



BUCUM scoping outcomes

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The Scoping workshop was designed both to refine the scoping of leadership development needs undertaken as part of the previous TEMPUS project (LHEM) and to enable a group of Rectors and senior leaders of participating universities to understand the needs that they had expressed at the kick-off meeting in Casablanca and how they might develop responses to those needs. It was designed and delivered by the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education under the direction of David Lock, its Director of International Projects.

The workshop was attended by 13 senior leaders from different countries who brought vast experience from which to develop the leadership concepts being explored. These included strategic planning, financial strategy and aspects of change management.

Among the key learning points were:

Each university should take time to develop a clear understanding of, and agreement about, its mission, vision and values and then communicate this effectively to its stakeholders, external and internal.

Strategic planning should be undertaken in the context of the agreement regarding the mission, vision and values with actions and new developments all being assessed and decided on in the context of the plan.

Diversity in the missions of different universities in a particular country provided variety and enabled each university to develop in accordance with its particular strengths. Regulatory arrangements should be able to accommodate and encourage this diversity.

The notion of students as ‘customers’ and the increasing attention being paid to ‘the student voice’ in some countries posed challenges for how students might be involved effectively in decision making within their universities. These could usefully be addressed more widely and the leadership implications considered.

While not all universities enjoyed the same level of autonomy, where they are able to, the implementation of strategic management and planning can serve to give confidence to ministries and other stakeholders.

The shortage of resources and restrictions on some universities earning revenue other than that provided by government are a significant constraint on universities developing and providing superior standards and additional programmes and otherwise improving the student experience. Looking at funding options, charging fees to students is the option increasingly being adopted by more countries.

Internationalisation was becoming increasingly important, for enriching domestic students, developing research partnerships and raising revenue through various forms of transnational education. To attract students from abroad it was vital for universities to project a clear image and to live up to the promises made, providing a good experience for international students. Joint and dual degrees represented a way forward for some universities although agreement about quality assurance and standards is vital to safeguard the reputations of the universities involved.

Engaging faculty and staff as much as possible in the management and leadership of the university is desirable to enhance the prospect of strategic objectives being achieved.

To accelerate the implementation of strategic management, programmes, similar to the Cardiff one, should be prepared for Vice-Presidents and Deans in each institution. One of the aims of these programmes might be to facilitate closer and more effective working relationships between Presidents, Vice-Presidents and Deans.

