organisation design unit. One of the most common things staff ask for in surveys and listening exercises is greater autonomy to do their job. Therefore, functional leaders should be able to commission change capabilities to help them deliver, but they themselves need to be responsible for bringing positive change to life. The often-seen risk of managers simply checking themselves out from the role of change delivery has to be mitigated more proactively.

Finally, organisation design in its truest sense is still disproportionately targeted at professional services and administration at universities. Societal and demographic changes in particular mean that is not sustainable. Universities need their academic model to evolve to meet the needs of a brave new world of education, employment and knowledge economy. Organisation design has to get into the academic space in a way that goes beyond structural considerations.



David Becker



Emma Ogden

Creating an Academic Development Framework

As part of their new Organisational Development strategy and roadmap, the University of Derby wanted to develop an Employee Value Proposition, to be publicised and recognised across the entire community. To achieve this, they enlisted SUMS' support to develop a Professional Development Framework. This would be a dynamic, principle-led and outcome-focused approach to achieving more self-reflection, identification of learning needs and positive impact within a constantly changing internal and external context.

Our approach

The initial brief set out an ambition for the framework to be primarily aimed at the academic community, with scope for it to be rolled out to professional services colleagues at a later stage. Following an initial review and comparative benchmarking process, SUMS worked with the University to

develop a framework, with a clear vision, aims and roadmap for implementation.

One of the priorities in developing the framework was to ensure that it was appropriately embedded. SUMS worked on agreement for the vision of the framework and then outlined a programme of activities needed to ensure successful implementation.

The difference it made

The support of SUMS consultants helped to build a focus on employee experience and organisational culture. Following the review, we engaged with staff to ensure the framework was appropriately socialised, aligned to the current cultural blueprint and sought to achieve realistic ambitions for staff. Derby is now moving forward with implementing this framework across the University community.



"I am delighted with the draft framework; it answers the brief perfectly and I have no doubt that the final product will be ground-breaking. Perhaps more importantly, SUMS' stakeholder engagement and approach to the build has been consultative and one of co-creation, completely in line with the ethos of building a better, more engaging employee experience for our people. SUMS has spent time and care ensuring that the delivery is culture-fit as well as future-fit – not an easy thing to do."

MARK HAMILTON

DIRECTOR OF TALENT, CULTURE AND INCLUSION, UNIVERSITY OF DERBY.

Designing and delivering the optimal student experience

In a competitive and challenging market, it is important for universities to optimise their student experience from the moment they show an initial interest through to their participation in the alumni community. Students should feel part of your university community every step of the way.

At SUMS Consulting we are supporting universities to review and improve their models for managing the student experience. Identifying what matters most to students and putting that at the heart of decision-making is a critical element of successful engagement with them. Together we are identifying bespoke solutions that meet the requirements of institutions and their student cohorts.

Joined-up experience

There are many touchpoints for the student experience and therefore many services involved in creating

it, including marketing, student services and employability teams. A good starting point for improvement is to map the 'as is' student journey at your institution in order to identify:

- > Current pain points, where the student experience is not as positive as it should be
- > How the transitions between different services and at different stages are impacting on the student experience – and often creating unnecessary administrative burdens at the same time
- > Student expectations at every stage
- > The ways in which your staff experience your current model and processes, and how this in turn impacts students.

SUMS consultants are working with institutions to review all or part of their student journey. Once there is



STUDENT JOURNEY MAPPING – UNIVERSITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON

The University worked with SUMS consultants to undertake a student journey mapping exercise from prospect to graduation, and to create the foundations for documented processes. Our support included skills transfer to in-house teams and additional hands-on capacity.





a clear picture of what is happening, we work with a range of teams to identify, design and implement improvements.

By rethinking how this journey works, institutions are starting to streamline how they operate for a more positive experience for everyone. Increasingly we are seeing universities understand that the challenges and opportunities lie within their operating model and not just within specific processes.

Applying digital solutions

Institutions need to get better at using technology to facilitate a seamless, positive experience for them. Effective application of digital solutions is an expected aspect of life for current and future students.

SUMS consultants have supported universities to look at how they bring together their existing systems and data in a meaningful way to follow the student throughout their journey. This is helping them to better understand the support a student might need at any point during their studies and to improve administrative processes.

**DIGITAL STRATEGY
RESEARCH – UNIVERSITY
OF GREENWICH**



SUMS consultants carried out research with current and potential students about their expectations for future technology development and its impact on the student experience. This fed into the development of the institution’s digital strategy.

Digital solutions are also important for effective communication, with the students themselves and across the institution.

At SUMS we have been working with institutions to review requirements such as:

- > Clearer messages that are communicated at the appropriate time to inspire optimal actions
- > Consistent tone of voice that is welcoming, inclusive and engaging at all stages of the journey, not just at the attraction stage
- > Communication methods and formats that work for students, using the technology that they expect and use in all areas of their lives.



**STUDENT SERVICES TARGET OPERATING MODEL
REVIEW – ST MARY’S UNIVERSITY, TWICKENHAM**



SUMS consultants worked with the University to review the organisational design of its Student Services functions with futureproofing in mind. The consultants looked at workforce planning and analysis, reviewed the service catalogue, and made structural recommendations based on sector best practice.

Redefining curriculum delivery for the long-term

For Universities to continue to flourish as dynamic centres of knowledge, academic portfolios, teaching and learning methods and curriculum delivery must evolve. Preparing students and staff for the ever-evolving demands of future societies needs to inform transformative thinking and decision-making now.

SUMS Consulting is working with universities who want to build more flexible curriculum structures. They understand the need to serve student expectations of a



NEW PRODUCT MARKET RESEARCH – **UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH**

SUMS consultants carried out market research so the university could make decisions about new products they can offer to meet demand in their place-based knowledge-economy.

university experience which looks very different to current delivery. We support them to consider complex questions such as:

- > How to deliver a more diverse portfolio that could offer very different products, including micro-credentials, multiple start dates in a carousel format or different types of learners side by side
- > What systems are needed to deliver lifelong learning that empowers students to build their own programmes through credit accumulation models rather than programme-focussed architectures
- > How to deliver quality assurance, student records and student support in a more student mobile environment
- > What are the cutting-edge technologies, innovative teaching and learning methods and sustainable estate management that will support changing expectations.





Planning an evidence-based approach

With a complex mix of financial, political and operational drivers for change, each institution must understand their own specific context and purpose. We work with universities to carry out a needs analysis for the curriculum delivery that will keep them relevant in a changing world.

Once the drivers for change are clear, we support institutions with the evidence to make decisions about how to deliver a relevant and high performing curriculum which prepares students to

TIMETABLING APPROACH AND CURRICULUM COMPLEXITY – UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

This work included an analysis of complexity. Data and visualisations have been provided to academic colleagues across the university to support academic planning related to curriculum structures and delivering the curriculum through scheduling. Our consultants worked with the university to review their approach to timetabling.



thrive in complex environments. Understanding their current position and options for reaching their desired future state is vital. Our work includes offers such as market research, data analysis and quantifying curriculum complexity.

Delivery models and review

SUMS consultants work with institutions to set up and review delivery models, supporting them to transition from their current model to something more agile. We have considerable expertise in target operating model design, delivery and review.



TIMETABLING, CURRICULUM AND SPACE REVIEW – UNIVERSITY OF KENT

Our consultants are working on a holistic review of timetabling. This is supported by work from our data and insights team who are evaluating levels of complexity in the curriculum and teaching space utilisation.



SPACE UTILISATION – UNIVERSITY OF READING

Our consultants carried out a teaching space needs analysis over a five-year time horizon, showing how demand for space would change as student numbers across discipline areas changed and space supply fluctuated with refurbishment and new build projects.

We have been working with some institutions to review whether their current models, systems and processes support future curriculum delivery. As a trusted external partner, we are able to:

- > Act as a critical friend
- > Cut through the complex interconnections
- > Identify areas of activity to start, stop and reshape.

This year has seen particular interest in SUMS’ data analysis expertise for teaching space utilisation and timetabling systems and processes.



Student journey – a fixed course or a ‘choose your own adventure’?

Written by Dr Rhiannon Birch, Principal Consultant



Currently the student journey is characterised by linear processes and loops. A student enrolls, studies, undertakes assessment and graduates in a linear educational process. Their core and optional modules and pathways are established at the start and by the time they reach university, most students will have already gravitated towards a subject specialism.

During their degree they will loop through the study and assessment part of the journey three or four times if they're an undergraduate and may have extra loops as a result of retaking part or all of a year or by going on a placement or year in industry. But broadly, the structure and components of the student journey are fixed depending on the level of study and are recognisable as a model which has been in place for generations.

While the world around HE has changed beyond recognition since the post-Robbins expansion and massification, with more students, more technology and a different funding model, the core student journey remains much the same. And, with the addition of the

odd chatbot or student app providing more modern ways to access information, so does the provision of student support.

Even Mass Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and apprenticeships failed to really disrupt the model, despite being touted as the end of higher education as we know it. Distance learning opened a brief discussion about portfolio degrees and transfer schemes before being quickly put in a box labelled 'Too Hard' and stashed on a mental shelf.

Apprenticeships provided an employment wrapper and some additional activities, but the core outcome is still a degree and the same old student journey.

Where we are in 2023 is a world with a wealth of educational technology which is often being underutilised because the student journey remains a fixed, linear process in a world of loops and complex webs of knowledge. Schools teach inquiry-based learning, futurists predict the rise of programmes based on 'knowledge from everywhere', many of us can lose an

hour just finding things out the internet. But a degree requires the student to stay in their fixed curriculum swim lane to complete the course and graduate.

So, what if a university wanted to move away from the current student journey structure and offer students the opportunity to choose their own educational adventure?

What if the future student journey looked more like a spirograph picture full of loops and complexity but within an overall structure to ensure a high-quality outcome?

What if technology could be a driver for change in enabling students to design their own curriculum from multiple universities and blend knowledge from everywhere?

That future could look very different for what, how and when learning happens and what the outcome is. One thing is certain though, what we learned from the post-qualification admissions (PQA) debate is that change has to be collective or not at all.

Timetabling approach for a complex curriculum

The University of Birmingham is a large, interdisciplinary institution with a complex, research informed curriculum. They commissioned SUMS to develop a framework that enables delivery of this complex curriculum, using an evidence-based approach to decision-making for successful implementation.

Our approach

SUMS consultants worked with the University in phases. Firstly, in order to understand the complexities of the curriculum and the context of the institution in which it was to be delivered, we interviewed a range of stakeholders across the University. Different approaches to timetabling were socialised and the institution made the decision to implement a partial block approach to scheduling.

In the second phase a significant amount of data was shared with colleagues at the University setting out levels of complexity, demand for particular

module combinations and levels of credit provision. This helped with understanding and engagement with the required changes. We worked with Birmingham to build the partial block structure. The benefits and risks of different implementation models were explored and the institution decided to implement the changes in a phased way.

Finally, we worked with educational leaders across the University to support the decision making in the second year of implementation, looking specifically at optionality in year two.

The difference it made

The initial phase of working with SUMS consultants enabled the University to take the strong, evidence-led, consultative decision to adopt a partial block approach to timetabling. As a result, the institution successfully implemented the identified year one approach changes in the same year that they adopted a new timetabling platform. Preparations have now begun for the second year of implementation.



Reshaping student services: a holistic approach

In the face of broad societal changes, universities must create inclusive and supportive environments that empower students to survive and excel in a rapidly changing world. At SUMS Consulting we work with forward-thinking institutions who are proactively shaping their student services to meet and exceed growing student and regulatory expectations in a competitive sector.

Our consultants support institutions to adopt a



MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING SUPPORT – UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

SUMS provided insight and support for the development of a business case for investment in Student Wellbeing and Support Services, including the review and redesign of the operating model.

strategic approach, starting with a holistic ‘whole university’ view and then considering individual components of the student experience. The aim is to create thriving communities with a strong sense of belonging, enrichment opportunities and resilience across the student and staff populations.

SUMS brings a wealth of experience from within and outside the HE sector. We provide expert support in a range of areas and tailor this according to:

- > University size and mission
- > Current strategic objectives, service maturity, culture and resources
- > Local partnership capabilities, within and beyond your university
- > National policy and funding context – we work across all UK nations
- > International benchmarking and good practice.





Tackling harassment and sexual misconduct

In November 2022, SUMS Consulting completed an influential evaluation for the Office for Students (OfS) of its statement of expectations on tackling harassment and sexual misconduct affecting students. We concluded that while some progress has been made, it is highly variable and recommended that regulatory intervention is required to drive sector-wide improvement. However, since a single intervention is not likely to be a ‘silver bullet’ that will solve all the issues in this area, change needs to be multi-layered. Therefore, we made multiple recommendations for OfS, sector bodies and providers, and these along with the findings are detailed in our [evaluation report](#). Since publication,

OfS has consulted on introducing a new condition of registration in relation to tackling harassment and sexual misconduct. Publication of the outcomes is expected in early 2024. SUMS consultants will work with our members and clients to improve approaches and help prepare for compliance with any future regulation in this area.

Requests for additional consideration (aka mitigating, extenuating or exceptional circumstances)

This is a complex, emerging area which includes changes at the societal, sectoral and institutional levels, as well as the broader legislative context and expectations of sector bodies. The number of students requesting consideration of

mitigation has increased in the last five years (probably influenced in part by Covid), leading to increases in administrative time and costs.

There is also significant student dissatisfaction with their universities’ processes in this area (including finding it hard to use the process, to meet set deadlines, or obtain the evidence they need). The Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) reports that one fifth of its complaints arise from this process. Complaints relate to students. Overall, systems and processes in place to support requests for additional consideration are often either no longer fit for purpose or will not remain relevant in the medium to long-term.

SUMS consultants are working with multiple institutions this year to review their current approaches to handling requests for additional consideration, and we are building up extensive knowledge of innovative and effective practice to input to this work.

REVIEW OF ADJUSTMENTS, ALLOWANCES AND MITIGATION – UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

This project considered the University’s whole approach in this area within the wider academic context and considering student welfare and wellbeing issues. The comprehensive review identified and made recommendations on multiple opportunities for enhancing the University’s approach, which will be considered over the coming months.



Protecting student and staff mental health and wellbeing

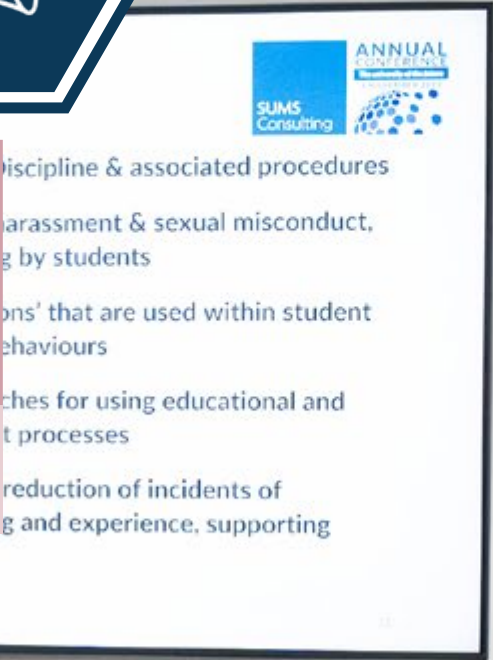
SUMS consultants continue to work in this important area, including in supporting universities in their preparations ahead of applying for the Student Minds’ Mental Health Charter. This work involves:

- > Reviewing and assessing current services and actions taken
- > Identifying opportunities for enhancement.

We also work with institutions to improve mental health and wellbeing support services, particularly where change programmes are driving cultural shifts to proactive support and early intervention, and working with partner organisations.

“We wanted to work towards the University Mental Health Charter, but weren’t sure where to start, so we commissioned SUMS Consulting to undertake a benchmarking exercise for us. This built on our existing partnership with them, and effectively utilised their expertise in this field. SUMS undertook a rigorous review of our current services and practices, with a desktop review of all relevant strategy and policy, plus numerous focus groups with our staff and students. We had regular dialogue with the team throughout the process, culminating in a full report plus recommendations, which were formally presented to us. The whole process and their final report have been absolutely invaluable in supporting and influencing our work towards achieving the University Mental Health Charter.”

SAM DALE
SAM DALE, DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SUPPORT AND WELLBEING, DURHAM UNIVERSITY



CHANGE PROGRAMME – UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE



We are supporting a 3-year post-implementation programme following our strategic review of student services for the University, to embed change and new ways of working across the whole University.

Durham University – preparation for the student minds’ mental health charter

Who we worked with

Durham University

The situation

Mental health problems and diagnosable mental illness have been increasing in children and young people – exacerbated by the pandemic – and it is evident that this increase is likely to continue. There have been corresponding year on year increases in the number of students disclosing a mental health condition on entering higher education, and more broadly in students seeking help for more generalised mental ill health or distress once they arrive at university. Across the sector, there has been an increase in demand for student support and mental health services as well as more students presenting with complex mental health difficulties. This has led to higher risk concerns about the impact on the mental health and wellbeing of other students and of staff supporting the students.

In this changing landscape, sector guidance advises that a ‘whole university approach’ should be taken to mental health and wellbeing support, principally Universities UK’s (UUK) StepChange and Suicide Safer Universities frameworks, and Student Minds’ University Mental Health Charter framework. Most recently, in June 2023, the Minister for Skills, Apprenticeships and Higher Education called on all universities to adopt the principles set out in the Mental Health Charter and join the programme.

What happened

Within this context, Durham University commissioned SUMS to conduct an independent review of its existing approach to supporting both staff and student mental health and wellbeing, which we completed in November 2022.

Durham is committed to the health and wellbeing of the whole University community and, as part of this, to achieving the Mental Health Charter.





The SUMS team was tasked with reviewing existing staff and student support at Durham and identifying further opportunities for enhancement as part of the University's preparation for applying for the Charter.

The SUMS team drew on the themes and principles in UUK's StepChange and Student Minds' Charter frameworks for the review, as well as our consultants' expertise and knowledge and experience gained from conducting similar reviews for multiple universities, and extensive comparative research into innovative

and effective practice in the sector. SUMS facilitated a range of reflective conversations with staff, students and leaders across Durham, along with NHS and third sector partners. We also reviewed and assimilated relevant documentation (such as strategies, policies and survey results). Our resulting report included a set of strategic recommendations on priority enhancements which will continue to improve the support for students and staff.

The difference it made
SUMS' review highlighted significant

strengths and progress being made towards developing a 'whole university' approach at Durham. This included the excellent practice of having a clear vision and Health and Wellbeing Strategy covering both staff and students, which is overseen and delivered by an overarching Health and Wellbeing Implementation Group. The Group is co-chaired by the Directors of Student Support & Wellbeing and HR & Organisational Development. Additionally, we found significant good practice in the University's approach to integration and cross sector working with both the NHS (and in particular Increasing Access to Psychological Therapies) and with the third sector.

Our team also identified opportunities for further development at Durham to support the University in its journey to a fully embedded University-wide approach. Our detailed recommendations were designed to drive further improvements, including: greater clarity about support services available for students and where to go with different issues; enhanced communications and information sharing across different parts of the University; enhanced pathways both into and from NHS services; a more strategic

approach to staff training across the University; and more diverse approaches to prevention to encourage a sense of community and belonging for all students.

We presented and discussed our findings with senior colleagues from across the University. The University has been able to use the results of the review to reflect on and adjust its plans as part of the preparation for applying to the Student Minds' Mental Health Charter programme. As part of this, individual staff were identified who had taken part in the SUMS review who could act as the lead for each specific theme. The University then utilised the SUMS report to create an action plan for each area, building on the identified good practice and working on areas where opportunities for enhancement has been recommended.



Embracing digital transformation for current and future success

Without question, the evolving landscape of digital technology has profound implications for higher education institutions individually and across the sector as a whole. At SUMS Consulting we work with institutions to develop and deliver digital strategies that enable their operational strategies and ambitions now and in the future.

Successful deployment of digital solutions is about more than the technology itself. Institutions must be mindful of the impact of their culture on processes, policies and new ways of working. SUMS consultants have many years of

specialist experience in HE cultures, including understanding how teams interact across institutions and how this impacts on successful transformation.

Optimising existing technology
New technology requires considerable investment, financially and in terms of change management time and resource. Our not-for-profit business model puts institutions’ needs firmly at the heart of our recommendations and advice.

Before committing to new solutions, our consultants work with members

to ensure that wherever possible they unleash the full potential of technology that they have already invested in. This can be done by:

- > Turning on modules and functionality you are not currently using
- > Solving the problems and workarounds that spring up around a system that has not been effectively embedded
- > Training your people so that they are confident to use existing technology.

These solutions are more operationally efficient and less costly than starting from scratch with a whole new system.

Identifying equitable digital solutions
Equitable experiences for all stakeholders are a central tenet of the social impact of universities. At

MODULE UTILISATION AND TRAINING – A SUMS MEMBER UNIVERSITY

The university had planned to procure a new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system to manage their operational activities more effectively. After reviewing their requirements with SUMS consultants, they identified ways to optimise their current system. The total cost of this revised approach was significantly reduced.



SUMS Consulting we work with institutions to identify practical ways to solve challenges and maximise opportunities digitally.

Our consultants have wide-ranging expertise in EDI areas and we support institutions to involve the relevant people in conversations. We review processes and cultures, checking solutions are appropriate for real-world experience. For example, we work to:

- > Identify ways to address issues of digital poverty which create barriers to online learning



TECHNOLOGY ASSESSMENTS – UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND BRISTOL

Assessing suppliers from an EDI perspective was incorporated into procurement processes, but not the EDI aspects of the technology itself. SUMS consultants helped the university to develop a framework to assess functionality of the technology against access needs, using deeper understanding of staff & student profiles.

- > Facilitate conversations about opportunities presented by AI and the changing nature of value-added work and study it can offer.

Powerful and meaningful data analysis and insight

With so many exciting digital approaches and solutions, it is vital that universities bring together their institutional data in a meaningful way for decision-making. They must manage and analyse their data holistically across systems.

SUMS consultants and the enhanced SUMS Group Business Intelligence team work with universities to identify the decisions they need to take and to understand



ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK – UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

SUMS consultants are working with the university to take the conversation about the inclusiveness of tech beyond the IT department and across all university activities.

the data they need to collect to inform those decisions, reviewing:

- > The types of data they already produce
- > Where, how and whether they are collating data
- > Whether they currently have the skills to analyse the data and generate insight.

ENTERPRISE RESOURCE PLANNING (ERP) SYSTEM REVIEW – UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND BRISTOL



SUMS consultants identified that the existing ERP system did not need to be replaced. Instead, they could bring together current systems from across the institution for a clearer picture of collated data for meaningful insight and decision-making.



Beyond efficiency: inclusivity in the digital era

Written by Lucy Dixon, Principal Consultant

Universities are once again at the heart of cross-sector challenges to our collective understanding of inclusivity.

The pandemic has been a catalyst for HEIs globally, propelling 'digital transformation' from a strategic initiative to an urgent necessity. SUMS has observed two distinct responses post-pandemic:

- > Consolidation: Many institutions are opting for introspection. There's a need to evaluate the rapid changes made during the pandemic and solidify digital infrastructure.
- > Advancement: Other institutions are using the post-pandemic period as a launchpad. For them, the disruptions caused by the pandemic are catalysts for larger digital transformation projects.

Neither approach is wrong. SUMS has been working with institutions across the spectrum. It's clear that the focus in all cases is forward facing; with an emphasis on resilience and the ever-evolving needs of the student population.

We've been working with one institution in particular, the University of the West of England Bristol (UWE), whose approach has highlighted the strategic importance of inclusivity. The University is defining

a comprehensive digital transformation roadmap, outlining the phased integration of digital technologies into their academic and administrative ecosystem. Their roadmap isn't just about digital tools; it's about reshaping processes and culture through technology. Given UWE's commitment to inclusivity, a cornerstone of its values, the project has prioritised inclusivity throughout.

One might question "why not prioritise efficiency?" It's a valid query. The sector is grappling with financial strains; declining student enrolments, dwindling government funding and increased competition. While efficiency is vital, our work with UWE highlights that a narrow focus could be detrimental.

Universities shoulder profound social missions which could be jeopardised by sidelining inclusivity. But from a pragmatic standpoint, a lack of diversity often carries hidden costs. Homogenous decision-making can lead to unspotted challenges, untapped markets, and unmet student needs, all of which can hamper growth and resilience.

As we move forward into the 'infotech' era, Artificial Intelligence (AI) in particular can perpetuate biases. For example, Amazon implemented an AI-driven recruitment tool which displayed a bias against female

candidates. This wasn't a nefarious plot but a reflection of the tool's training data (CVs over a decade) which predominantly came from men.

Imagine an AI-driven admissions tool disproportionately favouring certain demographic groups due to historical data biases. Such scenarios not only go against HE sector values but also create operational and reputational liabilities.

From our observations, many universities are ill-prepared to meet the mounting complexities of digital inclusivity within institutions. The stereotypical student profile - one that begins their university journey at 18 and spends a continuous three years on campus - is increasingly becoming an exception rather than the rule. As the student demographic evolves, so does the tapestry of their needs and expectations.

'Digital Transformation' is not one-size-fits all. While the benefits of efficiency through technology are undeniable, they should not overshadow the indispensable role of inclusivity. As the sector moves forward, inclusivity is not just an ethical choice, but a strategic one that promises a richer, more resilient academic landscape.



Lucy Dixon

Digital transformation operating model review

The Royal Veterinary College (RVC) was planning to undertake an ambitious journey towards digital transformation, aiming to improve its services, workflows, and overall organisational performance. The primary challenge lay in understanding the enablers within its existing structure, governance, and culture that could pave the way for a seamless transformation journey. RVC’s ambition was to construct a framework that not only supported digital initiatives but also systematically addressed any structural, cultural, and governance barriers that might hinder the evolution into a digitally-mature institution.

Our analysis focused on four key themes:

Organisational structure analysis: We investigated the existing operational framework through stakeholder interviews and functional analyses, identifying structural enablers impacting the digital transformation.

Governance evaluation: Assessed the efficacy of decision-making bodies and operational flows, pinpointing areas that might hinder or enable digital initiatives, and crafting a blueprint for optimised governance.

Cultural assessment: Engaged with various departments to understand the cultural dynamics and discern how cultural dynamics might influence digital innovation and adoption throughout RVC.

Benchmarking: Conducted a comparative analysis of RVC’s spending and investments against peer institutions, offering a contextual understanding of RVC’s financial stance in the broader educational sector.

Our project with RVC is ongoing, with plans being developed to further refine and implement the digital transformation strategy in a phased manner. The outcomes to date are as follows:

- > Strategic Alignment: Establishing a clearer alignment between IT operations and RVC’s overarching strategic goals
- > Operational Enhancements: Identification of operational and governance gaps, outlining barriers to more efficient processes and decision-making
- > Cultural Insight: A deeper understanding of the cultural barriers within RVC that may impact the digital transformation journey
- > Benchmarking Data: Compilation and analysis of comprehensive benchmarking data, providing RVC with critical insights into their financial and operational standing relative to peer institutions
- > Actionable Recommendations: Provision of clear, actionable recommendations based on the initial findings, intended to directly mitigate highlighted structural, operational, and cultural challenges.



Building a knowledge-driven economy for the common good

Universities have a significant role to play in shaping a shared knowledge economy to address global challenges that impact us all. Central to playing this part is the need for each institution to understand what this social value looks like in their context and how they contribute most effectively to shared goals rooted in economic and societal purpose.

At SUMS Consulting we bring together our expertise in the HE sector with our strategic thinking and rigorous approach to co-created solutions so that we can support our members to explore:

- > How they can create long-term social impact
- > What are the implications of changing systems and structures on their activities
- > How do they deliver a strong narrative to connect with their stakeholders and partners for the common good.

Defining your aims

The starting point for any institution is to understand their aims for social impact within their strategic mission. Our consultants work with them to assess and define their objectives in areas such as:

- > Knowledge exchange – there are many models for deploying university expertise, but they need to be tailored to your context
- > Civic engagement – Although the operating environment for universities stretches nationally and globally, every institution is also rooted to a place. With place and belonging increasingly part of conversations, understanding what your place means to you and how you engage with it is vital
- > Internationalisation – what do changes in world systems and economies mean for your internationalisation activities.





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CIVIC ENGAGEMENT REVIEW – UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM

Our consultants worked with University stakeholders to review the wide range of civic engagement activities undertaken, how they could be better organised and captured in order to optimise impact.

When institutions take a holistic approach to the risks and opportunities posed to their university by these activities, they are better able to identify the direction they may take in their response. Working with SUMS to carry out materiality assessments enables them to explore all areas of social and environmental sustainability, not just carbon management. As part of these assessments, SUMS runs consultations with internal and external stakeholders to discover preferred areas of focus and priority.

Understanding and engaging your stakeholders and partners

Universities have a wide range of stakeholders. They often seek to work with partners to extend their reach and reputation, as well as for wider impact.

To adopt successful strategies to engage and connect with others, SUMS consultants work with universities to develop deeper understanding of their motivations and agendas. Desired impact from these connections includes:

- > Widening participation
- > Engaging with employers
- > Building potential income streams.

A whole university approach enables them to aggregate data and systems to gain a more detailed picture. The SUMS Group Business Intelligence team assist our members with developing and using this insight.

Deploy your resources to best achieve your aims

Universities want to deploy their unique core business into

the wider world and SUMS' understanding of the higher education landscape supports them. We understand how an institution's reach, reputation and revenue contribute to achieving their social value mission.

Our consultants support institutions to develop clarity around key questions such as:

- > Which impact-driving activities are you engaged in
- > Which amongst those are important
- > Are these being delivered well enough to achieve your aims
- > What kind of narrative should you tell around this work.

With this meaningful insight, institutions are able to identify the best areas to emphasise in their engagement work. This brings benefits to universities themselves, and augments their ability to create positive impact for their stakeholders and society.



KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE MARKET RESEARCH – BOURNEMOUTH UNIVERSITY

SUMS consultants explored how comparable and aspirant institutions approach Knowledge Exchange, an area where they have made a conscious decision to invest and improve.



Understanding the benefits and costs of what universities do

Written by Dr Thomas Owen-Smith, Consultant



Few other organisations can match the contributions that universities make through their education, research and ability to bring people together.

The UK HE sector and its regulatory sphere have sophisticated ways of reflecting some of this. Research impact is evaluated through the Research Excellence Framework for example, and the Knowledge Exchange Framework assesses the outcomes of a diverse set of activities through which universities engage with other sectors and the public.

Some institutions and mission groups have undertaken analyses of their economic impacts. But even these generally do not account for the value that accrues to society from the public goods created through universities' educational activities; and the difference they make to human capital, social development, economic dynamism and strong institutions.

Nor do the regulators. In England, the value of university education is framed as essentially the monetary 'premium' to individual graduates. Societal and non-monetary benefits (admittedly harder to measure) barely feature. It is perhaps little wonder that rankings are stepping in to fill this void.

Contemporary thinking about sustainable futures, such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, Kate Raworth's 'Doughnut' and others emphasise the dependencies between our economy, society and environment: over the long-term, objectives in one sphere cannot be achieved without sufficient resilience in the others.

While universities' social and economic benefits have been justly celebrated, the UK HE sector's carbon emissions alone are comparable to a small country, and its full environmental footprint remains unmeasured.

Becoming environmentally sustainable will go beyond technical interventions. Improvements to infrastructure are essential, but to eliminate or even decisively reduce detrimental impacts on nature, fundamental changes to ways of doing business will be needed.

Approaches that help organisations to think about such changes are developing fast, many of them outside the HE sector. They include:

- > Materiality assessments, which allow organisations to better understand their impacts through scanning key topics and engagement with their stakeholders

- > Integrated reporting, which provides a codified framework for reflecting the impacts of organisations beyond their financials
- > Models for foresight and future modelling which appropriately reflect strategic sustainability risks, and shed light on how organisations' own operations may exacerbate those
- > Approaches such as natural capital and carbon pricing, which put a true value or cost on what were long treated as externalities.

Some of these are being spurred by regulation. From this year, larger companies in the UK are obliged to make disclosures in their statutory reporting around how they manage risks and opportunities related to climate. From 2025, large companies in the European Union will be expected to use a "double materiality" approach to report both sustainability impacts on their business and their own impacts on people and the environment. Despite the short-term news cycle, the direction of travel appears clear.

Such approaches can be useful for universities too – supporting a confident narrative around overall benefits they provide to society and individuals, a clearer view of overall costs of achieving those benefits, and what needs to be done to address them.

Measuring what matters

One of our members commissioned SUMS Consulting to undertake a materiality assessment to identify and prioritise the sustainability topics that are most important to the University and its stakeholders.

The concept of materiality is drawn from accounting: if a matter is material, it is worthy of attention. But in the place of monetary sums, a materiality assessment identifies sustainability issues which are important to an organisation and assesses the need to respond to or manage them in some way.

Our approach

SUMS consultants used qualitative and quantitative approaches to engage with the University's community and explore the concept of sustainability, how it relates to the University's work and the commitments of its strategy. We consulted four key groups of stakeholders:

- > The Leadership team and Sustainability Steering Group
- > Staff
- > Students
- > External stakeholders.

Over a series of three exploratory workshops, we developed a list of 18 sustainability topics most relevant to the University, its context and its work. Topics included health and wellbeing, the region's economy, and carbon emissions.

Quantitative surveys and scoring models were then used to assess each topic around the scale of the University's outward impacts on the wider world, and of inward impacts (trends, risks and opportunities) that the wider world exerts on the University. This is sometimes referred to as a "double materiality" approach.

The difference it made

The SUMS consultants developed a materiality matrix: a model that



shows which topics are the most significant for the University in terms of their outward and inward impacts.

Based on these insights, we provided recommendations for how the University can deploy the insights of the materiality assessment into strategy and planning, supporting the integration of sustainability as a true strategic driver.

Delivering a sustainable future

All areas of university life and activities have the potential to contribute sustainably to the delivery of your ambitions and objectives. The imperative for institutions to take action is multifaceted, including the expectations of student and staff communities as well as policy context and regulation. The financial driver of rising energy costs and future uncertainty in the energy market is being felt across the sector.

SUMS Consulting offers sustainability services expressly designed for the higher education and further education sectors. Our consultants facilitate exploration of strategic and operational solutions where there are no right or wrong answers. Institutions must consider what's right in their context, so our modules can be tailored to your specific needs.

The wider SUMS Group includes the largest of the HE purchasing

consortia in the UK, so we can provide specialist procurement expertise and insight where required. In addition, we combine our consulting expertise with specialist subject matter knowledge through a strategic partnership with EAUC, the sustainability champion for universities and colleges in the UK.

Carbon management

Most universities are now setting their path to achieve their net zero commitments. Our suite of modules enables them to understand, model and plan their journey, no matter where they are starting from.

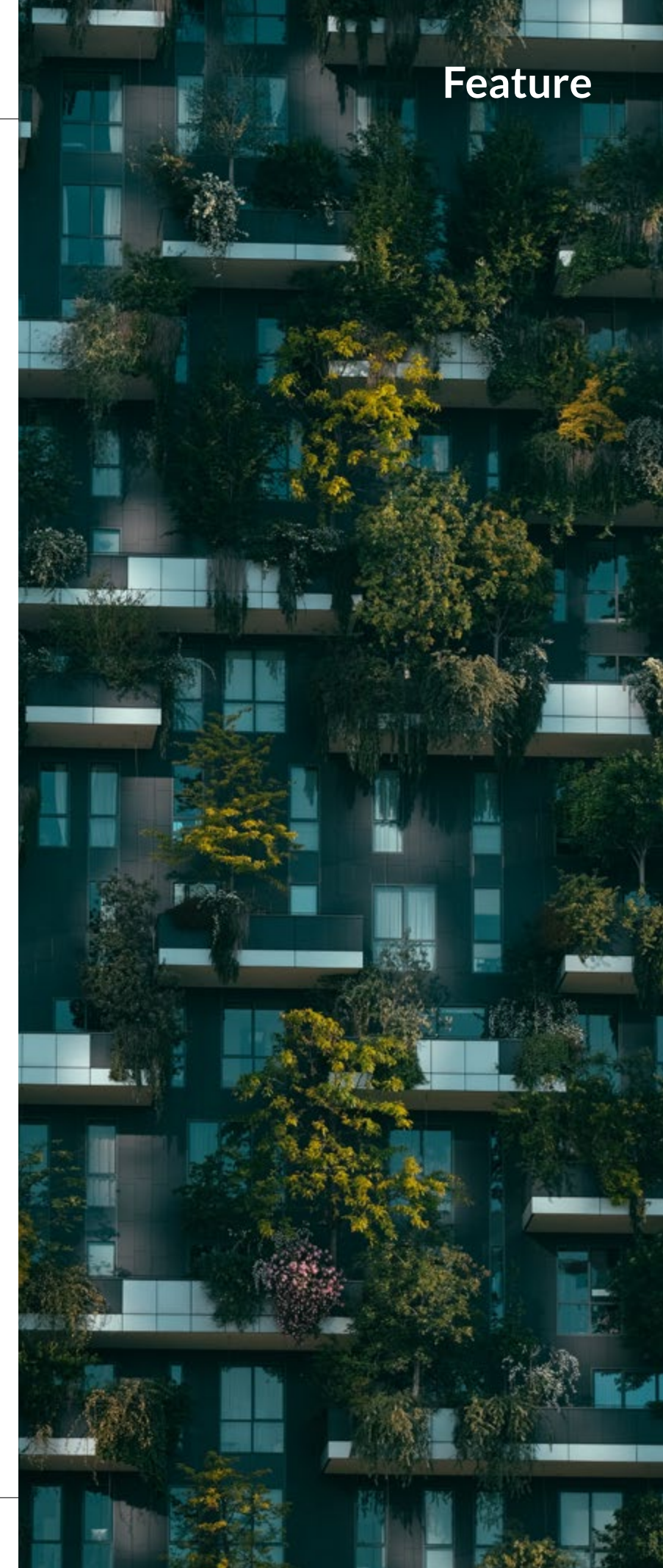
Many have made significant progress on their Scope 1 and 2 emissions by focusing on campus footprint and fuel consumption. They are now looking at their approach to tackling Scope 3, the vast majority of which comes from procurement supply chains and business travel.

SUMS consultants and our SUMS Group Business Intelligence teamwork with institutions to understand their measurement data and current emissions footprint. We support them to use their insight to take informed, strategic decisions, such as:

- > Where to focus your time and budget
- > What choices are most appropriate for your context
- > How to make the most sustainable use of your estate, now and in future capital plans
- > How to make use of offsetting options, now and in the future.

Moving from strategy to on-the-ground reality

As with any complex agenda, acting on sustainability requires difficult decisions and prioritising conflicting demands in an environment with constrained resources. SUMS consultants work with institutions to introduce tailored techniques and methods to drive behaviour change.





OPERATIONAL BEHAVIOUR CHANGE – UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX

SUMS consultants worked with the university to plan their change journey and messaging to inspire individuals to make more sustainable choices alongside institutional developments.

At an institutional level, this includes integrating sustainability into:

- > Planning and accounting frameworks
- > Governance and decision-making policies and processes
- > Risk assessments (direct operational risks and reputation impact).

At an individual level, SUMS consultants support universities to review the scope for individuals to take action, from culture and psychological contract to enabling technology and resource.

Maximising your potential

Education institutions are key leverage points for knowledge and influence in society. So, in addition to supporting members to address sustainability challenges, we

also offer a module to explore an institution’s opportunities from a strong response to the climate crisis.

We work with our partner, HESPA, to support universities to identify how they can make positive impacts on the climate crisis, adaptation and the global transition to a green economy. Early leadership in these areas can be expected to contribute positively to institutions’ public and research profiles, as well as attracting future students and staff.

SUMS Consulting’s sustainability service is delivered in partnership with EAUC.



Targeting Net Zero Carbon in Higher Education

Written by Dr Thomas Owen-Smith, Consultant



Despite ambitious targets and much substantive progress over recent years, the UK's universities still have a long way to go towards reducing their carbon emissions. Success will depend on a combination of technical interventions, policy and decision-making, as well as culture and behaviour change.

With the bulk of their activities based around knowledge and services, universities' work is generally less energy-intensive than manufacturing organisations. In theory, that should make Net Zero less of a mountain to climb.

On the other hand, most universities in the UK run on slim operating margins, leaving limited resources to invest into decarbonising.

Our members often tell us that multiple initiatives are underway, but these efforts are not always joined up. While taking action is positive, being more systematic maximises the benefits achieved for the resources put in.

Understanding your current emissions profile is crucial. This information will allow you to systematically identify actions that you might take to reduce them. Ambitious targets for reduction can spur institutions towards action – ideally these should be stretching, but with some realism baked in around achievement.

Next, select and plan delivery of actions which are most impactful and feasible for you to implement.

Different areas of focus will be required for scope 1, scope 2, and scope 3 emissions. Respectively these refer to direct greenhouse gas emissions, indirect emissions from purchased energy, and other indirect emissions. Addressing all scopes is essential for reaching Net Zero.

Scope 1 and 2: Universities' main contributors to scope 1 and 2 emissions tend to be heating and powering their buildings. Much "low-hanging fruit" around improving energy efficiency has already been harvested.

Institutions should build a comprehensive view of their existing estate and the potential for increasing its energy efficiency. A programme of investment to reduce building emissions can then be developed. Changes to how the estate is used, such as more consolidated space utilisation and flexible spaces, can also make a difference. New buildings should be built according to sustainable building standards, which are also likely to work out cheaper over the long term due to their energy efficiency.

Scope 3: Measurement of supply chain emissions is still generally impressionistic and assumptions-based, but a

coordinated approach to procurement can be the start of understanding and reducing them.

Emissions from business travel are relatively measurable and controllable. Institutions must tread a line between ambitious reductions and incremental changes to long-established tenets of an academic career like attending international conferences. There are also consequences for global engagement and international recruitment strategies.

Scope 3 includes other areas such as employees' commuting, emissions from homeworking, student accommodation and travel. Each requires innovative thinking, experimentation, and potentially collaborative approaches with partners.

Culture and behaviour change

A successful journey to Net Zero also needs to move beyond technical solutions into true changes to ways of working and running an organisation. Again, understanding the scope for moving the dial in different strands is helpful, as is clarity around what contributions technical interventions, policy and changes to personal behaviour will need to make.

Culture change for a sustainable university

While the University of Essex has seen reductions in its carbon emissions over recent years, it is committed to doing more to be an environmentally sustainable institution. The University declared a climate emergency in 2020 and has a comprehensive agenda to make its core mission a truly sustainable endeavour.

The University approached SUMS for help with the most challenging elements of this agenda, those which move beyond technical solutions into substantive changes to modes of core business, ways of working and personal behaviours across the student and staff community. They sought recommendations for making meaningful progress around these elements.

Our approach

This assignment was delivered in partnership with EAUC, the Alliance for Sustainability Leadership in Education, and brought together SUMS' disciplines around sustainability, transformation and change management. Our approach began by building a picture of the University's current

status, followed by making recommendations based on this insight. We gathered input from a range of sources:

- > Workshops with staff
- > Staff and student survey
- > Review of documentation around the agenda
- > One-to-one and small group discussions with colleagues at the University.

The difference it made

With these insights, our multi-disciplinary team developed recommendations for cultural and behaviour change. These were designed to truly move the dial on stubborn challenges, grounded in the realities of the institution. They were built around three overarching themes:

- > Building alignment: aligning delivery of sustainability agendas as far as possible to delivery of the institutional strategy
- > Defining the change needed: being clear about the scope for progress through technical interventions, policy changes and where individual behaviour change will be most impactful
- > Mobilising the community: working with the University community to harness energy and build momentum for change.



List of assignments

In 2022/23, SUMS helped members and clients with over 170 complex and strategic assignments, delivering 2,500 consultancy days. Our work covers a broad range of strategic areas across the full breadth of professional services. While this is not a definitive list, here are some examples of the assignments we have delivered.

- Innovation Strategic Review**
Aberystwyth Innovation and Enterprise Campus Limited
- Academic Programmes, growth and development - School of Media, Art and Humanities, growth and development**
University of Sussex
- Academic Workload Model Evaluation and Refining_Oxford Conted**
University of Oxford
- Academic Workload Modelling - Best Practice and Options Appraisal**
Oxford Brookes University
- Academic Workload Principles - Academic and Professional Services**
University College London
- Admissions review**
University of Wolverhampton
- APP Evaluation Framework**
Keele University
- APP financial support schemes**
The University of Birmingham
- Approach to timetabling**
The University of Birmingham
- Assessment**
Ulster University
- Bangor Mental Health Brief Review**
Bangor University
- BCU Academic Services and Registry Redesign**
Birmingham City University

- Benchmarking Doctoral Training Centres**
Trinity College Dublin
- Best practice and benchmarking Student’s Unions (SU)**
The University of East London
- Bournemouth Finance System Processes**
Bournemouth University
- Bournemouth Knowledge Exchange Analysis**
Bournemouth University
- British Academy Emissions Baselining**
The British Academy
- Bursaries development**
Xenophon College London
- Business Change - Assessment of Capability and Maturity**
University of the West of England, Bristol
- Business School MARCOMMS**
University of Sussex
- Cambridge - Vets Review of HR**
University of Cambridge
- Cambridge Support to MHWB Strategy Implementation**
University of Cambridge
- Cardiff Met Peer Support Development**
Cardiff Metropolitan University
- Career Frameworks and Pathways**
Newcastle University
- Catering model**
University of Dundee

Coaching and mentoring Queen Mary University of London	English Data The English Association	Global Engagement TOM University of Nottingham
Coaching for Service Delivery University of Hertfordshire	Essex Low Carbon University University of Essex	Governance Structure Xenophon College London
Comparative Study of Staff Terms and Conditions Higher Education Policy Institute	Estates Services Resource Model University of Oxford	HR Maturity Assessment University of the West of England, Bristol
Contract management support Oxford Brookes University	Examinations Processes Leeds Beckett University	HR Policy Review King’s College London
Course Selection and Curriculum Management London School of Economics and Political Science	External Engagement Review University of the West of England, Bristol	Hull Digital and UX Audit University of Hull
Critical Friend and Mentoring Support Goldsmiths, University of London	External Examining Ulster University	India Office Supplier Selection University of Reading
Culture, Wellbeing and Performance Cardiff University	Faculty of Environment, strategy development (size and shape) University of Leeds	Inform the Development of the Student Services Roadmap Queen Mary University of London
Data Governance Bangor University	Feasibility Study - Garrett Street City, University of London	Institute of Continuing Education Process Improvement Programme University of Cambridge
Data Governance and Landscape University of Nottingham	Fee Matrix and Fee Setting Process University of Law	LBIC Governance The Royal Veterinary College
Data Strategy The University of East London	Fee Price Sensitivity University of Reading	Leeds Student Experience Programme Critical Friend Support University of Leeds
Developing the Customer Experience Aberystwyth University	Fees and Price Sensitivity The University of East London	Libraries University of Nottingham
Digital Transformation Consultation and Engagement University of the West of England, Bristol	Functional Alignment and Change Portfolios University College London	LIPA Outline climate strategy Liverpool Institute of Performing Arts
Emissions scope 3 baselining Liverpool John Moores University	Glasgow SSPS Governance and Reshaping Support The University of Glasgow	London Campus Employment Offer Sheffield Hallam University

Market and Pricing Strategy University of Nottingham	Oxford Brookes materiality assessment Oxford Brookes University	Process design and development approach Trinity College Dublin
Market Research for Computer Science Programme The Queen’s University of Belfast	Oxford Sustainability Benchmarking University of Oxford	Process Design and Development Approach (Digitisation) University of St Andrews
Market Research for Non Standard Offer University of Plymouth	Oxford: Comparative study on non-academic misconduct University of Oxford	Process mapping Bournemouth University
Market Research to Support PSE Offer University of Reading	Payment Platform Review Royal College of Art	Procurement Hubs Newcastle University
Meetings Review St Mary’s University Twickenham London	Performance Benchmarking University of Gloucestershire	Procurement Implementation University of Southampton
MHWP Review University of Durham	PGR Interfaces at the University University College London	Procurement Process Review St Mary’s University Twickenham London
Northampton Strategy and Planning University of Northampton	PGR Service Excellence Benchmarking Trinity College Dublin	Professional Development Support University of Sunderland
Nottingham Ongoing Mental Health Support University of Nottingham	PGT Programme Review Process Trinity College Dublin	Professional Services Benchmarking revisited City, University of London
Office for Students HSV Evaluation Office for Students	PIR - University of Aberdeen with AFG College University of Aberdeen	Professional Services Review University of Oxford
OfS Registration Xenophon College London	Planning and Reporting Framework Middlesex University	Professional Services Structures University of Reading
Ongoing support for MHWP Strategy Implementation Aberystwyth University	Plymouth TOM Plan & Approach University of Plymouth	QA Comparator Study King’s College London
Online Distance Learning University of Sussex	Portfolio Review Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh	Recovery Programme Lessons Learnt Goldsmiths, University of London
Organisational Review Universities Scotland	Positive Futures Research Culture Review University College London	Recruitment and Onboarding Process Review St Mary’s University Twickenham London
	Pre-Enrolment Student Journey Review University of Aberdeen	

Redraft of Finance Policy and associated processes in relation to Procurement activity University of Southampton	Scholarships TOM Implementation Planning University of Nottingham	Space Utilisation and Timetabling Review University of Northampton
Research Pre and Post Award Review University of Hertfordshire	School Merger - Management and Economics & Finance (Business School) University of St Andrews	Space Utilisation Study Higher Education Authority ROI
Resource Allocation Model Aberystwyth University	School of Medicine Leadership Approach - Review and Benchmarking University of Nottingham	St Andrews Libraries and Museums Organisational Review University of St Andrews
Review of Cardiff University Bursary Cardiff University	School Professional Services Design University of Sussex	St Edmunds College Review of Tutorial Office University of Cambridge
Review of examination and assessment adjustments, allowances, and mitigation University of Cambridge	Scope 3 programme development Oxford Brookes University	Staff Recruitment and Onboarding Sheffield Hallam University
Review of Governance St Mary’s University Twickenham London	Senior Salary Benchmarking Oxford Brookes University	Strategic Leadership University of Aberdeen
Review of non-pay spend University of Kent	Size and shape comparisons University of Leeds	Strategy Review 2023 UCISA
Review of Residences Student Support Structure University of Aberdeen	SOAS Cleaning Review SOAS University of London	Strategy Support to DoPPSC University of Nottingham
Review of staff contracts and staff facing policies SP Jain	SOAS Policies Review SOAS University of London	Student Academic Experience (non-teaching) University of Durham
Review of Student Journey: Acceptance to Induction University of Durham	SOAS Recruitment Support SOAS University of London	Student Attendance and Engagement Benchmarking Oxford Brookes University
Review of Support Services University of Sunderland	Soft Market Appraisal University of Southampton	Student facing policies review SP Jain
Review of Timetabling University of Southampton	SP Jain campus development support SP Jain	Student Growth Analysis - TSNA University College London
Review of Timetabling and Teaching Space Use Nottingham Trent University	Space Management Policy University College London	Student Journey Mapping University of Wolverhampton

Student Protection Plan Middlesex University	Teaching Space Needs Analysis University of Reading	University of Oxford Conted Integrated Staffing Strategy University of Oxford
Student Recruitment Performance Reporting Review University of Aberdeen	Timetabling Reporting and Data Leeds Beckett University	University of Oxford Conted Project Management Support University of Oxford
Student Support and Welfare Team mentoring Cardiff Metropolitan University	Timetabling Review Bangor University	Vision for Accommodation Services Nottingham Trent University
Student Support Services Review St Mary’s University Twickenham London	Timetabling Review London School of Economics and Political Science	White Rose University Consortium The University of York
Student Support Services Support University of Leicester	Timetabling Review University of Kent	Workforce Planning Support University of Leicester
Students’ Union and Commercial Operations University of Nottingham	Timetabling Review and Strategic Support The University of Central Lancashire	
Support for Professional Services Restructure Middlesex University	Timetabling Support 22/23 Trinity College Dublin	
Support for Recovery Programme Goldsmiths, University of London	TRAC and Scheme of Delegation University of London (Central Institutes and activ	
Support for Student Services Review Ulster University	UCL Talent Benchmarking University College London	
Support for workforce planning Goldsmiths, University of London	Ulster University materiality assessment Ulster University	
Support to Derfel Owen and External Engagement University College London	University of Gloucestershire PS Target Operating Model University of Gloucestershire	
Supporting the development of a School (Maths & CS) vision and shared values University of Leicester	University of London ERP Options Appraisal University of London (Central Institutes and activ	
Target Operating Model Cardiff University	University of London Fee Pricing Model University of London (Central Institutes and activ	
	University of Nottingham Internal Audit University of Nottingham	



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