



**Information Services and Financial Consolidation**

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*A successful sector*

- 18 UK universities in the world top 100
- 12% share of the world's scientific citations for 1% of the population
- 11% of international trade in higher education
- Generating value of £55bn to the economy and promoting important health and social benefits

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*Funding Context in England*

- 41% real terms growth in QR spending between 2002-03 and 2009-10
- an established infrastructure for commercialisation, innovation and enterprise – generating £10.3bn in value
- a £4.9 - £7.1 return on every £1 of HEIF
- rapid support for business and graduates through ECIF
- leveraging £31m on £25m
- benefiting 50,000 people and 11,700 business

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## You never had it so good...

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- 'How was it for you?'
- Growth and bubble?
- Area of increasing cost
- Integral to student experience, probably biggest HE issue other than funding
- Where does your university/college stand?
- Budget and outturn?
- Student experience – NSS?



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## Where are we now?

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- Perceptions about efficiency, especially shared services
- Perceptions about quality – contact hours, student feedback
- Bridge (@HEFCE) over Valley of Death (@UUK)
- Lord Browne riding to the rescue?
- A coalition – policy under development



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## Financial Consolidation

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- 'What did we get for our money?'
- 'How important is it to protect research as opposed to ...?'
- ... public spending cuts happening & HE affected
- You cannot look at Research, isolated from Teaching
- Full effects of HE cuts, already announced, in England are not yet visible
- Where we really are...
- Emergency budget and spending review to come



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## Mindset and Attitudes

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- 'The thing they said was impossible, he has done...'
- Balance between reality and inviting the worst
- Self-serving or contributing?
- Individuals or collective effort?
  - Research teams, departments, universities
  - Different disciplines



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## Key Questions for Research

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- How do we demonstrate our contribution?
- How do we manage volume? Can we manage volume?
- How selective should we be in rewarding excellence?
- How much does the excellence depend on other work?
- Should we manage concentration artificially?
- How important is truly 'critical' mass?
- What about further mass effects?
- Funding middle-ranking work while ceasing to fund excellence?
- Autonomy/Academic Freedom is non-negotiable



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## REF – a UK-wide framework for assessing research quality

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... maintaining the capacity of higher education to undertake world-leading research across a range of academic disciplines, promoting economic growth and national well-being and the expansion and dissemination of knowledge

REF Consultation  
September 2009/38



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## The purpose of the REF

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- to secure the continuation of a world-class dynamic and responsive research base in the UK through
- funding: selective funding allocations informed by quality assessment
- benchmarking and information: establishing reputational yardsticks
- accountability: demonstrating that public investment in research is effective and delivers public benefit



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## Information Services Response

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- More for less, IT driving productivity gains
- Jobs on the line or opportunities?
- Outsourcing – implications for IT Staff
- Winning cultural battles, no 'victim attitude'
- Managing expectations through budgets – sacred cows go



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