



Strategic Plan 2008-2013

September 2008

Executive Summary

1. This document sets out the College's strategic planning objectives for the period 2008-2010. It builds upon our last Strategic Plan, which covered the period 2005-2010, whilst taking account of recent developments in the higher education and rural sectors. Both policy environments remain challenging and subject to considerable change over the next few years on issues that have increasing global significance, such as food production and climate change. The impact of agriculture on these issues is critical, and Harper Adams, with its considerable expertise in agriculture, but also on related rural and environmental matters, is ideally placed to provide innovation and advice on technological and policy developments. The University College is therefore at an important stage in its history, where it will be able to make a major contribution to some of the most important issues currently facing UK society and will have the potential to contribute to the development of international solutions to these major global priorities.

2. Since 2005 the University College has had considerable success in achieving the objectives it established in its last Strategic Plan. Harper Adams has a strong track record in many higher education policy priority areas, including widening participation, the provision of a high-quality 'student experience', the employment of its students, the provision of innovative employer engagement activities and the implementation of major award winning schemes on sustainability. The University College is increasingly recognised as a high-performing institution that has a clear focus on the markets in which it operates.

3. The University College has also, in the last three years, implemented two major initiatives as part of its previous Strategic Plan. The National Rural Knowledge Exchange (NRKE), the only HEFCE-funded Knowledge Exchange addressing the particular needs of the rural sector, and the *Aspire* Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL), which has made a major contribution to pedagogic developments in the land-based HE sector, have been particular mechanisms via which Harper Adams has been able to forge collaborative links with other organisations. Whilst HEFCE funding for the NRKE initiative is expected to come to an end in mid-2009, the University College is planning a number of new activities that will build upon the experience gained from the knowledge exchange and which will provide a means to promote further collaboration amongst land-based HE providers. The *Aspire* CETL is expected to make a major contribution to the University College's plans for developing employer engagement and work-based learning as a key part of its academic portfolio.

4. Whilst plans for the continuation of our current initiatives have been under review, the University College has also sought the resources to provide a platform for the early stages of the next phase of its development. Our initial proposals for a rurally-focussed Lifelong Learning Network have been reformulated into a Rural Employer Engagement Development

Network, which, in collaboration with the Royal Agricultural College, has allowed the University College to secure a major grant from the HEFCE Strategic Development Fund for co-funded additional student numbers and an associated capital development. The University College's expertise in tackling widening participation amongst young people from a rural background has been recognised with the award of 420 additional student numbers in the period 2008-2009 to 2010-2011 to deliver the Rural Outreach and Student Experience (ROSE) project. As the Year of Food and Farming comes to a close, in mid-2008, the ROSE project will provide the means by which improving rural access to higher education can continue to be a key objective in our work.

5. The University College has been the subject of a number of external reviews over the course of the last three years. The HEFCE Land-based Studies Review, concluded that land-based studies should be recognised as a strategically important subject and that the contributions of the specialist land-based HE providers, including Harper Adams, were of special significance because of their scale and the nature of the higher education they provided. The University College was identified as the UK's largest provider of land-based higher education but also as a significant player in industry-based research in this field. An in-depth QAA assessment in 2006 endorsed the University College's request that research degree awarding powers should be granted to Harper Adams. At the time of writing, the University College remains the only UK higher education institution with both taught and research degree awarding powers, but, because of its size, without University Title. We believe that there is a case to be made for the creation of high-quality specialist universities where both sets of degree awarding powers have been granted, and this objective will be explored early in the next planning period. The global issues facing rural regions at home and abroad demand that England has a university able to innovate, challenge and contribute to rural and scientific debates on the international stage, particularly with regard to issues of food production, food security and related environmental concerns.

6. We are already engaged in internationalisation on a number of fronts, not least through collaborative institutional initiatives in China and research collaborations with institutions in, for example, Europe and the USA. Our students are employed across the world, a feature of the global nature of the agricultural industry and food supply chain. Our international profile has recently been recognised by inclusion as a case study institution in a review of the management of international activities in UK higher education institutions¹.

7. The Strategic Plan is supported by a suite of sub-strategies covering the University College's major operational areas. The sub-strategies provide further in-depth analysis of each of these areas and related action plans that build upon the strategic objectives

¹ Fielden, J (2008) *The Practice of Internationalisation: Managing International Activities in UK Universities*. London: UK Higher Education International Unit Research Series/1, April 2008

established in this document. Our academic development plans, finance strategy and human resources strategy remain particularly important components of our strategic planning because of the period of growth and uncertainty in the external environment that the institution anticipates during the next planning period and the requirement of the University College to deliver major institutional change to achieve its key objectives.

8. The Strategic Plan is divided into the following sections:

- The College's mission and long term vision;
- Review of progress with objectives from the last Strategic Plan;
- An analysis of the external and internal planning environments;
- Long-term objectives and assessment of our current position
- The use of risk analysis to identify planning priorities;
- The integration of the College's planning environment;
- The College's planning priorities and key strategic objectives;
- Implementing the Strategic Plan;
- A goals and action plan (Annex A);
- Student, staff and financial forecasts 2005-2010 (Annex B);
- A statement on progress with the goals and action plan for the last planning period (2002-2007) (Annex C);

The College's Mission and Long Term Vision

9. The rural economies and food chain are vital ingredients in the provision of a sustainable economic climate for the UK. The fundamental shifts in agricultural policy towards more sustainable agricultural practices and stewardship of the environment, signalled in our last strategic plan, are in the process of being implemented. The Government, through DEFRA, has since placed a high priority on the subject of climate change, to which changes in agricultural practice will continue to make a significant contribution. At the same time, there are particular pressures facing the rural economies that remain high profile in policy terms but which need further underpinning research to address. These include global problems of animal disease prevention and control, the causes and impact of world food shortages and the related issue of the security of the UK's food supplies, the production of more healthy forms of food and water and soil management in the light of climate change. Issues that continue to challenge the UK include those of the unlocked potential of the rural economies to contribute to economic growth² and the need to encourage skills development, innovation and investment in support of rural businesses and communities. The University College's mission and vision sit at the heart of these concerns and are more closely related

² England's rural areas: steps to release their economic potential. Advice from the Rural Advocate to the Prime Minister (2008), Cheltenham: Commission for Rural Communities, May 2008

than ever to the policy and economic imperatives facing the UK and its position in the global economy. They are:

Mission

Higher education for the delivery of a sustainable food chain and rural economies

Vision

To maintain a high-quality university institution made distinctive by:

- Activities closely related to the needs of the rural economies and industries reliant upon those economies, with a specific commitment to farming for sustainable environments, re-establishing connections between food producers and consumers, knowledge transfer to support the rural economies and the international dimension of environmental and food chain sustainability;
- The development of national and international markets for students from a wide range of backgrounds wishing to specialise in rural subjects, with associated course and pedagogic developments;
- The provision of a learning environment and promotion of a student culture that enhance employability and personal development;
- Strong industry links that add business relevance to the College's role in higher education and encourage lifelong learning;
- A central role for the College in generating and promoting innovation and the provision of higher education for the rural economies, during and beyond the planning period.

10. To achieve our mission and vision we will continue to employ a set of core values to underpin our work, and which will shape our future planning and policy developments, namely:

- The development of intellectual and professional skills to enable individuals to realise their full personal, social and academic potential and to participate in lifelong learning;
- A commitment to building partnerships with industry, the professions and the community to promote the transfer of knowledge;
- A commitment to extend the boundaries of knowledge and understanding by conducting strategic and applied research;
- The provision of support for the personal, academic and professional development of all members of the College community;
- The development of the College's estate and educational resources to improve our learning environment;
- The delivery of planning systems and a framework for governance and management that will provide a sustainable financial foundation for the work of the College;
- An ethical approach to all activities in which the University College and its staff are engaged, with special reference to the production of food and management of the environment.

Progress with Objectives from the Last Strategic Plan

11. The College's last Strategic Plan covered the Period 2005-2010. A summary of progress with the major goals we set ourselves in that plan is provided in Annex C.

12. Our overall objective for teaching and learning was to stabilise and grow student numbers in our specialist subject areas, and this was to be supported by a number of new initiatives, including the *Aspire* CETL, the successful implementation of our international strategy, the development of a broader profile in CPD work and continued high performance in the assessment of learning and teaching by the QAA and other external agencies. All of these objectives were achieved. Our student numbers now show a healthy upward trajectory, fuelled, in part by the quality of our provision but also more recent and positive trends for graduate demand within the rural and food chain sectors. Our current FTEs stand at 1,670 compared to the planned total of 1,390 contract FTE students by 2010.

13. In research and reach-out work we undertook to achieve funding at least equivalent to 2005 levels in the HEIF3 funding round. Whilst this was achieved, the shift of HEIF4 funding to a formula based allocation has, despite our successful track record of delivery, reduced our level of underpinning grant for third-stream work. We have nonetheless had significant success in improving research and reach-out grant income in the period since our last Strategic Plan was prepared, led by investments in specialist facilities in support of animals and crop research, and the recruitment of research-active staff. Whilst the outcome of the Research Assessment Exercise will not be known until the end of 2008, the University College's performance in industry sponsored research, with 14% of the UK total in 2004, was recognised in the HEFCE Land-based Studies Review³. Research and reach-out income, other than from HEFCE sources, has grown from £1.366m in 2004-05 to £2.365m in 2006/07. We also gained Research Degree Awarding Powers in 2006, a major objective of our last Strategic Plan.

14. The University College established a Financial Strategy in its last planning period to secure an improvement in annual surpluses that would, in turn, provide for investment in human and physical resources necessary to sustain its development. Performance against the strategy targets has been consistent to date, with annual surpluses typically in the region of 3% of income. The Financial Strategy is seeking an improvement to the surplus level in cash terms, and methods to deliver this outcome feature later in the Strategic Plan. We have continued to invest in physical resources to improve their quality and provide additional facilities for students and to support our research and reach-out programmes. Recent developments include new specialist facilities such as extensions to our pig and poultry research units and a major new dairy unit, as well as a new self-catering hall of residence.

³ Review of provision for land-based studies: Final report (2007), Bristol: HEFCE, p6

Our estate development strategy is being progressed in concert with the Local Development Framework and we remain engaged with our Local Authority on methods to promote the sustainable development of the University College campus. This work forms one component of our Environmental Sustainability Strategy which was updated in 2007/08 and on which significant progress has been made over the period since 2005.

15. A large element of our success relates to the quality and dedication of our staff, and the desire, on the part of the University College, to provide a supportive environment in which they can contribute to key institutional objectives. In the period since 2005 we have implemented nearly all elements of the national framework agreement, successfully completed the HEFCE self-assessment review of HR practices and have paid particular attention to management performance, with initiatives such as a recent 360-degree appraisal exercise for all University College managers. We successfully achieved Investors in People reaccreditation in March 2008.

16. We highlighted, in our last Strategic Plan, the goal of academic and financial sustainability so that the University College would be in a position, by 2010, to adopt a leading role as a full university specialising in rural matters. We have made significant progress towards this objective over the last three years, particularly with regard to raising our institutional profile. Examples of this include the record of the University College in sector performance indicators and being shortlisted for the title of 'University of the Year' by the Sunday Times in 2007. We are preparing a case for university title which will be a major feature of our work in the early stages of the new Strategic Plan. The University College has consistently demonstrated, through external review, that the quality of its academic work is extremely high. This is matched by high standards of governance, which were subject to external review through the research degree awarding process in 2006. We continue to contribute to sector developments in governance as a means to learn from other institutions and to demonstrate best practice in this aspect of our work.

17. By a variety of measures the University College is performing well, in comparison with many other higher education institutions. The view from the perspective of the users of the University College's services could be considered particularly important. Recently, a number of cross-sector groups of higher education institutions have highlighted aspects of the 'student experience' on which the College has been working since its Strategic Plan in 2002. Most notable, in this respect, is the way that the National Student Survey (NSS) has quickly gained credibility, and widespread use, as a measure of the relative strength of an institution. This approach appears to have gained ground because of the potential 'opening' up of the HE market with the review of tuition fee levels planned for 2009. For example, a recent report by the 1994 Group of research-intensive (pre-92) universities⁴ presented NSS results that

⁴ *Enhancing the Student Experience*, 1994 Group Policy Statement, November 2007

suggested that 5 of its members occupied places within the top 6 institutions in the sector. When the results for Harper Adams are added (Tables 1 and 2), the College compares favourably, in terms of student experience, with this group of institutions and even more favourably when compared to the 1994 Group (19 institutions) and the sector as a whole (this analysis excludes other small institutions that could have featured in the tables):

Table 1: 1994 Group top institution NSS results, plus results for Harper Adams

NSS top six (from 3 year average 2005-2007)

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | | |
|-----------------------|----------|-------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| Institution | Teaching | Assessment and feedback | Academic support | Organisation and management | Learning resources | Personal development | Average Score (Columns A-F) | Overall satisfaction |
| 1 St Andrews | 88 | 77 | 83 | 86 | 75 | 84 | 82 | 89 |
| 2 Oxford | 88 | 76 | 84 | 80 | 94 | 84 | 84 | 88 |
| 3 Leicester | 85 | 75 | 81 | 82 | 84 | 83 | 82 | 87 |
| 4 Birkbeck | 86 | 76 | 77 | 79 | 77 | 80 | 79 | 86 |
| 5 Loughborough | 83 | 75 | 82 | 85 | 87 | 83 | 82 | 85 |
| 6 Harper Adams | 82 | 78 | 83 | 79 | 85 | 86 | 82 | 85 |
| 7 East Anglia | 84 | 74 | 80 | 81 | 85 | 83 | 81 | 85 |

Table 2: 1994 Group and sector NSS results, plus results for Harper Adams

| | A | B | C | D | E | F | | |
|---------------------|----------|-------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| Institution | Teaching | Assessment and feedback | Academic support | Organisation and management | Learning resources | Personal development | Average Score (Columns A-F) | Overall satisfaction |
| Harper Adams | 82.0 | 78.0 | 82.0 | 78.0 | 84.0 | 86.0 | 81.7 | 84.0 |
| 1994 Group | 82.2 | 71.3 | 77.4 | 79.3 | 80.0 | 80.1 | 78.4 | 82.9 |
| Sector | 79.9 | 70.5 | 75.6 | 75.0 | 79.9 | 80.1 | 76.9 | 80.1 |

The external and internal planning environments

18. A number of the major policy changes noted in our last Strategic Plan remain in the process of implementation. Although the introduction of increased tuition fees did not impact upon demand for university places as much as some commentators had feared, there is continued uncertainty around the timing and impact of the review of tuition fees scheduled to start in 2009. Increased tuition fees, and greater fee differentiation within the higher education market may occur at a time when demographic projections indicate a downturn in the number of available 'traditional' (ie age range 19-21) students⁵. Add to this the Government's aim to widen access to higher education from under-represented groups⁶, and the picture becomes even more complex. Although the UK population is expected to grow

⁵ Further Education: Raising Skills, Improving Life Chances, Technical Supplement to the White Paper, DFES, March 2006

⁶ Grant announcement for higher education 2008-09, Department for Innovation Universities and Skills, 11 January 2008

between 2008 to the mid 2030s, demographic projections suggest that there could be an average downturn of as much as 23% in potential students from lower-socioeconomic groups in the period to 2020, whilst numbers in groups normally expected to enter higher education are anticipated to fall by only 3%⁷.

19. Whilst current evidence suggests that demand for places at the University College is extremely strong, and despite the variability of the demographic projections, the underlying message is that 'traditional' students may be harder to find in the later stages of the planning period and into the period to 2020. The University College needs to respond to this signal early on, to establish a firm foundation to maintain and grow the institution in what could be an increasingly difficult core market for students over the next few years.

20. We noted in our last plan that the potential for instability in the sector in the light of the changes noted above could be increased should the funding environment for higher education be subject to major change. We have witnessed one such event in the last year, with the rapid implementation of a new Government policy on Equivalent and Lower Qualifications (ELQs). In the last three years we have addressed a HEFCE Land-based Studies Review and a HEFCE review of specialist institution funding that has led to changes that have effectively ruled out this element of funding for new areas of activity (for example, additional student numbers). At the time of writing, we face a further HEFCE review that intends to establish whether 'exceptional' funding (the new term for specialist premium funding) should be continued, on the basis of an assessment of whether the funded activities meet a public interest test. Given that the latest review is scheduled to take place as this Strategic Plan is being introduced, we are unable to determine the likely outcome, nor is there yet a clear picture of how HEFCE will address the complex issue of defining matters of public interest. The University College believes, that a stable funding platform is essential to the future sustainability of specialist institutions and will be making the case for retention of 'exceptional' funding, and for a period without further reviews, which inevitably lead to uncertainty in the funding climate for those institutions that are involved.

21. The HEFCE Land-based Studies Review, conducted during 2005-2007 concluded that the subject area was strategically important and that whilst it was not currently as vulnerable as some other subject areas there was strong potential for vulnerability to increase in response to events such as the decision of one institution to close the subject area. The Chairman of the Review Group noted that continued attention to the health of land-based subject providers was necessary because the land-based sector was going through a period 'of intense change'. She further noted that, 'Reform of the Common Agricultural Policy and its impact on the way in which farmers will manage the land, government targets for renewable energy, and an increasing recognition both by government and by the public of the extent of

⁷ Demand for Higher Education to 2020 and Beyond, HEPI, June 2007

climate change, are all likely to have major impacts on the skills needed to respond to these challenges⁸. The University College is well placed to respond to those skills needs, and the other issues addressed in the Chairman's statement, through high-quality teaching⁹.

22. Our track record in third-stream work, supported by an active applied research programme and a broad range of knowledge transfer activities, has placed us in a prime position to develop new approaches for the delivery of the Government's employer engagement programme to businesses in the rural economies. For example, our early work with resources provided by the Higher Education Innovation Fund helped develop the Women in Rural Enterprise programme to a position where it has led a novel Regional Womens' Enterprise Unit over the last two years, in conjunction with delivery agents specialising in urban business support. The initiative has resulted in the formation of 274 new urban and rural businesses within the West Midlands region since April 2006. Our Sustainable Technologies Network initiative has led to award-winning work with regional businesses on biomass technologies, and our programmes of continuing professional development have been extended to new audiences. Early work on employer engagement has involved a collaborative programme to deliver bite-sized modular conversion courses for more than 2,200 people seeking conversion to new qualifications to practice the distribution of animal medicines. Another 2,000 new learners have also been engaged in seeking the new qualifications. Other approaches to employer engagement, including accreditation arrangements for employer-led programmes, have also been successfully launched, and the employer engagement agenda will be a key feature of our strategy for addressing potential changes in 'traditional' student markets, diversifying our learning and teaching portfolio as we enter the next decade and in addressing the higher-level skills needs of the rural economies.

23. We have identified a need to create networks of provision to deliver ambitious targets for the growth of employer engagement work. Not only is the process of identifying and developing a relationship with potential employer clients time consuming, but it is also difficult for a single institution to respond to tailored business needs in the land-based sector because it consists of a large number of relatively small and widely dispersed businesses that require easy access to local university services. We have established collaborative arrangements for previous initiatives, such as the National Rural Knowledge Exchange, and new partnership arrangements in employer engagement where we are currently working with 21 HE and FE institutions on the delivery of one programme. The concept of collaborative activities in new areas of teaching, learning and knowledge transfer is not, therefore, new to the University College. It nonetheless requires high quality project management to deliver successfully, and this aspect of delivery will feature in the next stage of our employer engagement and knowledge transfer work.

⁸ Statement from the Chair of the Land-based Studies Advisory Group, commending the report to HEFCE, at http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/rdreports/2007/rd09_07/rd09_07.doc

⁹ QAA Institutional Audit, June 2005 and Mid-Cycle Review, 2007

24. The concept of the 'rural economy' has recently been challenged in that there is growing recognition of multiple local economies operating within rural areas, from relatively prosperous market towns, some close to a major conurbation, to remote inland or coastal communities¹⁰. Whilst underlining the need for tailored university-business interactions in response to local business conditions, this recognition also highlights the requirement for greater awareness of the social needs of rural communities, extending, in this context, to their access to educational opportunities. Their ability to unlock unfulfilled potential in terms of skills development and, in turn, to meet the expectations and objectives set out in the Leitch review of skills to develop higher-level (level 4) skills to over 40% of the adult workforce by 2020¹¹. The Government's Rural Advocate notes that, '...economies that contain 9.5m people – over 5.5m employees (including 34% of company directors), around 1 million businesses and over one third of a million workless households – as our rural areas host, merit attention and leadership at the heart of Government.'¹² Such attention and leadership must come also from the higher education sector, particularly in dealing with the issue of participation by rural young people and the promotion of graduate employment in rural regions to help improve the impact of knowledge transfer to rural businesses.

25. The OECD has picked up the need for more graduate recruitment and retention in rural firms and for young rural people to make the transition to higher education in such a way that it does not require them to leave rural communities to gain meaningful employment. It was noted that, 'in lagging regions with a low demand for graduates, higher education can legitimately provide a ladder of opportunity for young people that in the short run inevitably leads them out of the region. Knowledge transfer on legs will be of little use if those legs simply walk away'¹³. The OECD further noted that adult workers receiving higher-level skills development could have a more direct effect on a rural region's economic performance because they were often less mobile than younger people. Several OECD countries had, in addition, made specific efforts to attract top academics, researchers and highly skilled workers to rural areas, an approach that was increasingly replacing inward investment attraction as a key role for their rural development agencies¹⁴. The University College's twin-track approach to improving skills in rural businesses through its knowledge transfer and employer engagement activities, and its plans to address widening participation in rural communities, is intended to address the very issue of improving graduate recruitment and retention and higher-level skills in the UK's rural economies.

¹⁰ England's rural areas: steps to release their economic potential. Advice from the Rural Advocate to the Prime Minister (2008), Cheltenham: Commission for Rural Communities, May 2008, p11

¹¹ Prosperity for All in the Global Economy: Final Report, The Leitch Review of Skills, London: HM Treasury, December 2006

¹² *ibid*, p17

¹³ Yelland, R. (2008) Innovative rural regions: The Role of Human Capital and Technology, OECD Rural Conference 2007, Paris: OECD, quoted in, England's rural areas: steps to release their economic potential. Advice from the Rural Advocate to the Prime Minister (2008), Cheltenham: Commission for Rural Communities, May 2008, p23

¹⁴ Innovative rural regions: The Role of Human Capital and Technology – Key Messages. OECD Rural Conference 2007, Paris: OECD, p3 at <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/52/61/38861970.pdf>

26. The emphasis placed on innovation in the Sainsbury Report¹⁵ is echoed in the approach required to tackle major global issues and the way that they impact upon rural economies. A Cabinet Office study noted that, 'a key scientific challenge for the coming decades is to feed a growing world population by maintaining agricultural productivity growth in the face of:

- Deteriorating conditions in many areas (changing water availability, soil degradation and salinisation, climate modification);
- The need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture as part of the effort to tackle climate change; and
- A growing, and wealthier, world population

Biofuel policies are also creating a growing, inelastic source of demand for grain and oilseeds that will further tighten the global balance of supply and demand'¹⁶. The HEFCE Land-based Studies Review, however, identified a disconnection between the distribution of central research funding and the applied research necessary to address these issues. In addition, DEFRA figures for the 'self-sufficiency ratios for all foods' show that the UK's ability to supply its own food dropped from 70% in 1996 to 59% in 2006 and that, since the 1980s, the UK agricultural sector has failed to keep pace with the growth in productivity of its competitors¹⁷. The linkages between global issues, including those of food security, diet and nutrition, primary food production from our farming industry and the management of the food chain and its impact on rural economies, may seem remote from the focus of CAP reforms and their emphasis on environmental stewardship, but they nonetheless remain vital aspects of the future sustainability of the UK and in critical need of applied R&D investment. The University College has been successful in addressing industry R&D needs, as demonstrated in the HEFCE Land-based Studies Review, but there is far more work to be done to investigate ways in which sustainable food supplies can be maintained in the light of complex choices required over the use of land and the impact of climate change on food production. Proposed changes to the HEFCE funding system for research, with the introduction of the Research Excellence Framework, are now expected to take place outside the immediate planning period, but will nevertheless remain a focus for attention by the University College, to ensure that applied research features in the new funding mechanism.

27. The issues at stake are well rehearsed within the agricultural industry and are now having a direct impact on households across the UK, where average world agricultural prices have risen by 60% and retail food prices by 8% over the last year¹⁸. Less understood,

¹⁵ Innovation Nation, The Sainsbury Report, London: Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills, March 2008

¹⁶ Food: An Analysis of the Issues, The Strategy Unit, Cabinet Office, January 2008

¹⁷ Leaver, D (2008) Lack of agricultural R&D is putting food security at risk, Research Fortnight, 4 June 2008

¹⁸ Comment by Mervyn King, Governor of the Bank of England, reported by the BBC at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/7458209.stm>

perhaps, is the significantly increased cost of food production which means that even though prices have increased, agricultural businesses are not seeing a massive improvement in business returns, which has led to still further rationalisation within key commodity areas, such as dairy production. There are, however, signs that improved demand for agricultural production and innovation within the sector is leading to increased demand for high-level skills, which could prove helpful to the University College's ambitions for growth in the next planning period. It also underlines the need for the University College to be increasingly agile in its ability to identify new markets for growth and new areas for innovation that will help address the major issues facing rural economies in the next few years.

28. Improving economic agility lies at the heart of the Government's sub-national review, addressing regional disparities by reorganising policy making bodies, and their responsibilities within the English regions¹⁹. It will be important for the University College to act as an advocate for rural areas within the region both during and beyond this period of change. We expect, also, to strengthen our ties with our local authority, and the adjacent County Council, to assist with their potential new role in promoting economic development. We have considerable expertise in the rural aspects of this agenda and, as noted earlier, have conducted ground-breaking work on new business development in partnership with our Regional Development Agency, AWM. The new structures to be adopted within the region will be a focus of our outreach strategy over the next planning period. At the same time, the University College will seek closer ties with its local authority to assist, where possible, with the transfer of responsibilities for College provision for 16-19 year olds from the LSC, so as to ensure that progression from FE to HE within the local area remains a key priority.

29. The University College expects to play an increasing advisory role on rural developments in adjacent regions and the opportunities, and threats that they could pose for the development of rural higher education within the West Midlands. We regard the boundary with Wales to be artificial in this respect, particularly with regard to the rural focus of both regions, and note, in particular, the important developments taking place at Aberystwyth University on research and development in the agricultural sector²⁰ and the consortium of Welsh universities now providing support to businesses on sustainable development²¹. Cross-national collaboration could be one avenue to be explored, so as to capitalise on the respective positions of the University and the University College within some of the most rural parts of the UK.

¹⁹ Prosperous Places: Taking forwards the Review of Sub National Economic Development and Regeneration, Consultation Document issued by the Department for Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform, 31 March 2008

²⁰ The Aberystwyth Bio Centre (ABC) has brought together the research facilities of the Institute of Rural Sciences, the Institute of Biological Sciences (IBS) and the Institute of Grassland and Environmental Research (IGER).

²¹ See further details at: <http://www.aber.ac.uk/meansbusiness/home.htm>

30. This type of collaboration could be assisted by the decision to relocate the agricultural sector Levy Boards to Stoneleigh Park in the West Midlands. The new Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB), and its constituent companies representing areas of agricultural production, are expected to move in 2009, and will be located on the same site as the Sector Skills Council for the Environmental and Land-based sectors (LANTRA). The University College will endeavour to ensure that effective links are established and maintained with AHDB, as they have been with LANTRA, so that our work on research and development, and knowledge transfer into higher-level skills, can be informed by the latest policy developments and promoted within these important sector agencies.

Long Term Objectives and Assessment of Our Current Position

31. The Strategic Plan is seen as a stepping stone towards our long-term institutional objectives. Our long-term objectives, for the period up to 2020, are that the University College should be:

- A university;
- An HE voice on land-based (and related) subjects within the region, the UK more generally and Europe;
- A source of independent and authoritative commentary to inform the public about rural matters;
- An institution with a high profile within the HE sector;
- A centre of excellence working in partnership with the rural economy and communities

32. Three elements of these objectives revolve around our ability to influence debate to a wider extent than we are currently able. These are:

- Recognition of our position within the HE sector
- Developing our position within Europe
- Developing wider public recognition of the institution as a centre of excellence

On the point of establishing a clear position within the HE sector, an internal review, using an approach established by Ernst & Young²² to set out the key attributes of three broad categories of university (Table 3) sought to establish the current perception of the place of the University College within the sector. The characteristics of each type of institution, as provided by Ernst and Young, that are considered to be held by the University College, are indicated in bold:

²² *The new world order for higher education*, Government Services Series, Ernst & Young LLP, September 2007 (full paper available at http://www.ey.com/global/content.nsf/UK/_Government_Public)

Table 3: Attributes of three broad categories of university

| Regional | National | Global |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong links to local business and wider community • More applied and vocational subjects • Competent teaching staff • Incentives for local applicants • Pastoral care and student support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong links to major blue chip business • Blend of academic and vocational focus • Strong teaching staff • (Some) Quality research facilities • (Some) Quality student accommodation • Postgraduate schools for most subjects taught • Strong pastoral care | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to multinational and blue-chip employers • Traditional academic disciplines • (Some) Internationally renowned researchers and teachers • Access to leading edge research projects and high quality research facilities • Large international postgraduate schools • Personal tutorials with junior academics and post-doctoral students |

33. The University College clearly holds a national institutional profile, which is reflected in our pattern of undergraduate recruitment, but there are aspects of its work that still need to be strengthened. These relate, in particular, to taught postgraduate provision and the breadth of our research work, both of which could help raise the profile of the institution. The new Research Excellence Framework may not work in our favour in terms of funding, and other ways may need to be found to support the research activity that distinguishes our provision from the other specialist land-based HE and competitor FE institutions, including further possible collaborations with university faculties.

The use of risk analysis to identify planning priorities

34. The University College implemented its risk analysis and action plan system in May 2002, and this has been updated annually to take account of new key risks that need to be monitored and addressed. An OECD study on the sustainability of higher education²³ identified a number of factors that could present barriers, and hence risks, to the financial sustainability of higher education institutions. These included, amongst others:

- Where an institution is driven by an academic vision that is not directly related to financial goals;
- Where an ethos of public service and social responsibility leads the institution to provide services that might not be regarded as financially viable in business;
- Where institutions lack the ability (and perhaps the will) to manage their costs and performance to the extent that is normal in business.

All of these issues remain germane to the University College's implementation plans for the objectives later established for the period to 2013.

35. The University College must ensure that there is an adequate balance between the financial imperatives that need to be met to ensure its sustainability and the academic vitality

²³ On the Edge: Securing a Sustainable Future for Higher Education, OECD, 2004, p35

that will need to be displayed during the planning period to maintain a strong position and reputation within the higher education sector and amongst rural employers. To this end, the major elements of the current risk analysis that are expected to develop over the course of the next few years, and which impact directly on the Strategic Plan, have been assessed, and together with the ways in which they will be addressed, are shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Strategic plan risk analysis

| Major Strategic Plan Risk | To be addressed by: | And managed by: |
|--|--|--|
| Difficulties in meeting student contract targets because of the changing nature of the undergraduate student market. This is particularly the case from 2009 because of the review of variable tuition fees, but could extend later into the planning period because of competition for student recruitment | The University College's full range of widening participation and recruitment activities; regular monitoring of recruitment performance by the College Executive; novel rural programmes and methods of delivery | College Executive |
| The potential for a loss of core HEFCE funding because of the review of 'exceptional' funding and/or the replacement of competitive funding opportunities (in which the University College performs well) with formula-based systems (in which the University College is likely to fare less well) | Continued lobbying of the Funding Council during the review period, stressing, in particular, the need to 'rural-proof' appropriate higher education provision in line with the recent advice of the Government's Rural Advocate to the Prime Minister | Principal |
| Difficulties in developing alternative funding streams to meet any shortfall in income arising from the above risks. The principal aim of achieving financial sustainability will be helped, but not resolved by the flow of variable tuition fee income, and further work will be needed to generate additional income (with associated profit) from other sources in order to reinvest in the University College's infrastructure and general operations | A renewed effort on the part of all staff to generate income that will make a genuine contribution towards central costs by the appropriate use of Full Economic Costing, project management systems and the provision of time for project development | Heads of Academic Groups and Line Managers with Dean of Academic Affairs and Director of Finance |
| The difficulty in continuing to meet the University College's mission by delivering high cost academic subjects, balanced against the changing policy imperatives of the rural sector where the development of the farming sector will still need to be supported, but in different ways, whilst the full range of rural subjects will need to be addressed to maintain the University College's unique multidisciplinary expertise | The case for emphasising continued diversity within the sector will be made to the Funding Council, DIUS and other government agencies. | Principal with College Executive |
| The maintenance of high quality educational provision, third stream activities and research in a climate of rapid change and increasing legislative regulation | A continued emphasis on quality management systems across all University College activities | College Executive |
| The potential structural blockages to the University College's long-term objective to become a University because that vision is not shared or supported by funding agencies or other potential partners | Continued lobbying with the Funding Council, DIUS and other partner agencies to make clear the University College's case for full University Title to safeguard higher education provision in subjects of strategic importance | Principal with Director of Academic Affairs |

| Major Strategic Plan Risk | To be addressed by: | And managed by: |
|---|---|--|
| A further major shift in national policy during the planning period that could destabilise the core objectives of the Plan, including the potential for FD awarding powers being granted to FE Colleges | Maintaining the University College's ability to respond quickly and appropriately to such developments by constant policy monitoring | Principal with Dean of External Liaison |
| The risk of 'overtrading' by trying to take on too much activity without that activity being profitable | Implementation of more sophisticated and holistic techniques to analyse the opportunity costs of taking on new initiatives and establish new resource evaluation and allocation methods where appropriate | College Executive with Director of Finance |

36. The College has a strong reputation as a high-quality institution that is helping meet the needs of the rural sector, but continued attention will be required to a range of other operational risks to maintain that reputation and ensure that the key risks identified above can continue to be properly managed. These areas are identified in Diagram 1 and are routinely addressed through the College's risk management system.

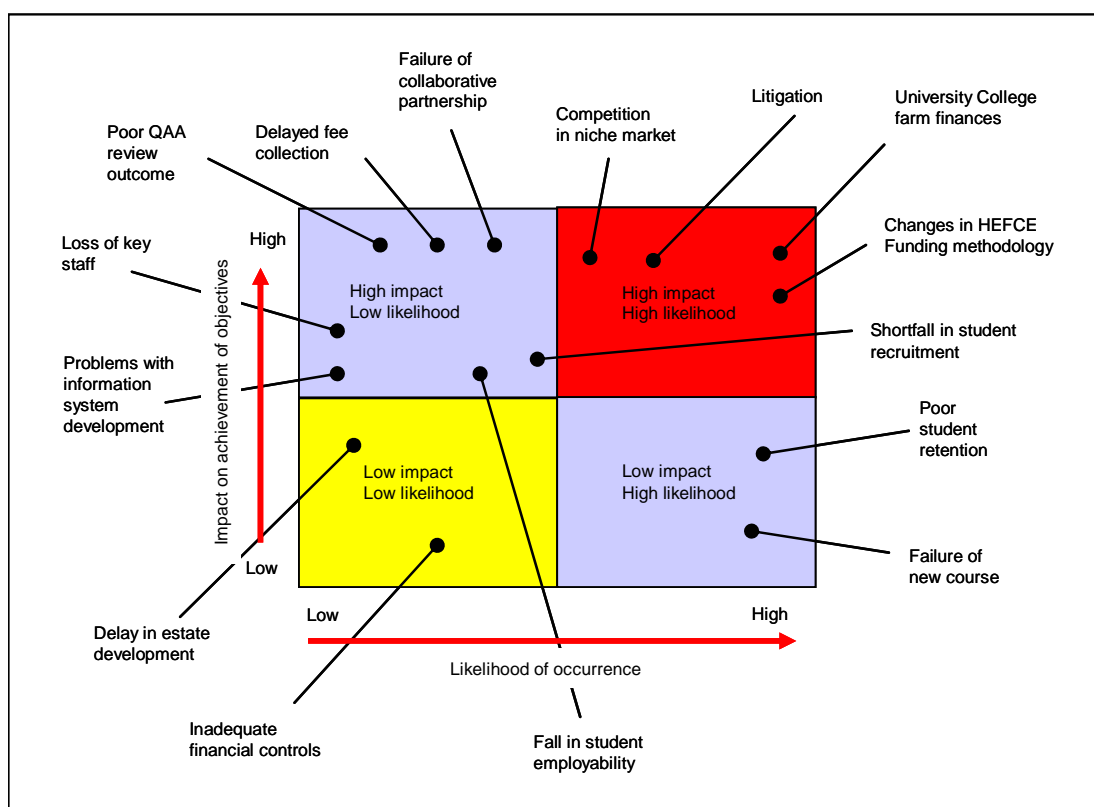


Diagram 1: The College's operational risk framework

37. The continued integration of the College's risk analysis framework with the strategic planning process will ensure that the key areas of risk will be closely monitored by senior College staff and action reported to the College Executive and relevant committees of the Academic Board and the Board of Governors over the lifetime of this plan.

The integration of the College's planning environment

38. The College continues to use an integrated planning methodology to ensure that the Strategic Plan and associated sub strategies aim for common objectives and support each other in the process, an approach recommended in a recent review of managing sustainability within the higher education sector²⁴. This method has helped provide a 'joined-up' approach to planning within the institution and a means by which those preparing sub strategies can consider the effects of their proposals on other sections or activities of the University College. The overall planning framework is shown in Diagram 2. This has been developed since the University College's last Strategic Plan, to show the importance of the University College's latest major initiatives and their relationship to other aspects of the College's planning environment.

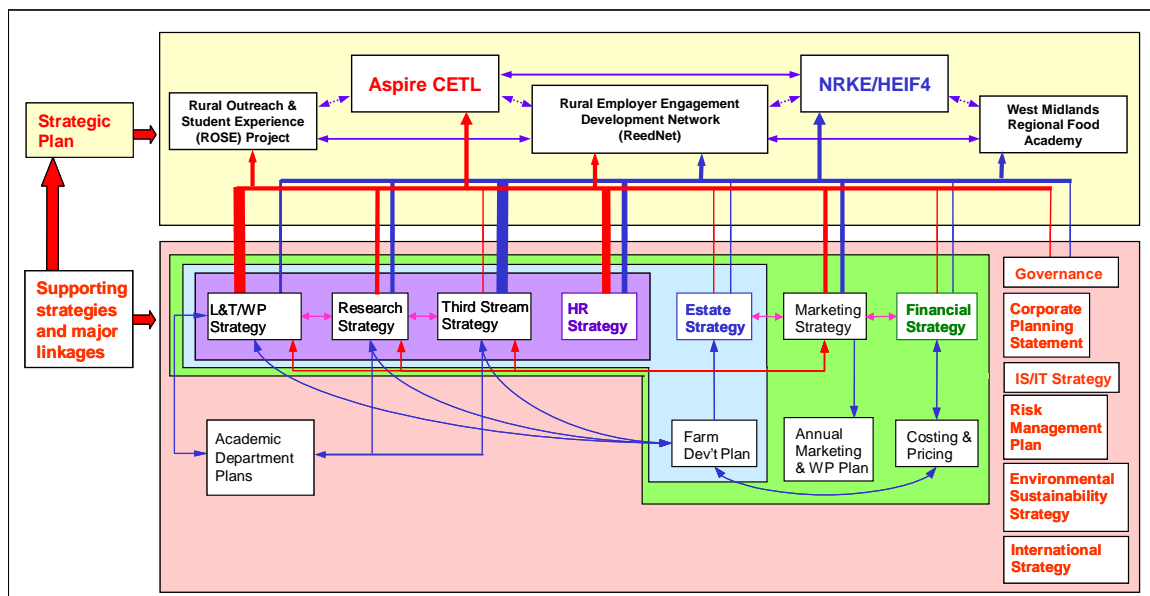


Diagram 2: The College's strategic planning framework

39. Each of the sub strategies is regularly reviewed to ensure that it remains able to meet current demands from external and internal planning developments. Most recently, reviews of the HR Strategy and Learning & Teaching Strategy have been undertaken. The Diagram indicates linkages between the sub strategies (indicated by the background coloured boxes) and where complementary arrangements need to exist between the sub-strategies (indicated by the arrows). The College Executive is responsible for managing the process of strategy formulation, which typically involves consultation with staff to ensure that a wide range of views can be incorporated in the final documents.

The College's planning priorities and key strategic objectives

²⁴ Inspiration, excellence and achievement: Helping universities manage for sustainable academic excellence, (2007) London: PA Consulting Group

40. Our earlier planning exercises²⁵ have endorsed our view of the College's significant strengths and unique features that will need to be fully employed for the benefit of students, their employers and the wider rural economies. In summary, these are:

- We understand the rural economy and communities;
- We have a critical mass of expertise in rural matters, including agriculture, agricultural engineering, food, and land and environmental management;
- We have a national perspective that can help break down regional barriers;
- We have, within our academic portfolio, strategically important subjects that need to be maintained and strengthened;
- We have a strong brand identity that is well known within related industries and professions;
- We have our own estate and a willingness to develop it for the greater good of the University College and its students;
- We have a direct role to play in 'rural-proofing' the UK higher education sector;
- We have a strong adaptive capacity, based on clearly articulated plans for development, the strengths of our staff, our physical asset base and the relationships we have with our sector.

41. It will be important for the University College to continue to play to these strengths in the next planning period. The University College has therefore established a number of strategic objectives it wishes to achieve by the end of the planning period in 2013. These objectives are critical to the continued financial well-being of the institution and the positioning of the University College in the higher education and rural sectors that will, in turn, contribute to continued financial sustainability. These are summarised in Table 5 and are expanded upon in Annex A. The University College will continue to emphasise its focus on rural matters and to differentiate itself within the sector by that focus and by the provision of high quality learning and teaching, third stream work and research. In adopting this approach, the University College will be taking a conscious decision to build further upon its strengths as a specialist higher education institution. It will be necessary for the College to deliver on a number of key objectives in the planning period, namely (All annexes to follow):

- Student recruitment to the targets set in Annex B1;
- The growth of our employer engagement activities to the targets set in Annex B1;
- The successful implementation of initiatives it has recently gained to promote widening participation and employer engagement in the rural sector;
- The maintenance of high-quality academic provision;
- The maintenance of financial sustainability over the planning period, in accordance with the financial forecasts at Annex B3.

²⁵ College Executive Review, December 2007; Board of Governors and College Executive joint planning exercise, January 2008; and subsequent consultations with staff

Table 5 Major strategic objectives for the period 2008-2013

Learning & Teaching and Widening Participation

- a) A continued focus on our approach to student recruitment, student financial aid and the broader 'student experience' to help maintain and improve undergraduate student numbers, retention and outcomes
- b) The implementation of our plans to further promote widening participation in higher education from rural areas, and hence a diverse student population, using the approach established in our Rural Outreach and Student Experience (ROSE) project
- c) The implementation of our plans for developing appropriate and flexible learning opportunities for work-based learners, including the wider use of learning technologies, using the approaches established in our Rural Employer Engagement Development Network (ReedNet) and Rural Employer Engagement Student Experience (REESEP) projects
- d) A series of measures to ensure that the University College's research and third-stream programmes continue to inform the development of the taught curriculum and that the design of the curriculum will ensure that students are well prepared for employment, self-employment and career development that provides for later reengagement on higher education and higher-level skills-related activities
- e) The implementation of our plans to further develop postgraduate taught provision to build upon core strengths and exploit new learning opportunities geared towards new cross-institution research and third-stream themes
- f) Robust academic quality management, coupled with the continued implementation of professional teaching standards and an attractive and economically sustainable curriculum that will ensure that the University College's learning and teaching provision is of the highest academic quality, helps meet the aims of our Learning and Teaching Strategy, and delivers a successful outcome to the QAA Institutional Audit in 2010

Research and Third Stream Activities

- a) Successful implementation and operation of new cross-institution research and third-stream themes in Sustainable Agriculture, Climate Change, Environment and Energy; Food Systems; and Rural Business and Social Enterprise
- b) Development of an integrated research and third stream strategy that will underpin our undergraduate and work-based learning curricula and provide a robust framework for delivering research via appropriate knowledge transfer mechanisms to the food chain, the wider rural economy and their constituent businesses and communities
- c) Successful implementation of our HEIF4 Institutional Strategy, including, from mid-2009, successor collaborative projects to the National Rural Knowledge Exchange and other activities in enterprise promotion and climate change
- d) The implementation of the West Midlands Regional Food Academy project that will focus on access to continuing professional development and knowledge transfer for small food businesses as well as large-scale food producers
- e) A review of the University College's performance in the Research Assessment Exercise 2008 to inform its approach to the Research Excellence Framework in 2013/14
- f) Continued support and development of new researchers and new areas of research expertise that will enhance the University College's current strengths and contribute to the implementation of the research and third-stream strategy

Human Resources

- a) Implementation of the University College's HR Strategy for the period 2008-2011, including planned investment in new staff resources to meet the institution's key academic and financial objectives
- b) A focus on the continued development of management and assessment of management performance as key components in the delivery of the University College's core academic and institutional objectives
- c) Continued staff development to enable all staff to contribute to high quality academic and support service delivery
- d) Implementation of a comprehensive contribution-related pay system to reward exceptional performance in the delivery of individual and institutional objectives

- e) Continued attention to the delivery of appropriate measures of equality and diversity in the operation of the institution's activities
- f) A further HR Self assessment review in 2010 to benchmark the University College's progress in HR management midway through the planning period

Financial Sustainability and Physical Resources

- a) Continued generation of financial surpluses to reinvest in core activities and maintain financial sustainability, in accordance with the institutional Financial Strategy, together with a greater understanding of the cost base of the University College's activities via a focus on new methods of resource allocation and resource management
- b) Diversification of learning and teaching activities to deliver further work-based learning (via the ReedNet programme) that will help the University College address changing demographics and ensure financial sustainability during the planning period
- c) A focus on changes to the HEFCE funding methodology, the forthcoming review of student contributions to tuition fees, the promotion of voluntary giving and labour and operating costs that all have the potential to impact upon the University College's Financial Strategy and financial sustainability during the planning period
- d) The implementation of the University College's Estate and IS/IT Strategies, to provide facilities that will continue to be attractive to students in the rapidly developing HE market
- e) The continued development of high quality specialist facilities that will underpin the University College's strategically important role in the land-based HE provision, including related applied research and knowledge transfer activities
- f) The management of physical resources, including the University College farm and estate, in ways that will make a positive contribution to addressing climate change, energy use and environmental sustainability

Institutional Profile and Governance

- a) Continued enhancement of the University College's national profile via the successful delivery of major initiatives such as the ReedNet and ROSE programmes and the implementation of new strategies for marketing and corporate communications
- b) Continued enhancement of the University College's international profile via the implementation of its International Strategy and targeted overseas collaborations
- c) Collaboration with DEFRA and other agencies involved in rural and food chain affairs, and regional government, so as to ensure that the University College's activities are attuned to national and regional policy imperatives and continue to make appropriate independent academic contributions to policy development and implementation
- d) Implementation of the institution's Environmental Sustainability Strategy to establish the University College as a leading exponent, within the higher education sector, on issues of rural sustainable development
- e) Submission, early in the planning period, of an application for University Title
- f) Maintenance of high standards of governance, leadership and management to deliver the strategic objectives outlined above

42. In delivering the above objectives, the University College will have to consider other major developments in the HE sector. As an 'early warning' of some of these issues, a recent analysis of 'megatrends' facing the US higher education system over the next planning period²⁶, provided a number that appear to resonate with issues that are likely to face higher education in the UK. These include:

- An ageing higher education sector workforce;
- The increasing disparity between institutions able to raise significant financial income from sources other than government, and those that are not;

²⁶ Carlson, BE and G J Matthews (2008) Bridging the Leadership Gap: Megatrends Impacting Our Next Generation of Presidents, Trusteeship, May/June 2008

- The potential for further growth of 'for-profit' higher education and the competition for resources and students that this might create;
- Further developments in distance-learning which require investment and pedagogical innovation;
- Increasing internationalisation of higher education and the development of new markets and new competitors on the global stage

43. The University College must therefore be prepared to attempt to achieve its objectives in the face of major changes in the nature and structure of higher education, in the UK and abroad, at the same time as addressing major changes in the rural economies that it serves. The challenge is clear – the University College will have to grow and adapt to deliver these objectives, and, potentially, to survive as a thriving independent organisation.

44. Our plans for growth are driven by the proven ability of the University College to demonstrate high quality provision across a wide range of accepted sector indicators and throughout its academic portfolio, as much as by the need to maintain the financial sustainability of the institution. Land-based studies are acknowledged to be strategically important and potentially vulnerable, and the evidence suggests that where the independence of an institution is lost, the threat of closure for subject areas such as agriculture remains high, in part because of the particular approaches required to attract students into higher education to study 'rural subjects' but also because of the relative underperformance of agriculture, across the sector, in assessments of research performance. The picture may change as the reality of global impacts on food production increase in the next five years. In the meantime, the University College is committed to an independent future and the development of a community of learning that can generate knowledge to support such changes, and their wider impact on society. Our key ambition in this area is the continued development, and possible implementation, of a submission for University Title. This would further differentiate the University College from other specialist providers of land-based studies, but would be a signal to the rural economies and rural communities that the provision of higher education is being directly addressed by an institution geared towards their needs.

Implementing the Strategic Plan

45. Resources to deliver the first stages of our adaptation have recently been secured, with the award of significant funding for the development of a new collaborative programme of employer engagement work. The targets set by the Rural Employer Engagement (ReedNet) programme are ambitious and stretching, but mark a shift from reliance on an undergraduate market that is potentially at risk over the period to 2020, a risk that the University College must be prepared to address. The ReedNet project has brought with it significant investment in co-funded students number (450 over the next three years distributed between the partner

institutions) and a major capital investment to improve student service delivery at the University College. A second major initiative is the Rural Outreach and Student Experience (ROSE) programme, which will seek to improve still further the widening participation activities of the University College, and its associate institution, Reaseheath College, in rural areas. The programme will result in 420 additional student numbers over the next three years, again, distributed between the partner institutions. The rapid pace of growth will require leadership, strong project management, and engagement from all sections on the University College community, but it is a unique base upon which to launch the next stage of the development of Harper Adams.

46. The scale of growth will also require the University College to invest in staff and related estates developments, both of which are included in the financial forecasts annexed to this plan. New funding streams for capital developments, including student accommodation, will be explored early in the planning period, with a view to securing this aspect of our estate strategy. The relatively remote nature of the University College's campus is a defining feature of the institution, but provides an additional challenge for development, particularly in relation to service infrastructure. Together with our plans to develop our academic profile in sustainable technologies, with a particular emphasis on biomass technologies, and our role in knowledge transfer, we are planning the implementation of a major scheme to construct an anaerobic digestion CHP system to serve the electricity and heating needs of the institution. We aim, through this initiative, to reinforce our position as a flagship for biomass technologies and to promote their potential contribution to the wider adoption of renewable sources of energy over the planning period. A business case for this development is currently being prepared so that funding can be sought early in a/y 2009/10.

47. The University College will need to continue to develop its approach towards the management of its own processes for change and staff performance in order to address the many rapidly developing circumstances it will face over the next planning period. Managers will be supported in this approach by appropriate staff development opportunities, but it will also be important for the communication of the University College's key objectives, and particularly the strategic rationale behind them, to continue on a regular basis so that staff, and students, can be kept informed and engaged. Our staffing profile will continue to be closely monitored so that we continue to attract the highest possible quality of staff and enable them to contribute fully to the development of the institution and, in the case of academic staff, their subject area. Our commitment to equality and diversity within our staffing and student profile will also be maintained. A number of critical structural changes will be made with effect from August 2008, with the formation of three new cross-institution research and reach out themes. These multidisciplinary themes will focus on key areas of public policy, namely:

- Food Systems

- Sustainable Agriculture, Climate Change and Environment
- Rural Business and Social Enterprise

48. The combination of these structural changes, the major initiatives being pursued by the University College, and the skills base available to address them, together with the key outcome elements we are seeking as a result of this plan, are shown in Diagram 3 (overleaf), which summarises the contents of this Strategic Plan.

49. The interplay between academic and governance issues in the delivery of the plan will be another critical feature over the next planning period. The University College has developed a new set of key performance indicators to establish management information based on this Plan and the sub strategy framework that will help inform management decision-making and will enable risk areas to be more closely monitored.

50. In our last Strategic Plan we took account of guidance provided at a planning event for the Board of Governors and College Executive. The guidance is still relevant and has been considered in the formulation of this document, as set out below. It was suggested that a number of key issues should be addressed in the formulation and evaluation of the Plan, and that the institutional strategy should:

- Respond to the real world of government and HEFCE policy: *See section on An analysis of the external and internal planning environments*
- Integrate academic and financial objectives: *See section on The use of risk analysis to identify planning priorities*
- Be realistic and capable of being financed, with financial headroom to invest and develop the institution: *See accompanying financial forecasts at Annex B*
- Be informed by objective analysis : *See section on The College's planning priorities and key strategic objectives*
- Make proper connections between the Plan and other institutional strategies: *See section on The integration of the College's planning environment*
- Direct planning and the College's profile of activities: *See Table 5 on Strategic objectives for the period 2005-2010*
- Be understood and owned by staff and management: *See the consultation and planning process in Annex D*

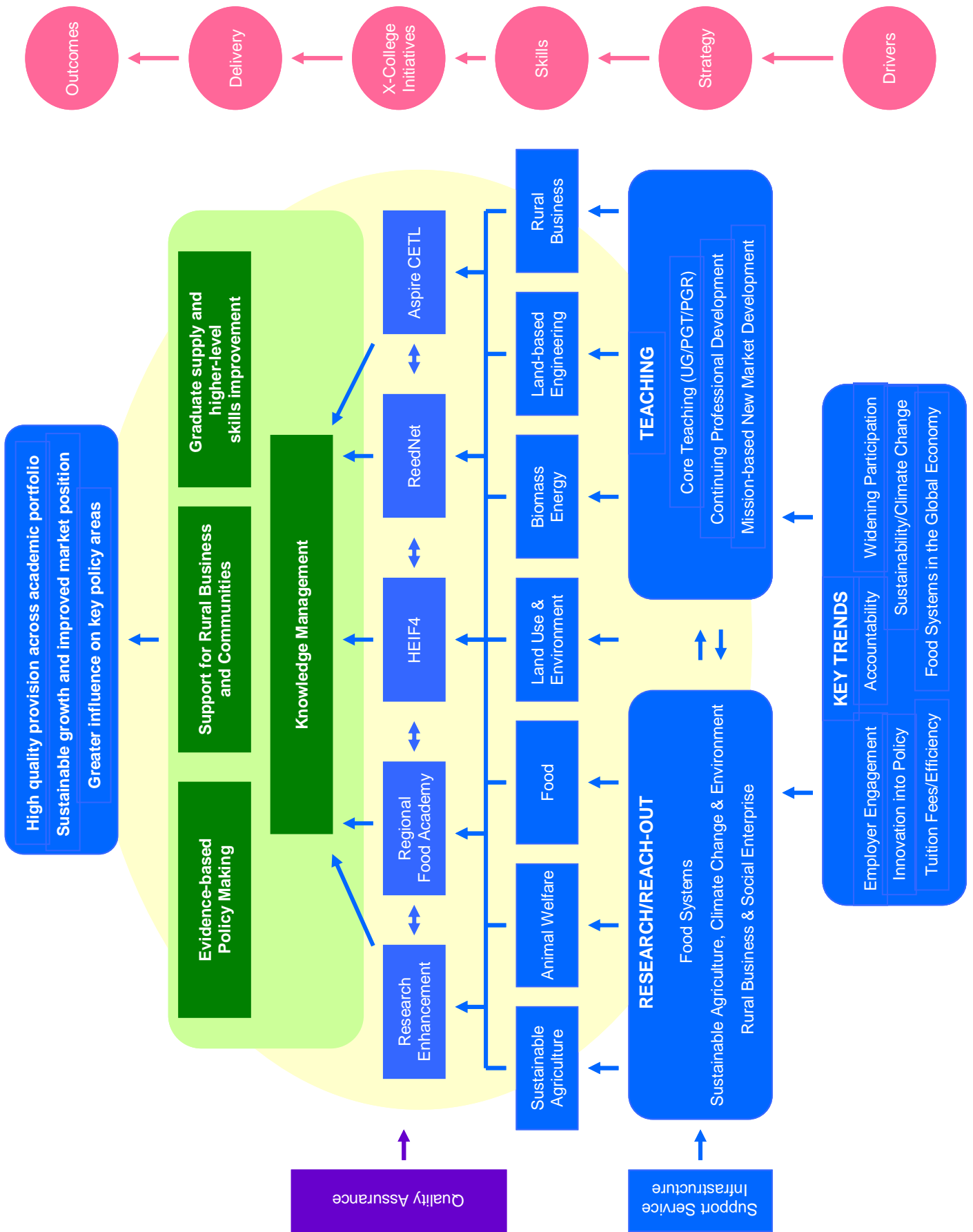


Diagram 3: The University College's Strategic Plan and associated delivery mechanisms

51. The College Executive will monitor progress of the implementation of the Strategic Plan, through regular contact with staff responsible for the delivery of its constituent elements. The College's risk management approach involves key committees of the Board of Governors and the Academic Board, which will monitor progress with the identified risks associated with planning objectives. In particular, the Finance & General Purposes Committee will monitor and provide advice on the development of the underlying financial strategy.

52. Annual Statements will be derived from the Strategic Plan, together with further external and internal developments that take place during the planning period, by the Director of Corporate Affairs. The Corporate Planning Statements will identify specific projects required to achieve strategic planning objectives that will be managed in accordance with new project management principles currently under development.

53. Heads of Academic Groups, Line Managers and Project Managers will be expected to provide input to the development of the Corporate Planning Statements. Staff will be consulted during the preparation of the Corporate Planning Statements, through Staff Development Reviews and ad hoc communications sessions and will be kept informed of progress with the University College's Strategic Plan, and associated sub-strategy development, through internal communications channels.

54. The Board of Governors will oversee the implementation of the Plan and will receive regular reports on progress with the Strategic Plan, and associated Corporate Planning Statements, over the planning period.

Further information

55. Further information about the College's Strategic Plan can be obtained from:

Strategic Plan

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Director of Corporate Affairs

tel: 01952 815242

e-mail: dllewellyn@harper-adams.ac.uk

Financial Forecasts

Mr Paul Rigg

Director of Finance

Tel: 01952 815267

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Strategic Plan 2008-2013: Goals and Action Plan

Learning, Teaching and Widening Participation

Overall objective: *To grow student numbers to 2,906 FTE students by 2013*

| Action | By whom | Planned outcomes | Timescale, targets and strategic monitoring | Strategy links |
|---|--|---|---|---|
| Successful implementation of the Learning & Teaching Strategy 2008-2013, including a continued focus on the student experience to help maintain student recruitment, retention and outcomes | Head of Educational Development & Quality Enhancement with all academic staff | Targets set in the L&T Strategy are achieved and associated KPIs met | Annual monitoring in period to 2013 Monitored by: Academic Groups Executive, Academic Board | Marketing Strategy; IS/IT Strategy; Estates Strategy; HR Strategy; <i>Aspire</i> CETL |
| Implementation of our plans to further promote widening participation in higher education from rural areas, and the provision of wider support for a diverse student population, through the ROSE project and other initiatives | All Staff but led by Academic Registrar and Dean of Academic Affairs | Achievement of student numbers to the targets established in the ROSE project business case and in the University College's overall annual targets | Annual targets established in Annex B1 Monitored by: College Executive, Academic Board and Board of Governors | Group Academic Plans; L&T Strategy; Marketing Strategy; Estates Strategy; <i>Aspire</i> CETL and ROSE Project Implementation Plan |
| Implementation of our plans for the Rural Employer Engagement Network (ReedNet) and related employer engagement initiatives to provide flexible learning opportunities for work-based learners | All Staff but led by Dean of External Liaison, Academic Registrar with the Dean of Academic Affairs | Achievement of student numbers to the targets established in the ReedNet project business case and in the University College's overall annual targets | Annual targets established in Annex B1 Monitored by: College Executive, Academic Board and Board of Governors | Group Academic Plans; L&T Strategy; Marketing Strategy; Estates Strategy; IS/IT Strategy; <i>Aspire</i> CETL; and ReedNet Project Implementation Plan |
| The continued successful implementation of the <i>Aspire</i> CETL programme and its transition to support for work-based learning/employer engagement in conjunction with the ReedNet project | Head of Educational Development & Quality Enhancement (CETL Director) | Targets achieved as per CETL bid; continuation of funding for the initiative | Annual review of progress to be conducted Monitored by: College Executive, Academic Board and F&GP Committee | <i>Aspire</i> CETL; L&T Strategy; IS/IT Strategy |
| The successful completion of a major curriculum review that will focus on curriculum design, student assessment, student employment, the use of learning technologies and financial sustainability | Dean of Academic Affairs with Head of Educational Development & Quality Enhancement and Academic Registrar | The introduction of a new curriculum that will take into account the diverse needs of the student population and the latest developments in teaching and learning | Completion of the curriculum review in 2010 Monitored by: College Executive, Academic Board and F&GP Committee | L&T Strategy, <i>Aspire</i> CETL, Financial Strategy |
| The continued successful implementation of the International Strategy | Dean of External Liaison | Targets set in the International Strategy are achieved and associated KPIs met | Annual monitoring in period to 2013 Monitored by: College Executive, Academic Board | Group Academic Plans; L&T Strategy; Marketing Strategy; Estates Strategy; IS/IT Strategy |

| Action | By whom | Planned outcomes | Timescale, targets and strategic monitoring | Strategy links |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| The use of research and third stream activities to enrich the taught curriculum | Dean of Academic Affairs, Dean of External Liaison and Head of Educational Development & Quality Enhancement | Research to be further embedded in the undergraduate curriculum and fully engaged with the higher level taught curriculum | Progress to be maintained prior to the QAA Institutional Audit in 2010 and monitored annually Monitored by: Academic Planning & Resources Committee, Research & reach-out Committee | L&T Strategy; Research & Reach-Out Strategy |
| The development of further taught postgraduate provision | Postgraduate Taught Course Manager with Dean of Academic Affairs and Academic Registrar | A taught PG population of 120 students by 2013 | Annual monitoring in period to 2013 Monitored by: College Executive, Academic Planning & Resources Committee | L&T Strategy |
| Provision of support, recognition and reward for the development and maintenance of professional teaching standards | Head of Educational Development & Quality Enhancement | 75% of academic staff will be Fellows of the HE Academy by 2013 | Annual review of progress to be conducted through Board KPI dataset Monitored by: Academic Board, Staffing Committee, Board of Governors | HR Strategy; L&T Strategy |
| Continued high performance in the assessment of learning and teaching by the QAA (in 2010) and other agencies/organisations through the use of robust but streamlined academic quality management systems | Head of Educational Development & Quality Enhancement | Broad confidence outcomes (and similar for other organisations) | Annual review of progress to be conducted Monitored by: College Executive, Academic Standards Committee, Academic Board | All Strategic and major initiative areas |

Research and Third Stream Work

Overall objective: *The launch and successful operation of integrated research and third stream themes to address key challenges in the rural sector and develop the University College's profile over the planning period*

| Action | By whom | Planned outcomes | Timescale, targets and strategic monitoring | Strategy links |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| The successful delivery of the Research and Third Stream Strategy, including our HEIF4 programme, that also addresses the new national innovation strategy | Dean of Academic Affairs and Dean of External Liaison | Targets set in the Research and Third Stream Strategy are achieved and associated KPIs met | Annual monitoring in period to 2013 Monitored by: College Executive, Academic Board, | Marketing Strategy; IS/IT Strategy; Estates Strategy; L&T Strategy; Financial Strategy; Research and Third Stream Strategy |
| The creation of new cross-institution research and third-stream themes in Sustainable Agriculture, Climate Change, Environment and Energy; Food Systems; and Rural Business and Social Enterprise | Dean of Academic Affairs and Dean of External Liaison | Improvements in academic and financial outputs from each cross-institution group | University College-based metrics and KPIs to be established by 2009; Monitored by: College Executive, Academic Board and F&GP Committee | Group Academic Plans; Research and Third Stream Strategy; Theme Implementation Plans |
| The implementation of the West Midlands Regional Food Academy (WMRFA) project to provide access to higher level skills development for the region's food businesses | Director of the WMRFA | Creation of the WMRFA and its successful operation over the RDA funding and planning period | Annual targets established as part of the Business Plan for the WMRFA and in conjunction with Advantage West Midlands Monitored by: College Executive, Academic Board and F&GP Committee | Research and Third Stream Strategy; Financial Strategy; WMRFA Implementation Plan |
| The implementation of the ReedNet programme, and other employer engagement initiatives, that will provide third stream activities with a range of businesses and professional bodies in the rural economies | All Staff but led by Dean of External Liaison, Academic Registrar with the Dean of Academic Affairs | Achievement of student numbers to the targets established in the ReedNet project business case and in the University College's overall annual targets | Annual targets established in Annex B1 Monitored by: College Executive, Academic Board and Board of Governors | Group Academic Plans; L&T Strategy; Marketing Strategy; Estates Strategy; IS/IT Strategy; <i>Aspire</i> CETL; and ReedNet Project Implementation Plan |
| The development of closer engagement with the RDA and Local Authority on ways in which the University College can support knowledge transfer and innovation within the regional and local business sectors | Dean of External Liaison and Principal | Greater recognition for the University College's regional and local position and its contribution to economic development | Annual report to Board of Governors Monitored by: Board of Governors | Marketing Strategy; Research and Third Stream Strategy |
| A review of the University College's performance in the Research Assessment Exercise 2008 to inform its approach to the Research Excellence Framework in 2013/14 | Dean of Academic Affairs | A rating in the RAE 2008 that will provide the basis for an improved assessment in the REF | Review in early 2009 and Annual monitoring in period to 2013 Monitored by: College Executive, Academic Board and Board of Governors | Research and Third Stream Strategy; Financial Strategy |
| Continued support and development of new researchers and new areas of research expertise | Dean of Academic Affairs | New researchers to improve the University College's performance in external ratings of research | Annual monitoring in period to 2013 Monitored by: College Executive, Academic Board, Staffing Committee | HR Strategy, Research and Third Stream Strategy |

Financial Sustainability and Physical Resources

Overall objective: To maintain a financially sustainable resource base for the operation of the College's academic activities during the planning period

| Action | By whom | Planned outcomes | Timescale, targets and strategic monitoring | Strategy links |
|--|--|---|---|---|
| The continued generation of financial surpluses to reinvest in core activities and maintain financial sustainability | Principal and Director of Finance with all staff | An annual financial surplus of at least 5% of turnover by 2013 | Annual monitoring in period to 2013 Monitored by: College Executive, F&GP Committee | All strategic areas |
| Further work to refine and extend the Full Economic Costing methodology to support the understanding of the institution's cost base and help implement new systems of resource allocation over the planning period | Director of Finance and Dean of Academic Affairs with Heads of Academic Groups and Line Managers | The use of the FEC methodology to inform major investment decisions from 2009 | Annual monitoring in period to 2013 Monitored by: College Executive, F&GP Committee | Group Academic Plans; Financial Strategy; Business Investment Plans |
| Diversification of our learning and teaching activities to deliver further work-based learning to help the University College address potential demographic changes over the planning period | Principal and Senior Management Team | Financial stability is maintained over the planning period | Annual monitoring in period to 2013 Monitored by: College Executive, F&GP Committee | Research and Third Stream Strategy; L&T Strategy; Financial Strategy |
| The implementation of a sustainable development strategy (linking in to DEFRA sustainable development objectives) and projects to deliver the strategy | Principal | New strategy to be in place by end of 2005 | Annual targets and monitoring plan to be in place for 2006 and progress monitored to 2010. Contribution to sector institutional sustainability monitoring to be in place by summer 2005 Monitored by: College Executive, Academic Board and F&GP Committee | All strategic areas with Sustainable Development Strategy and Farm Development Plan |
| The implementation of the College's Estate Strategy, to provide facilities that will continue to be attractive to students in the emerging HE market | Director of Corporate Affairs | Targets set in Estate Strategy for the period 2005-2015 | Annual monitoring in period to 2010 in line with financial strategy and forecasts Monitored by: College Executive, APRC and F&GP Committee | Financial Strategy; Estates Strategy; Farm Development Plan, Group Academic Plans |
| Making a full contribution to the HEFCE review of 'exceptional' funding early in the planning period, and to the later review of tuition fees | Director of Corporate Affairs with the Principal and Director of Finance | Maintenance of financial sustainability following implementation of any revisions to the teaching funding methodology and/or tuition fees | REFI submission request anticipated over the summer of 2008. Tuition Fee Review expected in 2009 Monitored by: College Executive, F&GP Committee | Financial Strategy |
| Further work on voluntary giving in conjunction with the Harper Adams University College Development Trust | Director of Corporate Affairs and Principal | Capital and scholarship fundraising to be improved over the planning period with assistance from the Government's matched-funding scheme | Annual monitoring in period to 2013 Monitored by: College Executive, F&GP Committee, Development Trust | Financial Strategy |
| Continued implementation of our Estate and IS/IT Strategies, in accordance with available financial resources, and a review of the Estate Strategy in 2010 | Director of Corporate Affairs and Head of IS/IT | The continued provision of specialist and general facilities and IT services that meet student and staff expectations, including the provision of a new Student Services Centre | Annual monitoring in period to 2013 Monitored by: College Executive, F&GP Committee | Estate Strategy; IS/IT Strategy; Financial Strategy |

| Action | By whom | Planned outcomes | Timescale, targets and strategic monitoring | Strategy links |
|--|--|---|--|---------------------|
| The implementation of our Environmental Sustainability Strategy 2008-2013 and associated infrastructural and capital developments, and the management of physical resources so that they make a positive contribution to addressing climate change | Principal and Director of Finance with all staff | New developments in sustainable technologies, energy management, environmental management and improved carbon management over the planning period | Annual monitoring in period to 2013 Monitored by: College Executive, F&GP Committee | All strategic areas |

Human Resources

Overall objective:

To recruit and retain high quality staff during the planning period to deliver the academic and financial objectives in the Strategic Plan

| Action | By whom | Planned outcomes | Timescale, targets and strategic monitoring | Strategy links |
|---|--|---|--|---------------------|
| Successful implementation of the University College's new HR Strategy for the period 2008-2011, including planned investment in new staff resources to meet the institution's key academic and financial objectives | Director of Corporate Affairs with Personnel Manager | Targets set in HR Strategy for the period to 2011 with prior review, in 2010, of the HR Strategy using the HR Self Assessment methodology | Annual monitoring in period to 2011 Monitored by: College Executive, Staffing Committee | All strategic areas |
| The implementation new staff performance systems (in accordance with the national framework agreement) | Director of Corporate Affairs with Personnel Manager and staff representatives | Implementation by December 2008 | Annual monitoring in period to 2013 Monitored by: College Executive, Staffing Committee | All strategic areas |
| Assessment of the outcomes of the second HE Workforce Framework | Director of Corporate Affairs | The HE Workforce Framework will be used to determine emerging trends in workforce planning for the next planning period | Framework anticipated in 2009 and review to follow in 2010 Monitored by: Staffing Committee | All strategic areas |
| Continued attention to the delivery of appropriate measures of equality and diversity in the operation of the University College's activities during the planning period | Director of Corporate Affairs | Improvement in key areas of equality and diversity over the planning period | Annual monitoring in period to 2013 Monitored by: Staffing Committee, Academic Board and Board of Governors | All strategic areas |

Institutional Profile and Governance

Overall objective: To ensure that the College is academically and financially sustainable over the planning period and remains in a leading position within the HE sector

| Action | By whom | Planned outcomes | Timescale, targets and strategic monitoring | Strategy links |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| The continued enhancement of the College's national profile via the successful delivery of major initiatives such as the ReedNet and ROSE programmes and the implementation of new strategies for marketing and corporate communications | Principal and Director of Corporate Affairs with all staff | A sustained national profile during the planning period, leading to further investment in the University College and growth in financially sustainable academic activities | Annual monitoring in period to 2010 Monitored by: College Executive, Board of Governors | All strategic areas but particularly the Marketing and Corporate Communications Strategy, |
| Continued enhancement of the University College's international profile via the implementation of its International Strategy and targeted overseas collaborations | Dean of External Liaison | Targets set in the International Strategy are achieved and associated KPIs met | Annual monitoring in period to 2013 Monitored by: College Executive, Academic Board | Group Academic Plans; L&T Strategy; Marketing Strategy; Estates Strategy; IS/IT Strategy |
| Collaboration with DEFRA and other agencies to ensure that the University College's activities are attuned to national and regional policy imperatives and continue to make appropriate independent academic contributions to policy development and implementation | Principal with Dean of External Liaison and Dean of Academic Affairs | A sustained national profile during the planning period, leading to further investment in the University College and growth in financially sustainable academic activities | Annual monitoring in period to 2010 Monitored by: College Executive, Board of Governors | All strategic areas but particularly the Marketing and Corporate Communications Strategy, |
| Continued maintenance of high standards of governance, leadership and management to deliver the University College's strategic objectives | Chair of Governors, Principal and Director of Corporate Affairs | Continued high ratings in assessments of the University College's standard of governance, leadership and management over the planning period | Annual monitoring in period to 2010 Monitored by: College Executive, Board of Governors | All strategic areas |
| The continuation of the above work to assemble a case for the award of university title | Principal | A successful application for university title | Case to be assembled by mid 2008 Monitored by: College Executive, Board of Governors | All strategic areas and major initiatives |

Glossary:

CETL Centre for Excellence in Teaching & Learning
 CPD Continuing Professional Development
 DEFRA Department of the Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs
 HEDQE Head of Education Development and Quality Enhancement
 HEFCE Higher Education Funding Council for England

HEIF Higher Education Innovation Fund
 KPI Key Performance Indicator
 NRKE National Rural Knowledge Exchange
 ReedNet Rural Employer Engagement Network
 ROSE Rural Outreach and Student Experience Project

STRATEGIC PLAN 2008-2013

STUDENT NUMBERS (FTES) 2008-2013

Projected numbers based on roll forward of existing recruitment patterns

This table has been used as the basis of the College's financial forecasts at Annex B3

| Student category | Actual 2007/08 | | 2008/09 | | 2009-10 | | 2010-11 | | 2011-12 | | 2012-13 | |
|----------------------------------|----------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| | Home/EC | O'seas | Home/EC | O'seas | Home/EC | O'seas | Home/EC | O'seas | Home/EC | O'seas | Home/EC | O'seas |
| Full time undergraduate | 1,279 | 210 | 1,450 | 210 | 1,590 | 210 | 1,700 | 225 | 1,720 | 230 | 1,720 | 230 |
| Full time postgraduate taught | 20 | 9 | 20 | 12 | 10 | 25 | 10 | 35 | 10 | 40 | 10 | 40 |
| Full time postgraduate research | 6 | 7 | 6 | 7 | 6 | 7 | 6 | 7 | 6 | 7 | 6 | 7 |
| FE students at institution | 52 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Sub total: | 1,357 | 227 | 1,476 | 229 | 1,606 | 242 | 1,716 | 267 | 1,736 | 277 | 1,736 | 277 |
| <i>Within full time figures:</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Franchised out students | 70 | 145 | 90 | 145 | 135 | 145 | 165 | 145 | 165 | 145 | 165 | 145 |
| Students based at Harper Adams | 1,287 | 82 | 1,386 | 84 | 1,471 | 97 | 1,551 | 122 | 1,571 | 132 | 1,571 | 132 |
| Part time employer engagement | 270 | 0 | 370 | 0 | 520 | 0 | 720 | 0 | 720 | 0 | 720 | 0 |
| Part time undergraduate | 78 | 0 | 100 | 3 | 150 | 2 | 170 | 0 | 170 | 0 | 170 | 0 |
| Part time postgraduate taught | 25 | 4 | 20 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Part time postgraduate research | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Sub total: | 374 | 4 | 491 | 3 | 683 | 2 | 893 | 0 | 893 | 0 | 893 | 0 |
| <i>Within part time figures:</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Franchised out students | 75 | 0 | 125 | 0 | 230 | 0 | 310 | 0 | 310 | 0 | 310 | 0 |
| FE students at institution | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Students based at Harper Adams | 299 | 4 | 366 | 3 | 453 | 2 | 583 | 0 | 583 | 0 | 583 | 0 |
| Totals: | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Franchised out students | 145 | 145 | 215 | 145 | 365 | 145 | 475 | 145 | 475 | 145 | 475 | 145 |
| FE students at institution | 52 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Students based at Harper Adams | 1,586 | 86 | 1,752 | 87 | 1,924 | 99 | 2,134 | 122 | 2,154 | 132 | 2,154 | 132 |
| Grand total: | 1,731 | 231 | 1,967 | 232 | 2,289 | 244 | 2,609 | 267 | 2,629 | 277 | 2,629 | 277 |

NB:

1. Part time franchised out numbers include both Reaseheath College and employer engagement numbers at the Royal Agricultural College
2. Full time UG overseas numbers include all years of joint programmes with Beijing University of Agriculture, with years 1 and 2 counting as franchised provision

STRATEGIC PLAN 2008-2013

STAFF TARGETS (FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT) 2008-2013

(31 July census date)

| Staff Category | 2007-2008 | 2008-09 | 2009-2010 | 2010-2011 | 2011-2012 | 2012-2013 |
|----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Lecturers | 90.8 | 97.0 | 99.0 | 99.0 | 99.0 | 99.0 |
| Technicians | 30.2 | 31.2 | 31.2 | 31.2 | 31.2 | 31.2 |
| Academic Support | 3.5 | 4.3 | 6.3 | 6.3 | 6.3 | 6.3 |
| Academic Development | 2.9 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 2.9 | 2.9 |
| Research | 4.4 | 6.1 | 6.1 | 6.1 | 6.1 | 6.1 |
| Sub-total | 131.75 | 141.45 | 145.45 | 145.45 | 145.45 | 145.45 |
| Academic Services | 57.5 | 61.5 | 65.5 | 65.5 | 65.5 | 65.5 |
| Administration | 25.3 | 25.3 | 25.3 | 25.3 | 25.3 | 25.3 |
| Premises | 43.8 | 43.8 | 43.8 | 43.8 | 43.8 | 43.8 |
| Residences & Catering | 51.5 | 51.5 | 51.5 | 51.5 | 51.5 | 51.5 |
| Other Income Generating Activity | 38.9 | 41.2 | 41.2 | 41.2 | 41.2 | 41.2 |
| Sub-total | 217.0 | 223.3 | 227.3 | 227.3 | 227.3 | 227.3 |
| Grand Total | 348.8 | 364.8 | 372.8 | 372.8 | 372.8 | 372.8 |

STRATEGIC PLAN 2008-2013

FINANCIAL FORECASTS 2008-2013

| Income and Expenditure Account | 2007-08 | 2008-09 | 2009-10 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 |
| Income | | | | | | |
| Funding council grant | 11,748 | 14,531 | 14,894 | 15,267 | 15,648 | 16,039 |
| Academic fees and support grants | 5,610 | 5,160 | 5,289 | 5,421 | 5,557 | 5,696 |
| Research grants and other contracts | 506 | 614 | 501 | 542 | 585 | 600 |
| Other operating income | 5,790 | 6,491 | 6,653 | 6,820 | 6,990 | 7,165 |
| Endowment income and interest receivable | 281 | 200 | 205 | 210 | 215 | 220 |
| Total income | 23,935 | 26,996 | 27,542 | 28,260 | 28,995 | 29,720 |
| Adjustments | | | -215 | -175 | 305 | 305 |
| Adjusted income | 23,935 | 26,996 | 27,327 | 28,085 | 29,300 | 30,025 |
| Expenditure | | | | | | |
| Staff costs | 11,721 | 13,187 | 13,358 | 13,692 | 14,034 | 14,385 |
| Other operating expenses | 9,064 | 10,821 | 10,977 | 11,251 | 11,532 | 11,820 |
| Depreciation | 1,575 | 1,674 | 1,809 | 1,968 | 2,209 | 2,264 |
| Interest payable | 375 | 354 | 371 | 368 | 368 | 377 |
| Total expenditure | 22,735 | 26,036 | 26,515 | 27,279 | 28,143 | 28,847 |
| Adjustments | | | -9 | -61 | 212 | 212 |
| Adjusted expenditure | 22,735 | 26,036 | 26,506 | 27,218 | 28,355 | 29,059 |
| Surplus/(Deficit) before taxation | 1,200 | 960 | 821 | 867 | 945 | 966 |
| Surplus as % of turnover | 5.0 | 3.6 | 3.0 | 3.1 | 3.2 | 3.2 |

| Cash Flow Statement | 2007-08 | 2008-09 | 2009-10 | 2010-11 | 2011-12 | 2012-13 |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 |
| Cash flow from operating activities | 2,511 | 2,185 | 2,302 | 2,498 | 2,811 | 2,881 |
| Income from endowments | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Income from short term investments | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Other interest received | 200 | 200 | 205 | 210 | 215 | 220 |
| Interest paid | (375) | (354) | (371) | (368) | (368) | (377) |
| Net from returns on investments and finance services | (175) | (154) | (166) | (158) | (153) | (157) |
| Payments to acquire tangible assets | (3,293) | (5,975) | (4,428) | (3,876) | (1,554) | (1,500) |
| Deferred capital grants received | 1,438 | 3,944 | 1,027 | 671 | 0 | 0 |
| Net cash flow from capex and financial investment | (1,855) | (2,031) | (3,401) | (3,205) | (1,554) | (1,500) |
| Cash flow before use of liquid resources | 481 | 0 | (1,265) | (865) | 1,104 | 1,224 |
| Capital element of finance lease repayments | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mortgages and loans acquired | 1,400 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mortgage and loan capital repayments | (201) | (253) | (253) | (253) | (253) | (253) |
| Other items | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Net cash flow from financing | 1,199 | (253) | (253) | (253) | (253) | (253) |
| Increase/(decrease) in cash in the period | 1,680 | (253) | (1,518) | (1,118) | 851 | 971 |

FINANCIAL FORECASTS 2008- 2013

| Balance Sheet | Actual 31 July 08 | Forecast 31 July 09 | Forecast 31 July 10 | Forecast 31 July 11 | Forecast 31 July 12 | Forecast 31 July 13 |
|--|------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Fixed assets | | | | | | |
| Tangible assets | 24,645 | 28,947 | 31,565 | 33,473 | 32,819 | 32,819 |
| Investments | 180 | 180 | 180 | 180 | 180 | 180 |
| | <u>24,825</u> | <u>29,127</u> | <u>31,745</u> | <u>33,653</u> | <u>32,999</u> | <u>32,999</u> |
| Current assets | | | | | | |
| Stocks | 657 | 817 | 817 | 817 | 817 | 817 |
| Debtors | 1,214 | 1,214 | 1,214 | 1,214 | 1,214 | 1,214 |
| Investments | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Cash in hand and at bank | 5,709 | 5,456 | 3,939 | 2,820 | 3,672 | 3,672 |
| Total current assets | <u>7,580</u> | <u>7,487</u> | <u>5,970</u> | <u>4,851</u> | <u>5,703</u> | <u>5,703</u> |
| Creditors | <u>(3,488)</u> | <u>(3,540)</u> | <u>(3,540)</u> | <u>(3,540)</u> | <u>(3,540)</u> | <u>(3,540)</u> |
| Net current assets/(liabilities) | <u>4,092</u> | <u>3,947</u> | <u>2,430</u> | <u>1,311</u> | <u>2,163</u> | <u>2,163</u> |
| Total assets less current liabilities | 28,917 | 33,074 | 34,175 | 34,964 | 35,162 | 35,162 |
| External borrowing | 6,297 | 6,045 | 5,792 | 5,539 | 5,286 | 5,286 |
| Provisions | (49) | (49) | (49) | (49) | (49) | (49) |
| Total assets less liabilities | <u>28,868</u> | <u>33,025</u> | <u>39,918</u> | <u>40,454</u> | <u>40,399</u> | <u>40,399</u> |
| Pension asset/(liability) | (3,306) | (3,306) | (3,306) | (3,306) | (3,306) | (3,306) |
| Deferred capital grant | 6,151 | 9,600 | 10,132 | 10,307 | 9,812 | 9,812 |
| Revaluation reserve | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Income and expenditure | 13,106 | 14,075 | 14,898 | 15,764 | 16,709 | 16,709 |
| Total funds | <u>19,266</u> | <u>23,675</u> | <u>25,030</u> | <u>26,071</u> | <u>26,521</u> | <u>26,521</u> |

Progress with Strategic Plan 2005-2010 Objectives

In our last Strategic Plan we set out a number of key objectives for the planning period 2005-2010. The following table summarises progress to date.

Learning, teaching and widening participation

| To grow our student numbers we planned to: | Progress to date: |
|---|--|
| Successfully implement our Learning & Teaching Strategy | Our Learning & Teaching Strategy has been successfully implemented and its major objectives have recently been reviewed by the College Executive and the Academic Board |
| Undertake further work on our approach to student recruitment, financial aid and the broader student experience | The University College admitted its largest ever cohort of first year students in 2007 and looks set to achieve a similar intake in 2008. Our marketing activities have been reviewed to improve their impact on student recruitment. We introduced a comprehensive financial aid programme in 2006/07, supported, in part by the University College's Development Trust. Fundraising by the Trust continues to provide and extend the range of scholarship support available to our students. In 2007/08 we came fourth in the sector in the National Student Survey. |
| Identify and implement ways to reach new learners via additional CPD programmes, including a major initiative to address this issue | We have successfully implemented a programme of employer engagement activities during the last planning period, and are currently one of the leading small HEIs in this field. |
| Successfully implement the <i>Aspire</i> CETL programme | The <i>Aspire</i> CETL has been extremely successful, as noted in regular reports of its activities and as evidenced in support for national <i>Aspire</i> conferences from other institutions in the land-based HE sector. |
| Develop and implement plans to enhance existing learning and teaching partnerships and create new forms of collaboration | We have established a partnership arrangement with Askham Bryan College in Yorkshire and have successfully concluded our arrangement with Warwickshire College over the last three years. Our partnership arrangement with Reaseheath College remains strong. New forms of collaboration are being sought through our ReedNet initiative, which is being run in partnership with the Royal Agricultural College and with the support of the Landex group of land-based FE and HE institutions |
| Successfully implement our International Strategy | Our collaborative arrangements with Beijing Agricultural College have been successfully implemented. Our work in this area has featured as a case study in a recent sector report on the implementation of international strategies |
| Continue our high performance in assessments of our learning and teaching by the QAA and other agencies/organisations | We received a QAA 'broad confidence' rating in 2005 and a number of areas of our work were highlighted as 'good practice'. Subsequent reviews have confirmed the high quality of our learning and teaching activities |

Third stream work

| To maintain HEIF funding levels we planned to: | Progress to date: |
|---|--|
| Successfully implement our Reach-out Strategy and the HEIF2/NRKE programmes | Our third stream work under the HEIF2 programme was successfully implemented, with a major focus on CPD activities and support for initiatives such as the development of care farming. The NRKE network of institutions has made a valuable contribution to the development of other collaborations, and significant progress was made in the creation of a web- for rural organisations. Funding for knowledge exchanges is scheduled to end in mid 2009 and we have been actively investigating ways to continue certain aspects of the NRKE's work, as noted in our recent HEIF4 submission to HEFCE |
| Develop metrics and key performance indicators for third stream work | Since this target was established, further work has been undertaken at a sector level to refine metrics for third stream work (the annual HEBICIS survey). We have implemented IT systems in support of data collection in order to measure our performance in this area |
| Develop a successful case for funding under the HEIF 3 programme and the delivery of that programme during the funding period | initiatives such as the WiRE programme making a major contribution to the economic development of the region through its lead role in the Regional Women's Enterprise Unit. |
| Generate a funding surplus to reinvest in third stream and underpinning | The change in HEIF4 funding to a formula based system has impacted upon this objective. Funding surpluses have nevertheless been generated on some third stream projects (eg the WiRE programme) that has been used as a 'bridge' whilst generating further grant income |

Research

| To develop our research profile we planned to: | Progress to date: |
|---|--|
| Successfully deliver our research strategy | Our research strategy is being successfully delivered, and will involve the creation, from 2008/09, of three key research/third stream themes. Our research collaborations have increased, with institutions such as the University of Bristol, Beijing Agricultural University and Cornell University, and we are investigating other research collaborations with national and international institutions. Research income has increased in the period 2005 to 2008 and research outputs have also improved in this period |
| Achieve Research Degree Awarding Powers | Research Degree Awarding Powers were granted in 2006 |
| Determine our approach to the RAE 2008 and, if appropriate, make a submission | The University College made a submission to the RAE 2008 and the outcome is awaited. The number of 'research active' staff submitted doubled from the return made in 2001 |

Financial Sustainability and Physical Resources

| To maintain a financially sustainable resource base we planned to: | Progress to date: |
|---|--|
| Continue to generate financial surpluses to invest in core activities | The University College has continued to generate financial surpluses over the last planning period and has produced a Financial Strategy with key performance indicators to guide its financial management and performance |
| Continue to embed the full economic costing methodology in our work | The FEC methodology has been used by the University College is a number of recent funding submissions to HEFCE and continues to be developed in accordance with sector guidelines |
| Implement a sustainable development strategy and projects to deliver that strategy | A new Environmental Sustainability Strategy was approved by the Board of Governors in March 2008. Award winning projects have been implemented, such as the biomass CHP system and a large scale photovoltaic array on a new hall of residence |
| Implement the University College's Estate Strategy to provide facilities that would be attractive to students in the emerging HE market | In addition to new residences, the University College has continued to invest in student facilities and initiatives such as the <i>Aspire</i> Centre. Our programme of IT investments has also continued. Major developments have focussed on specialist facilities on the University College Farm, including a new free-range poultry unit, an extension to the pig unit and a new dairy unit. Fundraising for other developments has continued |
| Develop financial and academic contingency plans to address the HEFCE teaching funding review that was anticipated in 2006/07 | The University College made a number of major submissions to both the HEFCE Land-based Studies Review and the subsequent review of specialist premium funding for teaching. This programme of work is continuing with Review of Exceptional Funding in Institutions to which the University College will again submit evidence in the early stages of the next planning period |

Human Resources

| To recruit and retain high quality staff during the planning period we aimed to: | Progress to date: |
|--|--|
| Implement the HR National Framework Agreement via the University College's HR Strategy | The National Framework Agreement was implemented within the agreed timescales, although discussions continue on performance related pay systems, where consultation with staff representatives is currently in progress |
| Develop new staff performance systems to provide clearer target setting and performance monitoring for staff and line managers | A 360-degree appraisal of all line managers was conducted in 2007 to help inform our next management development programme. The Annual Performance and Development Review system was continued over the planning period. The University College achieved full institution IIP re-accreditation in March 2008 |

Institutional Profile and Governance

| To ensure that the University College was academically and financially sustainable and in a position to adopt the role of a university by 2010 we planned to: | Progress to date: |
|---|--|
| Enhance the University College's national profile through the successful delivery of major programmes such as the NRKE, the <i>Aspire</i> CETL and the NRLLN | The University College has enhanced its national profile via major initiatives and a range of other activities, including national awards, sector performance indicators and league table performance |
| Continue our work to address DEFRA funding priorities, either through training/CPD, research or third stream activities | We have addressed many DEFRA policy priorities through our CPD programmes (eg environmental management) and have implemented other major award winning initiatives, such as our award-winning work on biomass technologies. Funding from DEFRA remains a major objective |
| Continue the above work to help assemble a case for the creation of a national rural university | A case for university title is currently being assembled |