



THE

LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT AWARDS 2011

in association with
**Leadership
Foundation**
for Higher Education

WINNERS

Thursday 16 June 2011
Grosvenor House Hotel, Park Lane, London



INTRODUCTION

The third *Times Higher Education* Leadership and Management Awards come at a time of uncertainty and huge challenges for the sector. The work of professional staff will be in the spotlight like never before, and examples of best practice that can be applied more widely will be more valuable than ever.

It is fitting that the winner of this year's top award has already faced and overcome what could have been total disaster.

In September 2007, the government decided to remove funding from students taking an equivalent or lower-level qualification (ELQ). The move dealt a devastating blow to Birkbeck, University of London. But the institution's leadership and management team picked itself up,

dusted itself off and implemented a successful strategic review. To make up for the loss in ELQ cash, they refocused their offering – which resulted in a 38 per cent rise in student recruitment.

The judges were impressed by the way the senior team used the opportunity to transform this unique and much-loved organisation to face the future with confidence.

Of course we congratulate all our very worthy winners, and I would like to thank our experienced and enthusiastic judges who took their role seriously and performed it with professionalism and aplomb.

Ann Mroz
Editor



JUDGES

Jon F. Baldwin, registrar, University of Warwick

Caroline Brazier, director of scholarships and collections, British Library

Ian Carter, director of research and enterprise, University of Sussex

Chris Cobb, pro vice-chancellor, Roehampton University

Cary Cooper, chair, Academy of Social Sciences, distinguished professor of organisational psychology and health, Lancaster University

Jane Embley, director of human resources, Northumbria University

Patrick Finch, bursar and director of estates, University of Bristol

Christopher Hallas, chair, Association of University Administrators

Susie Hills, director of development and alumni relations, University of Exeter

Geoff Hope-Terry, chair, Strategic Procurement Group for Higher Education, Universities UK

Hari Punchihewa, deputy chief executive and finance director, University of Derby

Andrew West, director of student services, University of Sheffield

Tricia Wombell, director of marketing and communications, Leadership Foundation for Higher Education

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OUTSTANDING UNIVERSITY FUNDRAISING TEAM

University of Bath

Despite having a small and relatively new fundraising team, the University of Bath had an exceptional year in 2009-10, with philanthropic donations totalling £4.3 million.

This was 159 per cent above its target and represented an increase of 120 per cent on the year before. Included in this total were the two largest non-legacy donations the university had ever received – notably the first gift of more than £1 million – and these were accompanied by a 20 per cent increase in the overall number of donors.

Important new initiatives in 2009-10 included data mining to prioritise alumni prospects, a coordinated direct mail and email appeal linked to website video

footage, and an 80 per cent donor participation rate among lay members of the university council.

Equally effective was the introduction of a bespoke philanthropic scholarship scheme, which led to pledges of over 200 named scholarships, more than twice the previous year's total.

For judge Susie Hills, director of development and alumni relations at the University of Exeter, "Bath has shown what a small fundraising team can achieve when they work together and take a systematic approach to fundraising."

She added that the judges also wanted to commend Durham University for its "creative" direct marketing appeal, which funded scholarships for Afghan women.

“This shows what a small fundraising team can achieve when they work together and take a systematic approach”



KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE/TRANSFER INITIATIVE OF THE YEAR

Aston University

In 2003, the Lambert Review of Business-University Collaboration flagged up the reluctance of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and universities to interact.

In response, Aston University created a novel voucher scheme enabling SMEs in the West Midlands to access the knowledge, expertise and facilities of local higher education institutions.

The fifth round of the scheme, launched in 2009, provided ample evidence of its success in achieving its goals of bringing academic expertise to a business audience. There were 253 applications for the 104 vouchers available, each entitling a business to consultancy and assistance worth £3,000.

Forty-six per cent of the winners had

never previously engaged with universities, yet many worked with their partners with the specific aim of bringing their proposed innovations to market. Nearly two-thirds managed to do so.

Tricia Wombell, director of marketing and communications at the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education and one of the award judges, said: “We admired Aston’s West Midlands voucher scheme as a true knowledge-exchange initiative, involving all the region’s universities and a wide range of small and medium-sized enterprises.

“We were particularly impressed by the rate at which SMEs with no previous involvement with universities continued to invest in the projects after they’d completed their vouchers.”

“We admired the voucher scheme as a true knowledge-exchange initiative, involving all the region’s universities and a wide range of SMEs”



OUTSTANDING HUMAN RESOURCES TEAM

Aston University

This award recognises the success of Aston First, an ambitious cultural transformation programme at Aston University.

Aston First aimed for “clear direction and inspiration” from leaders; better teamwork and communication; excellent customer service; equality and well-being for all; and innovation. The human resources team built managerial and leadership capacity, improved communication and promoted a positive working environment for staff.

This included a five-day leadership programme for middle managers, called ExCL, which was based on enhancing emotional intelligence and self-awareness.

The team developed a new performance and absence management policy and implemented it after feedback from participants.

Over a six-month period, 182 middle managers with responsibility for 65 per cent of staff took part in the ExCL programme.

The judges said the programme “was innovative in that it was designed around the themes of excellence, capability and leadership”.

“Middle managers are regularly cited as key to the achievement of organisational goals, and Aston developed a clear and focused strategy to engage with their staff in these critical roles,” they commented.

The second key area for the human resources team was implementing a range of initiatives to promote a positive working environment, including new occupational health arrangements, a staff disability network, staff volunteering at community projects, and well-being sessions and workshops.

“**The programme was innovative in that it was designed around the themes of excellence, capability and leadership**”



OUTSTANDING REGISTRY TEAM

University of Derby

The Programme Advisory Service, part of the University of Derby's registry team, has used a collaborative approach to good effect in a new attendance monitoring system.

The system aims to help identify students who are missing classes at an early stage and to encourage them to return.

By working closely with academic departments and the university's information technology services, advisory service staff created a system that allowed tutors to take the lead in interventions without unnecessary red tape.

In 2009-10, the team handled over 10,000 contacts with students that had been initiated by academics. More than

70 per cent of the students, mainly contacted by email or text message, re-engaged.

Jon Baldwin, registrar at the University of Warwick and a member of the judging panel, said: "From a range of innovative and well-managed change projects submitted under this category, Derby's submission stood out.

"Its entry outlined highly successful integration of new technology with the seemingly simple task of monitoring student attendance in a way that genuinely adds value to the student experience," he added. "The institution is able to identify students who are failing to attend in order to target interventions to support their re-engagement."

“Derby’s entry outlined highly successful integration of new technology with the seemingly simple task of monitoring student attendance”



OUTSTANDING DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATION TEAM

University of Greenwich

A small team of just 12 administrators at the University of Greenwich's Natural Resources Institute supports the work of more than 200 academic staff and consultants working on sustainable development projects across the world.

Last year the team helped to bring in £8.9 million in new research contracts – an increase of 61 per cent on the previous year – by underpinning every stage of the bidding process.

They also successfully supported overseas projects involving the NRI in many ways, including organising travel arrangements and ensuring health and safety in some of the most dangerous areas

of the world, including Afghanistan.

The team managed to couple this with support for the institute's 120 students, many of whom are from small towns in the developing world, helping them with accommodation, money, travel bookings and a wide range of welfare and health problems.

Christopher Hallas, chair of the Association of University Administrators and one of the judges, said the team – which judges considered to be “beyond outstanding” – had been a key player in helping to reverse the fortunes of the NRI.

He added that the team had been so successful that it was now rolling out good practice to other parts of the university.

“**The administration team had been a key player in helping to reverse the fortunes of the Natural Resources Institute**”



OUTSTANDING RESEARCH MANAGEMENT TEAM

University of Northampton

The University of Northampton's research income has nearly quadrupled since 2006 thanks to the work of its Research and Strategic Bidding Office.

The RSBO's three staff provide a full pre-bidding support and advice service for grant applicants. This includes producing monthly e-bulletins for each of the university's six academic schools, summarising funding opportunities and policy updates and publicising good news stories.

The office also provides a writing service for large institutional bids and holds bespoke capacity-building events for individual schools.

Award judge Ian Carter, director of research and enterprise at the University of Sussex, was particularly impressed by Northampton's Research Staff Network: a peer-led network aimed at helping

inexperienced researchers share skills in writing grant proposals.

More than 80 per cent of Northampton's early career researchers belong to the network. The programme includes workshops, a university-wide learning day and an internal conference, as well as work-based learning through external placements.

Since the RSBO was set up, Northampton's research income has risen from £1.7 million to £6.3 million. The university's grant application success rate has also risen from 10 per cent to 30 per cent.

"This is accompanied by very positive testimonials from both academic leaders and researchers," Dr Carter said.

Bournemouth University and the University of Greenwich were also commended.

“The successes were accompanied by very positive testimonials from both academic leaders and researchers”



OUTSTANDING ESTATES TEAM

Newcastle University

The estates team at Newcastle University has turned its fortunes around substantially over the past decade.

From having one of the poorest performing estates in terms of space and energy consumption, Newcastle has improved to the extent that it was selected as an exemplar of outstanding progress in this year's annual *Estates Management Statistics Report* from the Higher Education Statistics Agency.

Among its achievements, the institution has reduced energy consumption per member of staff and student by 16 per cent and reduced crime on campus by 60 per cent.

The team has also put in place initiatives such as the "Let's recycle more" campaign, which has resulted in some impressive statistics: 93 per cent of general waste at the university is now recycled.

In addition to these efforts, Newcastle's estates team also led an initiative worth £1 million to improve the physical environment of the campus.

Patrick Finch, bursar and director of estates at the University of Bristol, past chair of the Association of University Directors of Estates and one of the judges, said: "We were impressed by the clear strategic focus of the Newcastle estates team in rationalising and revitalising the university estate, achieving some very impressive results in space utilisation, carbon reduction, and condition and suitability along the way.

"The focus on customer service and a real sense of involving the wider university community in estates initiatives was also recognised, as was the significant contribution made to the wider urban regeneration agenda in the city."

“We were impressed by the clear strategic focus of the team in rationalising and revitalising the university estate”



OUTSTANDING STUDENT SERVICES TEAM

City University London

The City University London team was brought together in 2007 to address the confusion and difficulty resulting from a fragmentation of student services throughout the institution.

An investment of £4 million and the recruitment of student advisers from customer service backgrounds led to City joining the Institute of Customer Service in 2009.

During the 2009-10 academic year, all student advisers gained professional accreditation, and City achieved an ICS ServiceMark award, the first higher education institution to do so.

The judges described achieving the ServiceMark standard as “a clear example of innovation”.

Students have also rated the team highly; in a customer satisfaction survey in 2010, 93 per cent of respondents stated that they were “quite” or “very” satisfied with the Student Centre’s service.

Andrew West, head of student services at the University of Sheffield, chair of AMOSSHE, the Student Services Organisation, and one of the judges, said: “The judges were particularly struck by the strategic way in which the Student Centre initiative had been delivered, incorporating capital investment, service development and improvement, and a strong team ethos.

“The judges were also impressed by the very positive evidence from service-user evaluation, demonstrating a strong further endorsement of City’s approach.”

“**The very positive evidence from service-user evaluation demonstrated a strong further endorsement**”



OUTSTANDING MARKETING/COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

University of Nottingham

“Highly innovative, collaborative and novel in its approach to marketing.”

These were some of the judging panel’s comments about the University of Nottingham, where effective marketing has “changed public perceptions about the institution globally and supported a cultural sea change internally”.

Nottingham set out ambitious yet achievable targets to enhance the university’s brand, while at the same time saving at least £200,000 by resourceful tendering and bringing web marketing work in-house. The team oversaw a university-wide rebrand, as well as updating Nottingham’s visual identity and logo. Its efforts are credited with contributing to a 14 per cent increase in the number of undergraduate applications and a 29 per cent rise in the number of postgraduate applications.

Nottingham calculated its media coverage for the year at an advertising

value of £24 million. It also raised its overseas profile by participating in the 2010 Shanghai Expo world fair.

Cary Cooper, chair of the Academy of Social Sciences, distinguished professor of organisational psychology and health at Lancaster University and one of the judges, said: “The marketing and communications team at Nottingham has demonstrated [itself] this past year to be highly innovative, collaborative and novel in its approach.” He praised the team for using the full range of social media to reach out to students, as well as for a public relations campaign highlighting the university’s research.

The judges also commended a collaborative submission by Aston University, Birmingham City University, the University of Birmingham, Newman University College and University College Birmingham.

“**The marketing and communications team has shown itself to be highly innovative, collaborative and novel in its approach**”



OUTSTANDING LIBRARY TEAM

Newcastle University

Newcastle University Library's award is for a project that has given students greater power to determine the books that the institution buys.

In February 2010, the team set up a project with the Ebook Library, which added 100,000 new titles to its collection, effectively increasing the range by 15 per cent.

If a student is interested in a title that is available electronically, they are allowed a free browsing period of five minutes before being given an option to "borrow" the book.

After a 24-hour cooling-off period to ensure that the request is serious, the library pays a fee and the student can then access the text for up to a week. Any e-book borrowed five times is automatically purchased and added

to the library's permanent collection.

Speculative purchasing has thus been replaced by a system that responds directly to student demand and has also proved far cheaper than buying all the e-books borrowed or obtaining print copies through inter-library loan.

Caroline Brazier, director of scholarships and collections at the British Library and one of the award judges, said: "This year's entries in the library category showcase the wide range of strategic and technological developments under way across the sector.

"But the Newcastle entry stands out because it put students right at the heart of changing one of the most fundamental library services and points the way forward for transformational improvement in access to information."

“The Newcastle entry puts students right at the heart of changing one of the most fundamental library services”

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OUTSTANDING STUDENT ADMISSIONS TEAM

University of Warwick

A clear strategic plan and an array of evidence demonstrating outstanding performance are the elements that marked out the University of Warwick's postgraduate admissions team as winners.

The team adopted a paperless admissions system after extensive consultation with academic and administrative staff and students, and the innovation greatly improved the efficiency of the process.

As a result, the time it takes for a decision to be made on an application has fallen, despite a 55 per cent increase in the number of applications over the past two admissions cycles and static staffing levels.

The move online has proved popular with students too, and 97 per cent of all postgraduate applications are now made online.

The team is also helping Warwick

achieve wider aims; the university's Vision 2015 initiative, launched in 2007, set the challenging target of doubling the number of research students at the institution within eight years. The benefits of the new system are already evident: between 2008-09 and 2010-11, postgraduate enrolment went up by 33 per cent.

Andrew West, head of student services at the University of Sheffield, chair of AMOSSHE, the Student Services Organisation, and one of the judges, said: "Warwick's admissions team has been innovative in its use of business process review, coupled with an integrated service development plan, underpinned by effective use of IT solutions.

"The positive impact on processes, turn-around time and customer service has been dramatic and a real credit to the work of the whole team."

“The positive impact on processes, turn-around time and customer service has been dramatic and a real credit to the work of the team”



OUTSTANDING PROCUREMENT TEAM

University of the West of England

The University of the West of England's work with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to the benefit of the wider economy set it apart in this closely fought category.

The judges said the many partnerships set up by the institution's procurement team had supported local businesses that were vital to UWE's graduate employment record.

Another achievement that impressed was UWE's commitment to sustainability: in the past year the procurement team updated its policies in line with the students' union's environmental campaign, making regular contact with student representatives to take account of their views.

Geoff Hope-Terry, chair of Universities

UK's Strategic Procurement Group for Higher Education and a member of the judging panel, said: "It was evident that standard practice across the sector will be improved by picking up on many of the ideas and strategies that were put forward by the shortlisted institutions.

"In the end, however, the University of the West of England was unanimously voted as outright winner. The team's activity in partnering SMEs is of vital importance, not just to higher education but also to the economy at large.

"Hopefully institutions not working with this group will be encouraged to do so when they see the success achieved at UWE," he added.

The judges also commended the London Universities Purchasing Consortium.

“Partnering SMEs is of vital importance, not just to higher education but also to the economy at large”



OUTSTANDING FINANCE TEAM

University of Bedfordshire

A commitment to fund new facilities by building financial surpluses was among the factors that earned the University of Bedfordshire team its award.

Bringing in an operating cash flow of more than £22 million for the second successive year allowed the university to improve academic provision, student services and accommodation.

The university said its 2009-10 surplus of 11 per cent of income was among the highest in the sector – a £12 million surplus on turnover of £113 million.

The judges praised Bedfordshire's "clear but simple finance strategy to support some specific objectives of the corporate plan".

"Delivering a continuous year-on-year increase in their operating surplus with a

peak in 2009-10 returning over 10 per cent, mainly based on cost control and a substantial reduction in gearing, were the highlights," the judges found.

"Further it was clear how this improvement, delivered through the finance strategy, has helped them to invest in capital projects, including funding a new campus centre with modern facilities, which helped to increase their student recruitment and to enhance the student experience," they added.

"In addition, the role played by the finance team in structuring and negotiating an off-balance-sheet deal for an 850-bed student accommodation facility with a private provider and in securing a substantial premium was very impressive."

“It was clear how this improvement, delivered through the finance strategy, has helped them to invest in capital projects”



OUTSTANDING INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY

Birmingham City University

Birmingham City University's winning international strategy sought to achieve "a significant culture shift" to persuade the whole institution to embrace internationalisation.

Among the other key objectives were increasing international student recruitment while diversifying markets, developing overseas partnerships and championing the student experience.

The strategy identified appropriate markets for niche subjects, with a link between Birmingham City's theatre programme and US partners resulting in the programme's first international cohort.

There was also an informal approach to encouraging staff to see internationalisation in a positive light, bringing together groups of interested – and not so interested – staff.

Extending overseas visits, linked with faculty research interests, provided an incentive to become involved.

In terms of the student experience, the time taken to process international applications was cut to just 24 hours, while overseas bases offered a year-round service, including on Christmas Day. The university said the strategy had transformed it into a "significant international player".

The judges said: "A structural approach to embedding internationalisation in faculties and departments, combined with a campaign of 'winning the hearts and minds' of stakeholder groups within and beyond the university has resulted in a step change in organisational international awareness and positive impact upon the corporate brand and delivery of key international objectives."

“The result has been a step change in international awareness and positive impact upon the corporate brand”



ICT INITIATIVE OF THE YEAR

University of Huddersfield

The University of Huddersfield describes its Graduate Employment-Market Statistics system as a “large and ambitious project aimed at making sense of the mainly qualitative information derived from the annual Destinations of Leavers survey”.

Chris Cobb, pro vice-chancellor of Roehampton University and one of the award judges, said that the system had “turned a bureaucratic process into one that adds real value by creating business intelligence to improve retention and careers advice”.

The programme consists of two parts. The first allows academics, senior managers and researchers to access information on the destinations of the university’s graduates for the past three years.

The user can see not only performance indicators such as salaries, relevance of courses and graduate retention, but also qualitative information such as

employment locations, job titles and employer names.

This has been used extensively to help market Huddersfield’s courses and to provide performance monitoring to senior management.

The second part of the programme consists of a web page for external users, giving performance indicators for particular courses.

Mr Cobb said: “This innovative approach has since been licensed by 11 institutions, with growing interest from others. Huddersfield emerged from a strong field of submissions that included pioneering use of cloud-based technologies, location awareness on mobile devices and services-orientated architecture.”

The judges also commended the University of Wolverhampton and the University of Southampton.

“This innovative approach has since been licensed by 11 institutions, with growing interest from others”



OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT TEAM

Birkbeck, University of London

The decision by the last Labour government to withdraw funding for students taking an equivalent or lower-level qualification (ELQ) to one they already hold hit specialist part-time provider Birkbeck, University of London particularly hard.

Overnight the institution faced the loss of almost 40 per cent of its teaching funding and was forced into a fight for survival as it undertook a major strategic review and rapidly refocused its offering.

Led by the master of the college, David Latchman, the move resulted in a record-breaking 38 per cent increase in student recruitment to help replace ELQ losses, a hugely successful fundraising push and a radically streamlined institution, within a short time.

Tricia Wombell, director of marketing and communications at the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education, said the judges were impressed with the way that Birkbeck had reinvented itself as a “very modern institution” through strong leadership and management.


“From a standing start with the crisis management response to the ELQs policy, improving business processes, increasing widening participation achievements, fundraising, setting up new units, they have been able to define clear targets achieved and best management practices,” she said.

“While the transformation for this particularly unique organisation has been rapid, we believe the commitment and investment in culture change to be sustainable,” she added.

Birkbeck reinvented itself as a very modern institution through strong leadership and management

THE WINNERS

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Design by Chris Barber, *Times Higher Education*