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Occupational map for the Higher Education sector

Preliminary Findings: March 2010

Executive Summary

Higher Education sector occupational map – the context

This report details the findings from a project funded by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills to produce an occupational map for the UK Higher Education (HE) sector. The occupational map is a starting point to provide evidence for the current and emerging occupational roles in the four nations – England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Its purpose is to assist with the development of strategies to address the professional development of staff working in the UK HE sector.

The report covers:

- The types of jobs and occupations found in the sector
- The number of people working in the sector by occupation and gender, age, disability and ethnicity
- The main qualifications of people working in the sector
- HE provision by nation and the activities of the Higher Education institutions (HEIs)
- The drivers for change and new and emerging roles in the sector
- Sector skills gaps and shortages
- Training and workforce development in the sector
- Links between the HE sector and other sectors
- Key stakeholders with an interest in workforce planning and development in the sector
- Conclusions from the findings of this initial study
- Suggestions for further development of the occupational map.

Key findings

Sector challenges

The HE sector faces major changes in an environment where there has traditionally been much stability and low staff turnover. Many HEIs are only beginning to come to terms with the effects of the new financial constraints and their impact on workforce planning. Reactions to these new market conditions are varied: some HEIs are looking

at making further cuts, whilst others are continuing to expand. Either way, there is drive for more efficiency, through streamlining processes, introducing shared services models and consolidating facilities and structures. There is the additional challenge of greater competition from overseas for both staff and students, which is likely to become more intense in the future as developing nations set up their own HEIs.

New and emerging roles

The majority of HEIs reported that they were concentrating on developing the skill-sets of existing roles rather than developing new roles. So the issue identified here is less about new and emerging roles and more about new and emerging skills, such as the increasing demand for leadership, business development, commercial and entrepreneurial skills for both academic and non-academic professional and managerial roles. New ways of working for academics were also identified, meaning more flexibility around teaching delivery, such as blended and distance learning, delivering teaching outside normal working hours, greater reliance on technology and potentially some courses delivered in two years.

Where new roles have been created, they are often as a result of adapting existing resources to specific circumstances, such as focussing staff on admissions rather than marketing due to increasing numbers of student applications. Redeployment of this kind requires a flexible workforce with a broad range of transferable skills, a position that HEIs will need to attain if they are to meet their delivery commitments with the current financial and resource constraints.

Sector skills gaps and shortages

HEIs reported the following as the main areas where they have skills gaps:

- Leadership and management
- Entrepreneurial and commercial
- Change leadership and management
- Project management
- Business development
- Business consultancy.

These exist at all occupational levels from managers and professionals through to academics. As HEIs traditionally have low staff turnover, with rates of less than 2% not uncommon, many of these skills will need to be developed in existing staff.

HEIs reported some difficulty with recruiting people with the right skills, particularly leadership, entrepreneurial and commercial, and there is competition with other HEIs

seeking same skills. HEIs also identified the need to recruit people with the right mind-set (particularly academics) who understand the challenges of change. Overall, HEIs reported having fewer problems recruiting generally, although difficulties remain with traditionally difficult areas such as business, finance, marketing, modern languages, etc. Some unique and specialist academic roles remain difficult to recruit to, due to a shortage of appropriately qualified candidates. HEIs reported few difficulties with recruitment to non-academic posts.

Training and workforce development

HEIs reported that skills development is high on their agendas, with the majority planning or having in place a wide range of interventions focussed on developing and improving staff skills for the new environment and to address succession. Measures are also required to address resistance to change.

HEIs reported the following main areas of staff development needs for both academic and non-academic staff:

- Leadership and management
- Change leadership and management
- Business development and consultancy
- Project management
- Staff performance management
- Teamworking and partnerships.

In addition to the usual career development paths associated with large progressive organisations, HEIs reported a number of initiatives aimed at helping staff progress across different disciplines and utilising resources more effectively, including job families with cross-cutting career paths, support for staff to gain professional qualifications and move into managerial roles and apprenticeship schemes for technicians.

Conclusions

Taking into account the current HE sector environment and the information provided from the HEI sample interviews, concentrating workforce development initiatives on the following areas would provide the greatest benefits to the sector as a whole:

- Change management capability
- Project management capability
- Leadership capability
- Commercial, business and entrepreneurial capability.

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1. Objectives of the occupational map

The occupational map for the Higher Education (HE) sector has been produced by Lifelong Learning UK on behalf of the UK Commission for Employment and Skills.

The occupational map is a starting point to:

- Provide an analysis of current and emerging occupational roles in the Higher Education sector in the four nations; England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales
- Contribute to the context and background for the development of strategies to address the professional development of staff working in the UK HE sector.

It has been developed through a combination of desk research, accessing the main reports covering employment within the sector, and sector consultation with employers within the four nations.

The occupational map will underpin more detailed studies which could include detailed labour market analysis, development of National Occupational Standards and vocational qualifications for the sector.

The occupational map does not include the Further Education (FE) sector. Whilst it is acknowledged that the FE sector is facing similar challenges to those in the HE sector, such as reduced funding and increasing competition, there are a number of fundamental differences, such as the employment frameworks, the level and type of courses offered and the student market.

2. Types of jobs and occupations found in the HE sector

2.1 Occupational roles

The HESA classification in Figure 1 has been used to illustrate the occupational roles found in the HE sector. This variant on the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) is necessary as the SOC classifications do not provide an intuitive method of classifying the occupations with the HE sector. Additionally, the SOC coding manuals contain many occupations and job titles that are not relevant to the HE sector.

Figure 1: HESA occupational classifications

| |
|---|
| Academic staff |
| Academic professionals |
| Non-academic staff |
| Managers |
| Non-academic professionals |
| Laboratory, engineering, building, IT, and medical technicians (including nurses) |
| Student welfare workers, careers advisors, vocational training instructors, personnel and planning officers |
| Artistic, media, public relations, marketing and sports instruction occupations |
| Library assistants, clerks and general administrative assistants |
| Secretaries, typists, receptionists and telephonists |
| Chefs, gardeners, electrical and construction trades, mechanical fitters and printers |
| Caretakers, residential wardens, sports and leisure attendants, nursery nurses and care occupations |
| Retail and customer service occupations |
| Drivers, maintenance supervisors and plant operatives |
| Cleaners, catering assistants, security officers, porters and maintenance workers |

- **Academic staff** are defined as academic professionals who are responsible for planning, directing and undertaking academic teaching and research within HEIs. They also include vice-chancellors, medical practitioners, dentists, veterinarians and other healthcare professionals who undertake lecturing or research activities.
- **Non-academic staff** are defined as members of staff who fall into one of the remaining 12 occupational categories, such as managers, non-academic professionals, student welfare workers, secretaries, caretakers and cleaners.

2.2 Job roles

A wide range of titles exist within the HE sector, particularly amongst the non-academic roles and occupations. Job roles and titles vary from institution to institution. Different job titles are often used to describe similar roles, and sometimes individuals with the same job title will have very different roles and responsibilities. Figure 2 shows examples of current job titles used against each occupational classification.

Figure 2: Examples of job titles used in the HE sector

| HESA Categories | |
|---|---|
| Academic staff | Example job titles [from consultation] |
| Academic professionals | Chair, Dean, Deputy Dean, Head of Programme, Head of Subject, Principal Research Fellow, Professor, Reader, Senior Lecturer |
| Non-academic staff | |
| Managers | Admissions Manager, Conference Manager, Deputy Registrar, Disability Services Manager, Faculty Administration Manager, Finance Manager, Finance Office Manager, Head of HR, Head of Learning and Development, HR Manager, Head of Regional Partnership Strategy, Head of Staff Development |
| Non-academic professionals | Academic Support Librarian, Accommodation Manager, Database Librarian, Director of Finance, Deputy Director of HR, Director of HR, Financial Accountant; Financial Controller, Food Service Manager, Group Management Accountant, Management Accountant, Procurement Officer, Technical Scientist, University Librarian |
| Laboratory, engineering, building, IT, and medical technicians (including nurses) | EIS Developer, Electrical Supervisor, Estates Officer, Head of Estate Development, Head of Estates and Site Services, Facilities Manager, Head of ICT, Head of Information Service, Information Specialist, Network Management and Development Officer, Network Support Assistant, Technician, Technical Services Manager, Systems Developer, Systems Support |
| Student welfare workers, careers advisors, vocational training instructors, personnel and planning officers | Careers Advisor, Counsellor, Dyslexia Support Tutor, Finance Support Officer, HR Administrator, HR Advisor, HR Officer, Learning and Development Advisor, Senior Careers Information Advisor, Senior HR Advisor, Strategic Analyst, Student Advisor, Student Services Officer, Welfare Advisor |
| Artistic, media, public relations, marketing and sports instruction occupations | Graphic Designer, Head of Media Services, Internal Communications Officer, Marketing and Communications Manager, Marketing Officer, PR and Communications Officer, PR Officer, Sports Development Officer, Sports Facilities Manager, Student Association General Manager, Student Recruitment Project Officer |
| Library assistants, clerks and general administrative assistants | Data Entry Clerk, Information Advisor, Information Desk Assistant, Learning Centre Assistant, Mail Room Assistant, Mail Supervisor, Messenger, Senior Learning Centre Assistant; Service Supervisor |
| Secretaries, typists, receptionists and telephonists | Departmental Secretary, Personal Assistant, Receptionist, Secretary |
| Chefs, gardeners, electrical and construction trades, mechanical fitters and printers | Builder, Catering Manager, Chef de Partie, Commis Chef, Electrician, Groundsperson, Joiner, Plumber |
| Caretakers, residential wardens, sports and leisure attendants, nursery nurses and care occupations | Domestic Services Manager, Caretaker, Head Housekeeper, Pre-School Leader, YSJ Active Instructor |
| Retail and customer service occupations | Shop Manager, Shop Assistant, Student Experience Manager, Student Experience Officer |
| Drivers, maintenance supervisors and plant operatives | Driver, Maintenance Manager, Maintenance Services Manager, Maintenance Services Technician, Transport Manager |
| Cleaners, catering assistants, security officers, porters and maintenance workers | Catering Assistant, Domestic Assistant, Food Service Assistant, Head Porter, House Porter; Kitchen Porter, Porter, Room Assistant, Security Manager, Security Officer |

3. Number of people working in the HE sector

There were 314,616 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff working in HEIs in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland in 2007/08. Of these, 140,818 FTE were academic staff and 173,798 FTE were non-academic staff. Since 2003/04 there has been an increase of 16.5 per cent in the number of academic staff, 5.1 per cent in the number of non academic staff and an increase of 10.2 per cent in the overall number of staff working in the sector¹.

Figure 3 shows the total number of full and part-time FTE staff working in the sector by occupation and nation.

Figure 3: Staff FTEs full and part-time

| HESA staff classifications | Staff FTEs full and part-time expressed as percentages of total FTEs | | | | |
|---|--|------------------|----------|-------|----------|
| | England | Northern Ireland | Scotland | Wales | Total UK |
| Academic staff | | | | | |
| Academic professionals | 45% | 45% | 43% | 44% | 45% |
| Non-academic staff | | | | | |
| Managers | 5% | 2% | 3% | 2% | 5% |
| Non-academic professionals | 7% | 8% | 10% | 9% | 8% |
| Laboratory, engineering, building, IT and medical technicians (including nurses) | 8% | 9% | 10% | 7% | 8% |
| Student welfare workers, careers advisors, vocational training instructors, personnel and planning Officers | 3% | 4% | 2% | 3% | 3% |
| Artistic, media, public relations, marketing and sports occupations | 2% | 1% | 1% | 2% | 2% |
| Library assistants, clerks and general administrative assistants | 15% | 11% | 10% | 11% | 14% |
| Secretaries, typists, receptionists and telephonists | 4% | 8% | 7% | 9% | 5% |
| Chefs, gardeners, electrical and construction trades, mechanical fitters and printers | 2% | 2% | 2% | 2% | 2% |
| Caretakers, residential wardens, sports and leisure attendants, nursery nurses and care occupations | 1% | 1% | 2% | 1% | 1% |
| Retail and customer service occupations | 0.3% | 0.5% | 0.1% | 0.2% | 0.3% |
| Drivers, maintenance supervisors and plant operatives | 0.5% | 0.1% | 0.6% | 0.3% | 0.5% |

¹ HESA

| | | | | | |
|---|------------|-----------|------------|-----------|-------------|
| Cleaners, catering assistants, security officers, porters and maintenance Workers | 7% | 8% | 9% | 7% | 7% |
| Total FTEs | 82% | 2% | 11% | 5% | 100% |
| Total FTEs | 256,938 | 6,858 | 35,159 | 15,661 | 314,617 |

Source: HESA, *Resources of Higher Education Institutions 2007/08*

3.1 Staff working in the HE sector by occupation and gender

In 2007/08 there were 372,455 staff working in the HE sector, of which 234,675 were full-time and 137,780 were part-time. This is an increase of 10.2 per cent since 2003/4. Whilst the increase of full time academic and non-academic staff is very similar at around 9 per cent, there has been a significant increase in the number of part-time academic staff of 34.9 per cent and a decrease in the number of part-time non-academic staff of -1.9 per cent. Of females in academic roles, 45 per cent are part-time, compared to 27 per cent for males².

There is also a significantly higher number of females in part-time roles across all occupations; 45 per cent compared with 27 per cent for males³.

The distribution of male and female staff amongst the occupations tends to follow fairly traditional patterns. There are fewer females in the traditionally male dominated roles such as technicians (35 per cent), chefs, gardeners, etc. (17 per cent) and drivers, maintenance supervisors, etc. (18 per cent). Senior management teams in HEIs also tend to be male-dominated, although the number of female heads of institutions is rising with up to 19 per cent of Vice Chancellors and other institution heads (in England). In terms of professors, less than 20 per cent of permanent professors are women. The gender balance is better amongst managers with slightly more females than males, and non-academic professionals, with slightly fewer⁴.

Some occupations have a significantly higher proportion of females, such as student welfare workers, etc. (73 per cent), library assistants, etc. (79 per cent) and secretaries, typists, etc. (92 per cent)⁵.

A breakdown of staff headcount by gender and occupation can be found in Appendix A1.

3.2 Staff working in the HE sector by age

The average age of staff working in the HE sector in 2007/08 was 42.6 years, with 29 per

² HESA

³ HESA

⁴ HESA

⁵ HESA

cent of staff under 35 years and 19 per cent 55 years or over⁶.

People tend to reach senior leadership in the HE sector much later than in the private sector where the average age for senior management roles is around 43. For example, the average age for Vice Chancellors is 57 and the average age on appointment is 54. Senior academic leaders are also ageing, with a steep increase in the proportion of professors above 60. However this is different for managers and non-academic professionals, with an average age of 45 and 42 respectively⁷.

Other occupations with significant numbers of staff over 55 years of age are chefs, gardeners, etc. (25 per cent), drivers, maintenance supervisors, etc. (36 per cent), and cleaners, catering assistants, etc. (30 per cent)⁸.

A breakdown of the age distribution of staff working in the sector by occupation can be found in Appendix A2.

3.3 Staff working in the HE sector by disability

Based on their own assessment, 9,350 HE sector staff declared themselves disabled in 2007/08. This represents 2.7 per cent of the total of known disability status. Around 7 per cent of staff did not provide information on disability. A notably higher than average number of declared disabled staff was recorded by the following groups; laboratory technicians, etc. (3.5 per cent), student welfare workers, etc. (4.2 per cent), and chefs, gardeners, etc. (3.4 per cent).

A breakdown of reported disability status against occupational classification can be found in Appendix A3.

3.4 Staff working in the HE sector by ethnicity

Of the staff who revealed their ethnicity, 90 per cent of the total population described themselves as white, and of these 45 per cent classified themselves as academic professionals. Amongst ethnic minority groups, the highest proportion of staff described themselves as mixed and other ethnic backgrounds (33.3 per cent), and the lowest as Black or Black British (20.5 per cent)⁹.

The highest proportion of academic professionals is in the Chinese ethnic group (67 per cent), followed by mixed and other ethnic backgrounds (57.6 per cent), Asian or Asian British (46.5 per cent), and Black or Black British (31.8 per cent), compared with 51 per cent across

⁶ HESA

⁷ HESA

⁸ HESA

⁹ HESA

all ethnic minorities¹⁰.

A breakdown of reported ethnicity of staff working in the HE sector can be found in Appendix A4.

4. Main qualifications of people working in the HE sector

Due to the wide range of job roles found in the HE sector, there is a corresponding variety of professional and vocational qualifications required for the different types of academic and non-academic jobs. Figure 4 is intended to capture the most prevalent qualifications of staff working in the HE sector's main areas of activity.

Figure 4: Main qualifications found in the sector

| HESA Categories | Typical qualification requirements |
|---|--|
| Academic staff | |
| Academic professionals | MA, PhD or if from industry, relevant professional qualifications at senior level. Relevant teaching qualification e.g. HEA accredited. MSc may be acceptable for some posts |
| Non-academic staff | |
| Managers | First degree, MBA and/or relevant professional qualification. Depending on level, management qualifications may be required |
| Non-academic professionals | Professional qualification, e.g. CIPD for HR Professionals, PG in Library and Information Studies for Librarians, CCAB for Finance, MBA |
| Laboratory, engineering, building, IT, and medical technicians (including nurses) | GCSE, A levels (or equivalent) or first degree where relevant. Relevant professional qualification where necessary |
| Student welfare workers, careers advisors, vocational training instructors, personnel and planning officers | GCSE, A levels (or equivalent) or first degree where relevant. Relevant professional qualification e.g. CIPD, AGCAS etc. |
| Artistic, media, public relations, marketing and sports instruction occupations | e.g. CIM, HND in Graphic Design |
| Library assistants, clerks and general administrative assistants | 5 O levels or GCSE at grade C or above (or equivalent). Relevant professional qualification where necessary |
| Secretaries, typists, receptionists and telephonists | 5 O levels or GCSE at grade C or above (or equivalent). Relevant professional qualification where necessary |
| Chefs, gardeners, electrical and construction trades, mechanical fitters and printers | 5 O levels or GCSE at grade C or above (or equivalent). Relevant professional or technical qualification e.g. City & Guilds |
| Caretakers, residential wardens, sports and leisure attendants, nursery nurses and care occupations | 5 O levels or GCSE at grade C or above (or equivalent). Relevant professional qualification e.g. NVQ level 3 or equivalent in Childcare, recognised gym qualification, etc. |
| Retail and customer service occupations | Relevant City & Guilds qualification. English and Maths O level/GCSE or equivalent preferred |
| Drivers, maintenance supervisors and plant operatives | Clean UK driving licence, relevant City & Guilds qualification. English and Maths O level/GCSE or equivalent preferred |
| Cleaners, catering assistants, security officers, porters and maintenance workers | Basic health and hygiene certificate, relevant City & Guilds qualification. English and Maths O level/GCSE or equivalent preferred. |

¹⁰ HESA

5. Higher Education Institutions

There were a total of 168 HEIs in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland in 2007/08. This included 132 in England, 12 in Wales, 20 in Scotland and 4 in Northern Ireland¹¹.

Figure 5 shows the locations of HEIs throughout the UK. The greatest concentration of HEIs is in London and the South East, where competition for skills with other sectors is greatest. Several HEIs located in less populated areas, e.g. parts of the East Midlands, reported difficulty in attracting staff due to their locations being outside the main conurbations within the region.

Figure 5: Location of HEIs

| Location | Number of HEIs |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| East of England | 9 |
| East Midlands | 12 |
| West Midlands | 12 |
| London | 39 |
| North East | 5 |
| North West | 15 |
| Yorkshire and Humberside | 11 |
| South East | 16 |
| South West | 13 |
| England total | 132 |
| Northern Ireland | 4 |
| Scotland* | 20 |
| Wales | 12 |
| UK total | 168 |

**Including Open University Scotland*

Note on Figure 9: The allocation of HEIs to a geographical area is done by reference to the administrative centre of that HEI. There may be staff employed in regions other than that of the administrative centre of that HEI. The Open University is counted as a wholly English institution as its administrative centre is based in the South East of England.

5.1 Higher education provision by nation

5.1.1 England

There are 467,860 staff employed in 132 HEIs across the nine regions that make up England¹². The regional breakdowns are as follows:

- **East of England** – There are nine HEIs the region. These range in size from the University of Cambridge with 9,920 staff, to Norwich University College of the Arts with

¹¹ HESA

¹² HEFCE

300 staff. All the sub-regions contain a university with the exception of Suffolk, which has a campus of the University of Essex. The south of the region, just north of the M25, has the highest concentration of HEIs.

- **East Midlands** – There are twelve HEIs based in the region. These range in size from the University of Nottingham with 12,120 staff, to Bishop Grosseteste University College Lincoln with 310 staff. The greatest concentration of HEIs is in Nottingham and Leicester, with two universities each. All five sub-regions include at least one university.
- **West Midlands** – There are twelve HEIs based in the region. These range in size from the University of Birmingham with 13,785 staff, to Newman University College with 450 staff. Most of the higher education provision is in the east of the region, with the largest concentration in the Birmingham and Solihull area.
- **London** – There are 39 HEIs based in London, by far the largest concentration in the UK. These range in size from University College London, with 11,705 staff, to the Rose Bruford College with 130 staff.
- **North East** – There are five HEIs based in the region. These range in size from the University of Newcastle upon Tyne with 6,365 staff, to the University of Sunderland with 2,505 staff. The largest concentration of HEIs is in the Tyne and Wear area.
- **North West** – There are 15 HEIs based in the region. These range in size from the University of Manchester with 26,380 staff, to the Royal Northern College of Music with 550 staff, which is the only independent music conservatoire outside London. Higher education is concentrated in the Liverpool-Manchester axis, with eight universities in this area. Higher education in Cumbria is provided at a mixture of colleges of higher and further education and university campuses.
- **Yorkshire and Humberside** – There are 11 HEIs based in the region. These range in size from the University of Leeds with 12,495 staff, to Leeds College of Music with 300 staff. The largest concentration of higher education is in the Leeds and Bradford area.
- **South East** – Apart from the Open University there are 16 HEIs based in the region. In addition, four higher education institutions, not themselves in the South East, have campuses in the region, and the headquarters of the Open University located Milton Keynes, which employs 15,390 staff nationally. The HEIs range in size from the University of Oxford with 13,820 staff, to the University of Chichester with 1,250 staff. The largest concentration of HE provision is in the Southampton / Portsmouth area.
- **South West** – There are 13 higher education institutions based in the South West. These range in size from the University of Plymouth, with 4,060 staff, to Dartington College of Arts with 180 staff. The largest concentration of higher education is in the Bristol and Bath area.

5.1.2 Northern Ireland

There are four higher education institutions based in Northern Ireland. These range in size from The Queen's University of Belfast, with 6,680 staff, to St. Mary's University College with 180 staff. The total number of staff employed by HEIs is 12,765¹³. The largest concentration of HEIs is in the Belfast area.

5.1.3 Scotland

There are 20 HEIs based in Scotland. These range in size from the University of Edinburgh, with 11,900 staff, to the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, with 695 staff. The total number of staff employed by HEIs in Scotland is 59,210¹⁴. The largest concentration of HEIs is in the Edinburgh area, closely followed by Glasgow.

5.1.4 Wales

There are 11 HEIs based in Wales. These range in size from Cardiff University, with 8,380 staff, to Trinity College Carmarthen with 280 staff. The total number of staff employed by HEIs in Wales is 24,855¹⁵. The largest concentration of higher education is in the South East of the country, particularly in the Cardiff area.

5.2 Activities of the Higher Education Institutions found in the sector

Higher education covers a wide range of very different client groups and services, so broad and diverse that the concepts of a single HE market and sector have meaning only in the most general terms.

HEIs' ambitions for distinctive positioning among their peers are increasingly being expressed in terms of the areas of the HE marketplace in which they believe they can best develop sustainable competitive advantage. Based on research and analysis, five distinct segments of the HE market have been identified which together capture the range of HEIs' activities:

- **Primary research** – the development and dissemination of advanced research results into the public domain, contributing to the development of national and international intellectual capital; funded mainly from the public and (some) private research streams
- **Research-led teaching** – discipline-based undergraduate and post-graduate programmes taught by staff who are actively involved in public and private research, with the style and content of teaching strongly influenced by current research; funded mainly from public teaching sources, plus overseas student fees

¹³ HEFCE

¹⁴ HEFCE

¹⁵ HEFCE

- **Professional formation** – teaching provision explicitly geared to preparing or developing students for work in areas of professional practice, often including substantial elements of practical, work-based experience; funded partly through public teaching grants and also through private individual and corporate fees and contracts
- **Research-based solutions** – development of practical and commercial solutions to technically complex problems posed by business or Government clients which draw directly on advanced research findings; funded mainly from business and Government clients for academic enterprise, and also some private research
- **Specialist and niche provision** – applied teaching (often mainly post-graduate) and research services directed towards particular areas of practice such as creative arts, agriculture or bio-medical specialities; variously funded from each of the core streams, depending on the institution.

Most HEIs are likely to seek to maintain some presence in each of these core market areas, although the balance and priorities will be different between institutions and sometimes between schools or departments within an institution. The challenge for HEIs, therefore, is to develop the right portfolio of organisational capabilities supported by the institution's workforce, within a clearly-articulated corporate identity, mission and academic/business strategy. Adopting different strategic positioning will in turn require critical organisational capabilities, as outlined in the table below:

Table 6: Critical capabilities for different strategic priorities

| Strategic priorities | Primary research | Research-led teaching | Professional formation | Research-based solutions | Specialist |
|------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| Market ambition | World-class reputation for primary research (especially in STEM areas) | International recognition for research-informed education | National and sector-based development of research-informed practice | Research-based solutions for national and international clients | Development of research-informed practice focused on specific niche sectors |
| Critical capabilities | Assembling and developing field-leading research teams Maintaining first class research facilities Selective recruitment of most academically able students | Highly respected academic faculty with public profile Excellent student experience and results Selective recruitment of highly able students | Recognition from professional and sector stakeholders Vibrant community of academics and practitioners Provider of choice for aspiring and current professionals | 'Blue chip' client list and relationships Partner of choice for innovating business organisations Maintaining flow of project-based income | Recognition as sectoral centre of excellence Excellent relationships across focus sectors Agility and foresight to avoid downturns in niche business |

Source: *The Future Workforce for Higher Education (HEFCE)*

These critical capabilities include the different elements that an organisation needs to deliver its strategy – systems and technology, processes, management controls – and most importantly in Higher Education, the staff skill-sets required to enable an organisation to deliver its strategy. In terms of people capabilities, these include the following:

- **Leadership, management and governance capabilities** – having the right number of leaders and managers, with the right skills and knowledge to set the direction for the future, drive the implementation of institutional strategies, and ensure effective management of corporate risks.
- **Research capabilities** – having the right number of staff conducting research, with the right skills and knowledge. This involves academics, but also principal investigators, research assistants, post-doctorates, and technicians and academic enterprise staff involved in research projects.
- **Teaching and learning capabilities** – having the right number of staff developing and supporting teaching activities, with the right skills and knowledge. This includes academics, but also other roles such as PhD students, assistant lecturers, visiting teachers, and technicians involved in learning support.
- **Enterprise capabilities** – having the right number of staff developing both academic enterprise activities, and non-academic commercial activities (such as renting facilities). This includes dedicated roles, such as IP lawyers, business development managers, but also delivery of specific academic enterprise projects by the research and teaching capabilities mentioned above.
- **Business support capabilities** – having the right number of staff with the right skills and knowledge running the internal functions of an institution, such as HR, Finance, Estate, Libraries, Student Support and Career Advice centres.

6. Anticipated future trends

6.1 Key drivers for change

Higher education in the UK is widely acknowledged as a success story. Over the last decade the twin objectives of supporting excellence and widening access have been pursued and have proved to be complementary and mutually reinforcing. Over the same period there has been a sustained increase in student numbers. In 1997 921,000 students entered higher education. By 2009 that figure had risen to over 1.1 million. This progress has been supported by a sustained increase in investment. By 2010-11, total

funding for institutions will have doubled from 1997 levels¹⁶.

In 'Skills for Growth – The future of universities in a knowledge economy', the English Government sets out its strategy for sustaining the strength of higher education in an increasingly demanding and competitive environment. Key to this strategy is reinforcing the contact between businesses and universities, to ensure that:

- Universities work with employers to develop programmes that deliver high level skills to respond to the needs of the economy, especially in priority markets and sectors
- Universities produce employability support plans that will help ensure their graduates have the important generic skills (e.g. team-working, reasoning, communication) that are required in modern workplaces.

In Scotland, 'New Horizons: responding to the challenges of the 21st century' recommends that universities should become be an economic sector in their own right, becoming the 'seventh sector' in Scotland in recognition of the vital contribution they can make to delivering the Government's Economic Strategy. The report produced by the Joint Future Thinking Taskforce on Universities also sets out three challenges for Scotland's universities. These are summarised as follows:

- Universities must demonstrate that they use public funding to support activities that are aligned with the Scottish Government's Purpose, economic and skills strategies and other policies
- Learning provision must become more flexible to meet the needs of students, and be suitable for delivery by differing collaborations and structures
- Universities must be able to contribute directly to Scotland's ambition for a world-class knowledge economy by embedding a culture of engagement between themselves and the Scottish micro, small and medium sized business base.

6.2 Changes in Government funding for the HE sector

In December 2009, Business Secretary Lord Mandelson announced that the English government is to cut university funding by £533m – from £7.81bn in 2009 to £7.29bn for 2010-11, whilst asking that universities protect quality and access to higher education. This was not wholly unexpected as increased pressures on public expenditure were seen by many HEIs as resulting in reduced real levels of public funding for HE provision and increased selectivity in their distribution.

In consequence, all HEIs are planning for a reduced proportion of their income coming from

¹⁶ BIS - Higher Ambitions: The future of universities in a knowledge economy (2009)

public grants, and for some at least offsetting increases in earnings from private and competitive sources (including student fees in England, Wales and Northern Ireland).

The Government's stated strategy for strengthening higher education, and the recently announced cuts, puts English HEIs in something of a dilemma. On the one hand, HEIs are expected to deliver a high-quality student experience, whilst on the other financial cuts are limiting their available resources to do this. Understandably, following Lord Mandelson's announcement there were fears there could be consequences under the Barnett Formula for HE in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and that similar cuts in HE sector funding would follow. HEIs surveyed from all nations mentioned 'having to do more with less' as the biggest challenge they were facing over the next five to ten years. Over three-quarters also mentioned already having freezes on recruitment in place and implementing voluntary redundancy schemes as ways of meeting the funding squeeze, thus reducing their staff resource pools even further.

In **Scotland** the HE budget for 2010/2011 will be announced in March 2010. There have been indications that HE will be granted an extra £20 million, although it has been widely acknowledged that this will come under attack over the next few years. Parts of the sector are already experiencing difficulties, with for example several HEIs showing budget deficits in 2009 and many making job cuts. There have also been calls for the re-introduction of student tuition fees by some of Scotland's leading academics to help provide more funds for the sector.

In **Wales**, following publication of the draft 2010/2011 education budget, there is likely to be an increase on HE spending of around 1% and the Welsh Assembly Government is committed to putting a further £31 million into universities by 2015. Despite this the sector is facing having to make 5% efficiency savings a potential deficit of £48 million. The Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW) has warned of job losses and the closure of courses as a result of falling funding levels and has warned that key areas such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics could be exposed to the biggest cuts, due to the expense of providing them and the dwindling number of students opting to take them. HEFCW has been asked to provide details of actions, measures and timelines for delivering a review of higher education in Wales by spring 2010.

In **Northern Ireland**, there is to be an increase in recurrent funding for 2010/2011, but a cut in the strategic capital investment fund of £8 million. The Department for Employment and Learning is also looking for £3 million savings from HEI efficiencies. A review into the future of the Northern Irish HE sector is currently being undertaken by a 15-strong group who will analyse the findings of five separate expert groups, covering the economy, society and people, learning, internationalisation, and finance and governance. A separate review into

student funding in Northern Ireland is to be published in February 2010.

These challenges imply that HEI face major financial, structural and cultural changes in a sector where there has been traditionally a lot of stability and low staff turnover.

6.3 Market challenges

The emerging environment for HEIs is more volatile and uncertain than at any time in their history. Changes in patterns of demand for knowledge and learning, the impacts of technology on the delivery of HE services, growth in the number and range of competitors for those services, and fundamental changes in public funding and policy among other things are all redefining the business of higher education and the capabilities that HEIs need to succeed. This in turn implies major changes in the nature of work in HEIs, the skills and behaviours needed from academic, professional and supporting staff, and the ways that people work together, both with their colleagues and with students, business and other external stakeholders.

The response to these objectives is complicated by four challenges caused by a more dynamic and competitive HE environment.

1. Increasing diversity of mission and strategy among HE institutions

The increasingly competitive and multi-faceted nature of the HE marketplace will require every institution to establish its own distinctive identity in selected areas of the market, and to build advantageous and sustainable positions in the perceptions of different client groups.

This imperative for strategic differentiation will further extend the diversity already seen among institutions' academic/business models, and hence in the organisational capabilities needed for success. For example, an institution seeking to extend its reputation (and income) from world-class research will need quite distinct capabilities from one focused on growing its business through employer-centred learning.

2. Diversity of future workforce requirements

The patterns and focus of future demand for different academic and professional skills will vary widely between institutions, and may be articulated in terms quite different from current roles and job descriptions. Since the great majority of the HE workforce in 2015 or even 2020 is already employed within the sector, this clearly implies a very substantial staff development undertaking.

3. Continued turbulence and uncertainty of different HE markets

In contrast to the relative stability of the historical, publicly-funded model of HE, the future environment is far less predictable, comprising as it does multiple and dynamic competitive sub-markets for different services. The forces for change and long-term

outlook for grant-funded research are very different from those shaping the future market for work-based learning. There is no steady-state future scenario in this world, and the business models that succeed today may be inappropriate in 10 or 15 years time. This means that institutional strategies and business models, and the workforce capabilities needed to sustain them, will be subject to continuous challenge and review, and must embody agility and flexibility to adapt to new conditions and demands. The inherent conservatism and slow pace of workforce change in many HEIs will have to be overcome to meet this challenge.

4. Sector-wide workforce frameworks

The need for greater levels of agility and flexibility at institution level starts to challenge the very notion of a single HE workforce, and raises questions about the interpretation and application of sector-wide workforce structures such as the single grading and pay framework, national pay bargaining and standard terms of employment. There is a widespread perception across the sector that these agreements inhibit flexibility and change in workforce strategies. This is certainly not the intention (or indeed the fact) behind these measures, and there are already many examples of institutions employing local terms and conditions to support more flexible employment models. These variants can be expected to become more common in future. Nonetheless, there are workforce needs and pressures that will be common to all institutions, such as shared needs for staff development and leadership programmes, and which are best met through sector-wide responses.

All this implies that strategic workforce management – planning ahead to ensure the right people with the right skills can work together in new ways – is central to the future of every HEI, and must be a top priority for institutional and sector leaders.

6.1.3. Collaborative working between HEIs and sector organisations

There are a number of organisations in existence who as part of their role enable HEIs to address their workforce challenges. These include UCEA, HEA, LLUK, CUC, LFHE, ECU, UUK; Universities Scotland; the higher education funding bodies (HEFCE, SFC, HEFCW, DELNI); and employee representative bodies such as UNITE, UNISON, EIS, GMB and UCU. A full list of acronyms used in this report can be found in Appendix C.

Sector organisations can support HEIs on workforce issues in a variety of ways, including:

- **Workforce analytics** – providing HE workforce data (such as the HESA data), information and statistical analysis of workforce trends (such as those contained in many of the HEFCE workforce reports) to enable identification of sector wide workforce issues
- **Leadership, technical and management development services** – to directly address skill gaps and deficiencies across the HE workforce (such as those provided by the

Leadership Foundation for HE)

- **Advisory and consultancy services** – to support institutions in finding good practice approaches to addressing institutional workforce issues
- **Tools, frameworks and resources** – to provide common sets of tools and resources that would be of benefit across multiple institutions (e.g. a strategic workforce planning toolkit)
- **Alignment of sector level support** – bringing together and aligning HE workforce development across the differing interests of the four Governments, institutional employers and HE staff.

As the pressure on costs begins to be felt, the challenge for both sector organisations and HEIs will be to ensure that:

- Key sector-wide issues are clearly identified, validated and specified
- Interventions are well-defined and provide individual HEIs with frameworks, tools, expert support and relevant data to address issues within their national regional or local context.

6.1.4. International competition for staff

At present there are more incoming academics than academic emigrants from the UK. In 2005/06 there were significant inflows from outside the UK at lecturer, researcher and other grades, with greater outflow than inflow at senior lecturer/researcher and professorial level¹⁷. The increasing number of international staff working in the UK is a very positive indication of the attractiveness of the sector. Their contribution enables the UK to continue to support teaching and research in several key areas where UK nationals are found in declining numbers.

However, there are potential risks associated with an over-reliance on non-UK staff who may not be long term UK residents. Many countries are engaged in higher education reforms that should result in more effective and efficient systems. It will also mean increased international competition for highly qualified academic staff as these countries try to retain them in their own systems or encourage them to return after a period overseas. Additional pressures include increasing competition for researchers round the world as many countries increase their research and development targets, and the creation of the European Higher Education Area by 2010 which will reinforce strong international demand for appropriately qualified academic staff.

In 2009, the UK government commenced the introduction of a new Points Based System (PBS) for migration. The aims of PBS include providing a better method of identifying and attracting migrants from outside the EU who have most to contribute to the UK. The impact

¹⁷ UUK

of PBS on HE sector workforce resourcing has not been quantified. As the roll-out of the scheme has not been completed it is too early to tell whether the introduction of PBS will have a positive or negative effect on the recruitment of staff from outside the EU. However, the highly qualified and skilled migrants that the HE sector seeks to recruit should be able to enter the UK and remain here.

7. New and emerging roles within the HE sector

As a result of the funding constraints mentioned earlier, HEIs reported looking closely at their organisational structures and workforce composition, on the one hand to identify where savings and efficiencies can be made, but also to determine the structures and roles that will be necessary to meet the market challenges of the future. How each HEI reacts in terms of workforce development will vary depending on their vision and strategy. The following sections describe the more common themes that have been identified.

7.1 New and emerging roles

A small proportion of the HEIs surveyed reported developing new roles to meet to meet changing market conditions. Examples of these included:

Academic roles: Academics/consultants; ‘new academics’ who support flexible and distributed learning

Non-academic roles: Student experience managers / officers; business support managers

More significantly, the majority of HEIs reported that they were concentrating on developing the skill-sets required by existing roles. There is a resulting increased requirement for leadership, business development, commercial and entrepreneurial skills for both academic and professional and managerial staff.

So many roles are likely to stay the same, but the skills required by staff to perform them effectively are changing. For example, the role of head of faculty/department is becoming increasingly focussed on the active management of academic capabilities, teaching, research and enterprise and the management of resources, people, finance, etc., rather than academic quality. This change is not about doing the old job more effectively; the skill-set it now requires is significantly different to those of the traditional head of faculty/department role.

A similar change can be seen in the professional support services area. Many HEIs are moving to shared service models for their support services. This requires moving e.g. HR and finance delivery out of the faculties/departments and providing these services through centralised business support roles. These roles still require HR or finance experience, but

also greater customer service and advisory skills and the ability and flexibility to work across a number of different faculties/departments.

As discussed in Section 5.2, the critical capabilities required by the new strategic priorities will need to be supported by a different set of staff skills. Due to the current funding constraints, this is most commonly addressed by HEIs through developing the skills of existing staff, although these new skills are also sought when recruiting externally. For many staff it can be something of a culture shock, for example where traditional academic teaching or research focused roles are required to become more commercially focused. There is evidence that some of these new skills are being provided by external recruitment to both academic and non-academic roles, although with low turnover rates prevalent across the sector this can be a limited option.

Where new roles have been created, they are often as a result of adapting existing resources to specific circumstances. For example, those HEIs experiencing significant increases in student applications are starting to redirect resources that may have used for student marketing into their admissions processing activities. Redeployment of this kind requires a flexible workforce with a broad range of transferable skills, a position that HEIs will need to attain if they are to meet their delivery commitments with the current financial and resource constraints.

HEIs also reported looking at up-skilling existing roles where there are potentially untapped resources. This includes considering schemes to develop quasi-academic roles for technicians, to enable them to teach certain classes or undertake research, and offering professional development opportunities for non-academic staff, such as those in clerical roles, leading to professional qualifications and/or degrees.

The table below summarises the main changes to roles.

Table 7: Summary of main changes to roles

| Academic staff | Main changes to roles |
|--|--|
| Academic professionals | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater emphasis on leadership, commercial, entrepreneurial, alumni and partnership management skills • Making academic posts more attractive to non-academic applicants, e.g. flexibility to retain external professional commitments • More flexibility in ways of working to match student demands • Dual teaching and consultancy roles |
| Non-academic staff | |
| Managers and non-academic professional staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater emphasis on leadership, commercial, marketing, project management and financial skills • Broader skill-sets enabling greater flexibility in matching resource to organisational changes • Business development skills, overseas marketing • Business support roles • Service-orientated |
| Technicians | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move to formalised support for teaching and research |
| Support roles | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broader skill-sets enabling greater flexibility in matching resource to |

| Academic staff | Main changes to roles |
|----------------|---|
| | organisational changes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater emphasis on student experience / customer care • Introduction of customer service roles • Professionalisation of some administration and support roles |

7.2 Structural and organisational changes

Over half of the HEIs surveyed reported having restructured or being in the process of restructuring their organisations to streamline their processes and operate more effectively. Increasing implementation of shared service approaches and the consolidation of facilities and structures signal the end of traditional silo working that was once prevalent in the sector, although there are still exceptions. These types of changes mean that academic staff are becoming the ‘customers’ of corporate service delivery functions such as finance, HR, etc. whereas previously these activities may have resided in each school or faculty. They also require significant changes in the ways of working for the staff involved.

These organisational changes are likely to be accompanied by significantly different ways of working in the future for academic staff and the non-academic staff who support them, as well as changes to employment contracts. These include:

- Introducing initiatives to keep abreast of staff expectations and reflect the changes in the wider employment marketplace, such as flexible working hours and provisions for working from home, the latter becoming more attractive as the cost of and pressure on office accommodation continues to rise
- More flexibility around teaching delivery, such as blended and distance learning, teaching outside normal working hours and the potential introduction of two year degree courses in some English HEIs
- Moving to a performance-related culture where there is a focus on the measurement of outputs. This will be particularly important to ensure the highest levels of staff utilisation and effectiveness when funding is reduced. Combined with an effective performance management regime it can also be a useful tool for identifying development needs and latent skills.

The HE sector has generally not followed the outsourcing route for the external provision of services, except in a few relatively uncomplicated areas, e.g. catering, cleaning and security. However, there appears to be more enthusiasm for forming strategic partnerships with other organisations for the provision of transactional aspects of services such as estates, IT, HR, etc., and for forming buying groups e.g. for legal services. Whilst the general view was that these partnerships would be with other HEIs, two HEIs surveyed mentioned actively investigating strategic partnerships with organisations from other sectors such as health,

police and local authorities. The skill-sets required for staff managing these types of partnerships, e.g. contract management, commercial and entrepreneurial skills, will be different from those currently found in most HEIs.

8. Current skills gaps and recruitment challenges

HEIs traditionally have low staff turnover, with rates of less than 2 per cent not uncommon. Although this has been influenced by the current economic climate, low staff turnover has been a feature of the HE sector for many years. Many HEIs reported having in place recruitment freezes or very stringent processes for approving recruitment, as well as voluntary redundancy and early retirement schemes.

8.1 Skills gaps

HEIs reported the following as the main areas where they have skills gaps:

- Leadership and management
- Entrepreneurial and commercial
- Change leadership and management
- Project management
- Business development
- Business consultancy.

These exist at all occupational levels from managers and professionals through to academics. HEIs mentioned in particular the lack of change management and project management skills within the sector. These are seen as critical for addressing changes the sector faces, but are difficult to develop quickly. The inherent stability of the HE workforce and with many HEIs not planning to increase their headcounts, means there are limited opportunities to recruit staff with these new skill-sets into HEIs.

There is also a need within the sector to ensure a greater focus on the employer agenda, in particular being more responsive and open to a demand-led employer approach. This may require the development of new skill sets, possibly also for academics who are traditionally required to focus on research and teaching. The current climate increasingly requires staff with the appropriate blend of academic experience and technical ability (i.e. dual professionalism).

An important skills need is linked to developing innovation and creativity in the HE sector. It was reported that there currently exists a wealth of untapped expertise within

the sector, especially amongst academics. However, the challenge is in harnessing these skills and using them to develop new products and enter new markets. Related to this, there is substantial research particularly in relation to ethnicity (Equality Challenge Unit 2009) and disability (National Institute of Adult Continuing Education 2008), and to a lesser extent in relation to gender (Times Higher Education March 2008 and July 2009) that academics from particular backgrounds do not have equal opportunity to develop their expertise across the full range of academic settings. Engaging with blended learning and new technologies was also cited as an important skills gap within HE, particularly where people had been promoted who had good technical knowledge but not the same level of skills in management and leadership.

Within Wales, there is an emerging skills shortage of Welsh speakers. All students at Welsh HEIs have the right to submit work and sit exams in the Welsh medium. This is creating a shortage of bi-lingual academic and non-academic staff and affecting HEIs' ability to deliver courses in the Welsh medium. However, the Welsh Assembly Government is funding a Research Studentship, which leads to a PhD, as a way of developing academic talent with Welsh language skills. HEIs are also encouraging their staff to develop Welsh language skills by offering Welsh medium courses that cater for all skill levels, from beginners onwards.

8.2 Skills shortages and recruitment challenges

Overall, the HE sector is experiencing few recruitment problems, a situation that can be attributed to the current economic situation. However there continue to be some areas that remain difficult to recruit to and sourcing candidates with the right combination of skills, as mentioned in Section 5.2, can sometimes be problematic.

8.2.1 Academic recruitment

HEIs reported having fewer problems recruiting generally, although difficulties remain with traditionally difficult areas such as business, finance, marketing, modern languages, etc. It was also reported that there is still difficulty with some unique and very specialist academic roles, particularly those where there are national and international shortages of experienced candidates, e.g. Forestry, Criminology, Logistics, etc. The majority of academic posts are currently filled by academics, but these are starting to attract more non-academic candidates with professional experience from outside the HE sector as a result of the current recession.

There is evidence that candidates who combine leadership and managerial skills and specialist subject expertise are becoming more difficult to recruit as these skill-sets are scarcer and there is competition amongst HEIs for them. Other recruitment difficulties identified relate to skills shortages in specialist expertise and research acumen, project

management experience, knowledge of teaching and a willingness to work flexibly and financially skilled staff with sales and marketing expertise

8.2.2 Non-academic recruitment

HEIs reported few difficulties with recruitment to non-academic posts. Locally placed advertisements for most posts will attract high numbers of applicants, often in the hundreds. Even traditionally difficult to recruit to posts, such as IT, finance and marketing can be filled with relative ease, attracting highly-qualified candidates who are willing to take a reduction in salary to remain in employment.

8.2.3 Factors influencing recruitment

Clearly the current economic environment has had a major influence on HEIs' ability to fill posts with relative ease. This applies particularly to non-academic staff, although the sector has seen an increase in applications to academic posts from candidates outside the HE sector. However, a small number of HEIs reported seeing a fall in applications from outside the sector for some professional and senior management posts, possibly due to the negative impact of the financial constraints, with people starting to regard the sector as less stable than previously. The concern was also expressed by most HEIs that recruitment will become more difficult again once the economy improves as the sector is not able to match private sector and some public sector bodies (e.g. NHS) salary levels for many posts.

9. Training and workforce development in the HE sector

9.1 Training and development

HEIs reported that skills development is high on their agendas, with the majority planning or having in place a wide range of interventions focussed on developing and improving staff skills for the new environment and to address succession. HEIs are seeking to avoid situations such as young lecturers who have progressed quickly through their undergraduate, MSc and PhD degrees to become lecturers and are then given programmes or large scale projects to manage without having been exposed to, or having gained prior experience of, project management skills.

However, it is also recognised that HEIs will have less funds to invest in training and development over the next three to four years.

HEIs also reported that interventions were needed to address resistance to the changes, particularly amongst longer-serving staff.

HEIs reported the following main areas of staff development needs:

- Leadership and management
- Change leadership and management
- Business development and consultancy
- Project management
- Staff performance management
- Teamworking and partnerships.

Most HEIs reported concentrating on developing leadership and management skills, particularly amongst academic staff, although there was recognition that this was needed across all staff groups.

Training and development is mainly developed and delivered in-house, except for specialist subjects or professional development. There is an increasing use of e-learning and blended learning approaches for training delivery. Some HEIs also mentioned forming partnerships with other organisations from different sectors, e.g. NHS for the delivery of core subjects. External bodies are occasionally used for training and development, depending on the type of intervention required, but may be less so due to their added cost.

9.2 Career development

Talent management is undertaken within each HEI; there are no cross-sector fast track schemes such as those found in the Civil Service aimed at bringing people into senior grades from their mid-30s.

In addition to the usual career development paths associated with large progressive organisations, HEIs reported a number of initiatives aimed at helping staff progress across different disciplines and utilising resources more effectively. These initiatives include:

- Creating job families with cross-cutting career paths so that staff can progress through academic and non-academic roles and not exclusively one or the other
- The introduction of associate academic roles that allow new recruits to undertake post graduate teaching courses and join the Higher Education Academy before moving into teaching roles
- Career development schemes for clerical staff to develop into professional roles, with support for vocational and professional training, such as part-time degrees. However it was noted that an increasing number of staff recruited to clerical roles already

possess degrees

- Schemes for non-academic staff to provide a first step into management, including experiential learning, job swaps, mentoring, etc.
- Technician apprenticeship schemes to address succession planning and an ageing population
- Schemes to support technicians with gaining degrees and to move into teaching and research support roles
- Support for non-academic staff wishing to gain degrees or professional qualifications in HR, Finance, etc. through access to their HEI's courses.

10. Links with other sectors and occupational areas

Many parts of the HE sector, such as the academic and research areas, are well-defined compared to other sectors. However, there are several areas of the HE sector's activities where there are clear overlaps with other occupational areas, particularly those found in other parts of the public sector with which HEIs share many similarities, such as local government, education and FE. The fact that several HEIs reported investigating partnerships with other public sector bodies for the provision of IT, procurement and other similar services underlines the similarities within the sector as a whole.

The HE sector also has links with a number of other sectors. The table below shows a summary of the main sectors with links to the HE sector, using Standard Industrial Classifications (SICs).

Table 8: Links with other sectors

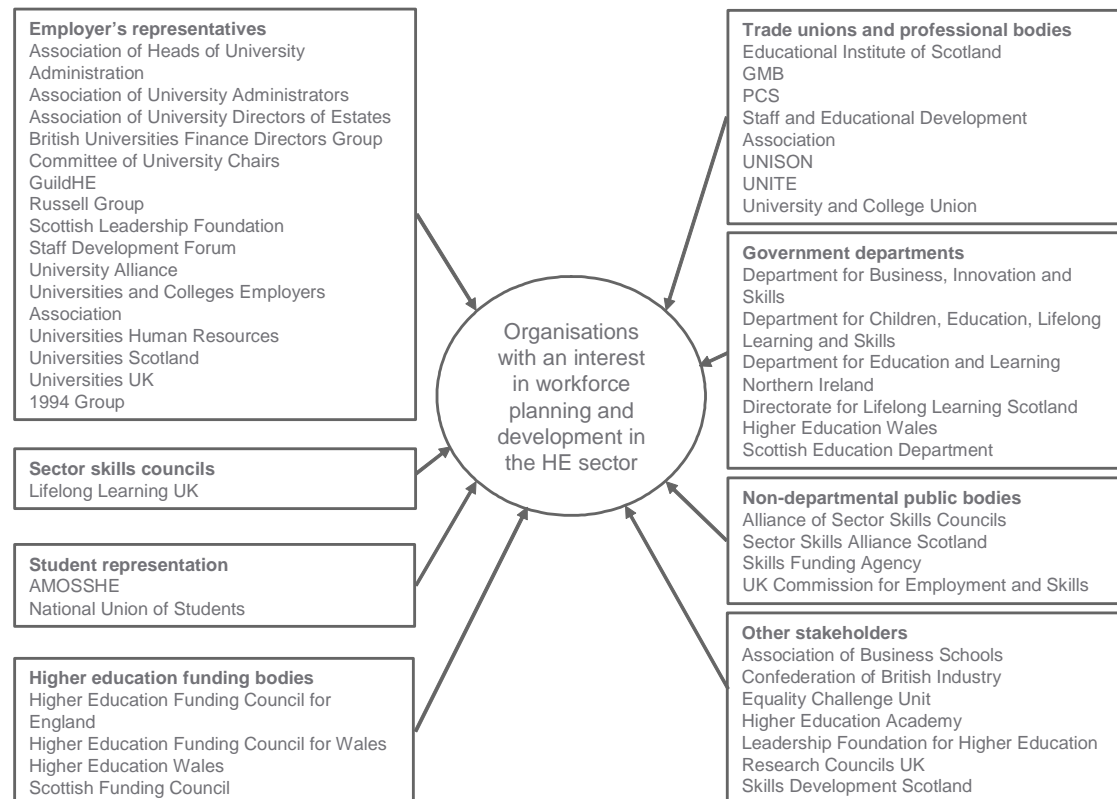
| Sectors (SICs) |
|--|
| • Retail trade, except of motor vehicles and motorcycles |
| • Accommodation and Food Service Activities |
| • Computer programming, consultancy and related activities |
| • Information service activities |
| • Real Estate Activities |
| • Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities |
| • Management consultancy activities |
| • Scientific research and development |
| • Creative, arts and entertainment activities |
| • Libraries, archives, museums and other cultural activities |
| • Sports activities and amusement and recreation activities |

It should also be remembered that both the HE sector and other sectors are constantly evolving, so that what they currently cover could change over time.

11. Key stakeholders and organisations in the sector

Numerous bodies and organisations have an interest in the workforce development in the HE sector. The stakeholder map shown below in Figure 9 provides an overview of the main stakeholder groups.

Table 9: Stakeholder map



12. Conclusions

This occupational map has been produced during a time of unprecedented change in the HE sector. These changes are affecting an environment that was until recently, relatively stable and enjoying steady growth. HEI's are now facing significant financial constraints, pressure to provide a high-quality student experience, changes in the patterns of demand for and delivery of knowledge and learning, and increasing competition, particularly from overseas. In addressing these challenges HEIs will also need to address a number of internal issues, such as an ageing workforce, particularly amongst academics, traditionally low staff turnover and an employment framework which can be enforced rigidly at a time when greater flexibility is necessary.

Taking into account this background and the information provided from the HEI sample interviews, concentrating workforce development initiatives on the following areas would provide the greatest benefits to the sector as a whole:

- **Change management capability**

The far-reaching changes the sector is facing require well-developed change management skills if these changes are to be addressed successfully. Therefore change management skills will be an essential requirement for both academic and non-academic leaders. As mentioned previously, the sector has traditionally had low staff turnover and is now facing an ageing workforce, particularly amongst academics. These two factors will make the kind of changes required difficult to implement unless sound change management interventions are employed. HEIs reported that the additional cost of buying-in these skills, whether through permanent posts or contractors, are beyond them, so developing the skills of existing staff is their only option.

- **Project management capability**

HEIs reported a lack of good project management skills, particularly amongst academics, but also amongst managers and non-academic professionals. These skills will be increasingly important to ensure that changes are implemented in a planned and controlled manner.

- **Leadership capability**

Traditionally in HEIs leadership has come from academic staff. As the majority of academics have been appointed from academic roles in the past, this has resulted in little diversity in terms of the profile of leaders. HEIs reported undertaking much work in developing leaders amongst academic staff and at most other managerial levels amongst non-academic staff. Academic leaders will need a wider range of skills, including those in financial, people and change management and not just academic credibility, to enable

them to manage the uncertainty and complexity of the changing HE environment. Increasing competition for academic and non-academic staff with strong leadership skills amongst HEIs will require a greater supply of leaders than is currently available in the sector.

- **Commercial, business and entrepreneurial capability**

As HEIs are required to become more commercially-focussed, the requirement for both academic and non-academic staff (managers and non-academic professionals) to possess the requisite skill-sets increases. As a result, HEIs are starting to place increasing importance on financial, marketing and business consulting skills, commercial awareness and business acumen.

13. Further development of the HE sector occupational map

The occupational map for the UK HE sector is a starting point and has been produced in order to provide the context and background for the development of strategies to address the professional development of staff working in the sector. As might be expected, there are many common challenges across the sector, despite each HEI having its own unique identity and the wide geographical spread of HEIs across the four nations. However, each HEI's response to these changes depends on their individual circumstances. Therefore there would be benefit in carrying out further analysis, for example amongst HEIs by nation (or in the case of England by region), or by different types of HEIs as identified in Section 5.2. This would enable the development of specifically targeted interventions that more closely reflect the uniqueness of each institution's situation, as well as the development of National Occupational Standards and vocational qualifications for the sector as a whole.

As mentioned in Section 1, during the creation of the occupational map consideration was given to whether it could also be used to cover the FE sector. However, an initial comparison between the two sectors has shown significant differences between the challenges and issues they face. Therefore it is recommended that a separate study is undertaken to produce an occupational map specifically for the UK FE sector.

APPENDIX A: Number of people working in the HE sector

A1: Total staff headcount

| HESA staff classifications | Total staff headcount | | |
|---|-----------------------|--------|--------|
| | Female | Male | Total |
| Academic staff | | | |
| Academic professionals | 74590 | 100355 | 174945 |
| Full-time | 43200 | 73295 | 116495 |
| Part-time | 31385 | 27060 | 58445 |
| Non-academic staff | | | |
| Managers | 7590 | 7315 | 14905 |
| Full-time | 6370 | 6975 | 13345 |
| Part-time | 1220 | 335 | 1555 |
| Non-academic professionals | 14715 | 11120 | 25835 |
| Full-time | 10695 | 9970 | 20665 |
| Part-time | 4020 | 1150 | 5170 |
| Laboratory, engineering, building, IT and medical technicians (including nurses) | 9470 | 17655 | 27120 |
| Full-time | 6510 | 16300 | 22810 |
| Part-time | 2960 | 1355 | 4315 |
| Student welfare workers, careers Advisors, vocational training instructors, personnel and planning officers | 6875 | 2490 | 9365 |
| Full-time | 4230 | 1910 | 6140 |
| Part-time | 2645 | 580 | 3225 |
| Artistic, media, public relations, marketing and sports occupations | 3410 | 2395 | 5805 |
| Full-time | 2350 | 1945 | 4295 |
| Part-time | 1060 | 450 | 1510 |
| Library assistants, clerks and general administrative assistants | 41640 | 10950 | 52590 |
| Full-time | 25065 | 7450 | 32515 |
| Part-time | 16575 | 3500 | 20075 |
| Secretaries, typists, receptionists and telephonists | 16880 | 1305 | 18185 |
| Full-time | 10435 | 845 | 11280 |
| Part-time | 6445 | 460 | 6905 |
| Chefs, gardeners, electrical and construction trades, mechanical fitters and printers | 855 | 4275 | 5130 |
| Full-time | 590 | 4115 | 4705 |
| Part-time | 270 | 160 | 430 |
| Caretakers, residential wardens, sports and leisure attendants, nursery nurses and care occupations | 2690 | 2435 | 5125 |
| Full-time | 1300 | 1680 | 2980 |
| Part-time | 1390 | 760 | 2150 |
| Retail and customer service occupations | 875 | 350 | 1225 |
| Full-time | 375 | 200 | 575 |

| | | | |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Part-time | 500 | 150 | 650 |
| Drivers, maintenance supervisors and plant operatives | 265 | 1180 | 1450 |
| Full-time | 145 | 1075 | 1220 |
| Part-time | 120 | 105 | 225 |
| Cleaners, catering assistants, security officers, porters and maintenance workers | 18335 | 12450 | 30785 |
| Full-time | 2805 | 8190 | 10995 |
| Part-time | 15530 | 4260 | 19790 |
| Total | 198185 | 174270 | 372455 |
| Full-time | 107700 | 126975 | 234675 |
| Part-time | 90485 | 47295 | 137780 |

Source: HESA, Resources of Higher Education Institutions 2007/08

A2: Age distribution of staff working in the HE Sector

| HESA staff classifications | Age distribution | | |
|---|------------------|--------------|-------------|
| | Average age | % < 35 years | % >55 years |
| Academic staff | | | |
| Academic professionals | 43.7 | 25% | 21% |
| Non-academic staff | | | |
| Managers | 45.0 | 16% | 19% |
| Non-academic professionals | 42.1 | 28% | 15% |
| Laboratory, engineering, building, IT and medical technicians (including nurses) | 41.7 | 32% | 18% |
| Student welfare workers, careers advisors, vocational training instructors, personnel & planning officers | 40.1 | 37% | 14% |
| Artistic, media, public relations, marketing and sports occupations | 36.9 | 50% | 9% |
| Library assistants, clerks and general administrative assistants | 39.0 | 42% | 14% |
| Secretaries, typists, receptionists and telephonists | 42.3 | 30% | 20% |
| Chefs, gardeners, electrical and construction trades, mechanical fitters and printers | 44.9 | 20% | 25% |
| Caretakers, residential wardens, sports and leisure attendants, nursery nurses and care occupations | 37.6 | 47% | 16% |
| Retail and customer service occupations | 37.7 | 46% | 15% |
| Drivers, maintenance supervisors and plant operatives | 48.8 | 10% | 36% |
| Cleaners, catering assistants, security officers, porters and maintenance workers | 45.5 | 22% | 30% |
| Total | 42.6 | 29% | 19% |

Source: HESA, Resources of Higher Education Institutions 2007/08

A3: Disability status of staff working in the HE sector

| HESA staff classifications | Disability status | | | |
|---|-------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Declared disabled | Not known to be disabled | Total of known disability status | Information not provided |
| Academic staff | | | | |
| Academic professionals | 3780 | 157785 | 161565 | 13380 |
| Non-academic staff | | | | |
| Managers | 405 | 13755 | 14160 | 745 |
| Non-academic professionals | 635 | 23665 | 24300 | 1530 |
| Laboratory, engineering, building, IT and medical technicians (including nurses) | 885 | 24285 | 25175 | 1945 |
| Student welfare workers, careers advisors, vocational training instructors, personnel and planning officers | 375 | 8445 | 8820 | 545 |
| Artistic, media, public relations, marketing and sports occupations | 155 | 5280 | 5430 | 370 |
| Library assistants, clerks and general administrative assistants | 1520 | 47630 | 49150 | 3440 |
| Secretaries, typists, receptionists and telephonists | 420 | 16650 | 17070 | 1115 |
| Chefs, gardeners, electrical and construction trades, mechanical fitters and printers | 160 | 4515 | 4675 | 455 |
| Caretakers, residential wardens, sports and leisure attendants, nursery nurses and care occupations | 120 | 4560 | 4680 | 445 |
| Retail and customer service occupations | 30 | 1095 | 1125 | 100 |
| Drivers, maintenance supervisors and plant operatives | 40 | 1270 | 1315 | 135 |
| Cleaners, catering assistants, security officers, porters and maintenance workers | 825 | 26735 | 27555 | 3225 |
| Total | 9350 | 335670 | 345020 | 27435 |

Source: HESA, Resources of Higher Education Institutions 2007/08

Note on Appendix A3: Disability indicates whether a member of staff is disabled on the basis of their own assessment. Staff are not obliged to report a disability, and therefore figures reported in the HESA analyses are derived from a subset which may not be representative of the total staff population.

A4: Ethnicity of staff working in the HE sector

| HESA staff classifications | Ethnicity | | | | | | | |
|---|------------------------|------------------------|-------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|--------------|
| | Black or Black British | Asian or Asian British | Chinese | Mixed and other ethnic backgrounds | Total of ethnic minorities | White | Total of known ethnicity | Not known |
| Academic staff | | | | | | | | |
| Academic professionals | 2260 | 4410 | 4510 | 6645 | 17815 | 139080 | 156895 | 18050 |
| Non-academic staff | | | | | | | | |
| Managers | 190 | 250 | 70 | 245 | 755 | 13415 | 14170 | 735 |
| Non-academic professionals | 375 | 620 | 260 | 580 | 1840 | 22420 | 24255 | 1575 |
| Laboratory, engineering, building, IT and medical technicians (including nurses) | 440 | 905 | 345 | 625 | 2320 | 22135 | 24455 | 2670 |
| Student welfare workers, careers advisors, vocational training instructors, personnel and planning officers | 190 | 285 | 60 | 200 | 730 | 8165 | 8895 | 470 |
| Artistic, media, public relations, marketing and sports occupations | 90 | 110 | 45 | 150 | 395 | 4990 | 5385 | 420 |
| Library assistants, clerks and general administrative assistants | 1465 | 1705 | 645 | 1500 | 5310 | 43350 | 48660 | 3930 |
| Secretaries, typists, receptionists and telephonists | 330 | 310 | 105 | 335 | 1090 | 16015 | 17105 | 1085 |
| Chefs, gardeners, electrical and construction trades, mechanical fitters and printers | 105 | 35 | 15 | 75 | 230 | 4275 | 4505 | 625 |
| Caretakers, residential wardens, sports and leisure attendants, nursery nurses and care occupations | 130 | 95 | 25 | 115 | 365 | 4175 | 4540 | 585 |
| Retail and customer service occupations | 15 | 25 | 10 | 30 | 80 | 990 | 1075 | 150 |
| Drivers, maintenance supervisors and plant operatives | 20 | 5 | 0 | 25 | 50 | 1245 | 1295 | 155 |
| Cleaners, catering assistants, security officers, porters and maintenance workers | 1485 | 740 | 445 | 1020 | 3695 | 23225 | 26915 | 3865 |
| Total | 7100 | 9490 | 6535 | 11540 | 34670 | 303475 | 338145 | 34310 |

Source: HESA, Resources of Higher Education Institutions 2007/08

Note on Appendix A4: Staff may choose not to reveal their ethnicity and therefore the figures reported in the HESA analyses are derived from a subset that may not be representative of the total staff population.

APPENDIX B: Information sources

Reference reports

- Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, *Higher Ambitions: The future of universities in a knowledge economy* – 2009
- Department for Employment and Learning, *The Northern Ireland Skills Monitoring Survey 2005: Sector Skills Councils Summary Report* – 2008
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- HESA, *Resources of Higher Education Institutions 2007/08*
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- LLUK, *Lifelong Learning UK (Lifelong Learning Sector) Scottish Sector Profile 2007*
- LLUK, *Lifelong Learning workforce in England factsheet* – 2009
- LLUK, *Lifelong Learning workforce in Northern Ireland factsheet* – 2009
- LLUK, *Lifelong Learning workforce in Scotland factsheet* – 2009
- LLUK, *Lifelong Learning workforce in Wales factsheet* – 2009
- LLUK, *Sector Skills Assessment: UK wide Report* – 2010
- LLUK, *Workforce Skills in Lifelong Learning* – 2007
- PA Consulting Group, *Escaping the Red Queen Effect: Succeeding in the new economics of higher education* – 2009
- PA Consulting Group, *The Future Workforce in Higher Education: A report to HEFCE by PA Consulting Group* – 2009
- Scottish Government, *Skills for Scotland: A lifelong skills strategy* – 2007
- Times Higher Education Supplements
- UCEA, *Recruitment and Retention of Staff in Higher Education* – 2008

UKCES, *Towards Ambition 2020; skills, jobs, growth* – 2009

UNISON, *Research into the position of secretarial and clerical staff within the UK Higher Education System* – 2007

UUK, *Talent Wars: the international market for academic staff* – 2007

Universities Scotland Joint Future Thinking Taskforce on Universities, *New Horizons: responding to the challenges of the 21st century*

Welsh Assembly Government, *Skills That Work for Wales: A skills and employment strategy* – 2008

APPENDIX C: Acronyms used in this report

| | |
|-------|---|
| BIS | Department for Business, Innovation and Skills |
| CUC | Committee of University Chairs |
| DELNI | Department for Employment and Learning Northern Ireland |
| ECU | Equality Challenge Unit |
| EIS | Educational Institute of Scotland |
| EU | European Union |
| FE | Further Education |
| FTE | Full-time equivalent |
| HE | Higher education |
| HEFCE | Higher Education Funding Council for England |
| HEFCW | Higher Education Funding Council for Wales |
| HEI | Higher education institution |
| HESA | Higher Education Statistics Agency |
| LFHE | Leadership Foundation for Higher Education |
| LLUK | Lifelong Learning UK |
| PCS | Public and Commercial Services Union |
| PBS | Points-based System |
| SFC | Scottish Funding Council |
| SOC | Standard Occupational Classification |
| UCEA | Universities and Colleges Employers Association |
| UCU | University and College Union |
| UKCES | UK Commission for Employment and Skills |
| UUK | Universities UK |