



CORPORATE PLANNING STATEMENT, 2009/10

Introduction

1. The University adopted its current 5 year Strategic Plan in January 2007. The Plan envisages an exciting future for the University and includes a clear statement of the University's values and ambitions. The Plan seeks to build on strengths and extend further the University's reputation for providing excellent, inclusive higher education.
2. The University has adopted a set of values to inform its future vision – to develop, promote and protect values of intellectual openness, honesty and love of learning, and a deep commitment to human equality and dignity. The University's values and ambitions are encapsulated in the final section of the Plan: to inspire, to include and to innovate.
3. The Strategic Plan commits the University to significant growth, both in size and in impact on the region it serves. The University will, by the end of the life of the Plan, provide substantially more higher education opportunities and, through the construction of its new city centre campus, will have contributed to the regeneration of the City of Worcester, and the development of a new cultural and learning quarter. In order to achieve these ambitions, the Strategic Plan identified aims, objectives, success criteria and key strategic risks within five areas:-
 - An outstanding student experience
 - Generating knowledge and promoting enterprise
 - A first class university for the region
 - High achieving staff in a well led University
 - Sustainable development, excellent facilities
4. In its annual corporate planning statement, the University seeks to set key strategic priorities for the following 12 month period, which will ensure that progress is made towards the fulfilment of the aims and objectives in the Strategic Plan, 2007-2012. In turn, individual academic and support departments compile annual planning statements, using the Strategic Plan and annual corporate planning statement as a framework. Academic departments produce their own plans using the same principal headings as the corporate planning statement; service departments are required to identify key priorities for the subsequent year, and for the medium term development of the

service and to show how the service will support the achievement of the University's key strategic objectives.

5. The remainder of this statement reviews progress against the key strategic and specific priorities and targets identified in the Corporate Planning Statement 2008/09 and identifies priorities for 2009/10.

Strategic Priorities 2008/09

6. The 2008/09 Corporate Planning Statement identified 9 key strategic priorities:-

- i) *To improve further the University's performance on the achievement and retention of students, through enhancement of the student experience; this will include a review of the first year experience of undergraduate students.*

The recent publication of the HEFCE Performance Indicators shows that the University has achieved a satisfactory level of performance against its benchmark. There has been a further improvement in the number of students who achieved a good degree (i.e. a 2:1 or 1st), 49% in 2007/08, although this remains low in comparison with other universities. The University remains concerned about the number of students who fail to submit assignments and who fail at the first attempt. All Institutes have been required to review arrangements for assessing and tracking students and to put in place additional mechanisms to support students 'at risk'. A number of new initiatives, using the opportunities presented by new technology, have been identified which will be implemented in 2009/10. Through the Student Retention and Achievement Working Group, a University-wide discussion of issues affecting retention and achievement has been conducted (Pre-Entry; Induction; Course Structures; the First Year Experience: Personal Tutoring; Re-Assessment and Non-Submission) and a number of new initiatives will be taken forward as a result. Academic Board has agreed to re-locate re-assessment from September to July from 2010/11 onwards, in response to evidence that students are more likely to engage with and be successful in re-assessment, if it is timed to take place earlier.

- ii) *To pursue initiatives to ensure that the University at least maintains application levels achieved in 2007/2008, and to develop provision at UG and PG levels to prepare the University to face the demographic challenges ahead and to meet its growth targets.*

Applications through UCAS for 2009 entry have increased by 12.06%. There has also been an increase in applications from postgraduate and international applicants. The principal focus

for curriculum development at undergraduate and postgraduate levels remains a determination to ensure that courses are relevant and market driven. New courses which will come on stream in 2009 and 2010 include: Advertising; Business Systems Management; Counselling; Education; Forensic Psychology; Marketing, Advertising & Web Design; Accounting, Marketing and Tourism.

- iii) *To build further on the quality and excellence of the University's academic provision, and ensure that there is sufficient investment to, support the further development in a number of key subject areas and to build on innovative practice in others (e.g. Education).*

The University continues to invest in facilities that contribute to an outstanding student experience. New laboratories for science teaching (part of the new building that will house the National Pollen and Aerobiology Research Unit) will open in September 2009. New teaching accommodation for teaching Art & Design courses will also open in September 2009. Plans to move the University's Business School to the new city centre campus are well-advanced and the Business School will relocate to its new premises in the summer of 2010. A third generation Astro-turf facility, to enhance learning and teaching in Sports Coaching and related courses, will be constructed in the first part of the 2009/10 session. In August 2009, the University will acquire a former school adjacent to its St John's Campus which will relieve pressure on existing facilities. The programme of refurbishment of existing facilities will continue and by September 2009 the University will have largely completed its 'modern classroom' initiative. As well as these developments, the University continues to invest in other aspects of the learning infrastructure, in particular learning technologies, which are designed to support academic provision across the University's academic institutes. Funding through the Teaching Quality Enhancement Fund has supported a number of projects designed to enhance learning and teaching: examples include: the development of an on-line version of the first module of the PG Cert Learning and Teaching in HE and a M level module in e-learning pedagogy; the development of a peer learning through observation scheme; the establishment of a University Learning and Teaching Journal and a network of staff engaged in researching learning and teaching; a secondment to take forward initiatives to further develop student employability; a project on appreciative inquiry and inclusion. The Academic Development and Practice Unit (established in 2007/08) has been the focus for a programme of activities designed to support the enhanced quality of academic provision.

- iv) *To prepare and submit an application for Research Degree Awarding Powers*

The University's application was submitted in October 2008. The QAA's Advisory Committee on Degree Awarding Powers (ACDAP) agreed that a prima facie case had been made and the scrutiny of the University's application commenced in March 2009. The cycle of visits culminated with a 2 day visit by the Scrutiny Panel in September 2009 and it is anticipated that, a recommendation arising out of the Scrutiny will be presented to either the December 2009 or March 2010 meeting of ACDAP.

- v) *To maintain a surplus budget, within the limits of HEFCE guidance, in order to retain the confidence of funders in the University's ability to manage the capital development programme, and its ability to service an increased level of debt, ensuring that there is sufficient flexibility to respond to new opportunities and changing circumstance*

The forecast out-turn for 2008/09, prior to external audit, shows a surplus of £1,798,000 prior to the release from the revaluation reserve (3.5% of income).

- vi) *To utilise fully the functionality in recently acquired software better to inform the University's schools and colleges liaison and widening participation strategies.*

Further implementation of the LINK software has enabled the provision of improved information to the University's Widening Participation Unit on the backgrounds of applicants to the University and current students. This information is now informing the Unit's work and has been helpful in the development of the University's Widening Participation Strategic Assessment.

- vii) *To develop further a culture of excellent achievement, building on recent developments, especially through the transformational leadership programme*

The University's Leadership Development Programme is now well advanced. More than 70 managers have attended the core two day programme and a number of learning sets are being supported. Additional Strengths-based Leadership training has also been undertaken. An accredited (Level 6) Team Leaders' programme has been piloted in Information and Learning Services and will be rolled out to other parts of the University in 2009/10. The University's Reward Scheme is now well-embedded and there is widespread recognition that they exist to reward 'excellent achievement'. This is reflected in the number and quality of applications from academic and support staff,

including in the latter category a growing number of applications for team awards. A continuing professional development framework, "A Framework for Staff Development: High Achieving Staff in a Well Led University", has been approved by the University's Executive Management Board.

- viii) *To complete in large part Phase A of the construction of the city centre campus, and to complete an interim re-evaluation of the plans for Phase B of the development, in the context of changing economic circumstances.*

The first part of Phase A of the city centre campus (two halls of residence) opened in September 2009; the second part of Phase A (the refurbishment of the Worcester Royal Infirmary to house the University's Business School and a new Well-Being Centre) is well-advanced and will be completed in the summer of 2010. The Board of Governors, at a special meeting in May 2009, considered the strategy for a 5-10 year programme of capital developments, in the context of Phase B of the City Campus development and the recent acquisition of land at Grove Farm. It was agreed that the immediate priorities were the further development of the city centre campus, especially in relation to providing a link with the Worcester Library and History Centre, and the provision of additional indoor sports facilities. It was recognised that the timescale and precise nature of the Phase B development needed to be reviewed in the context of the changed economic circumstances, especially in the light of likely further cuts in public spending and uncertainty around the availability of additional student numbers. The Board will address these issues further at forthcoming meetings (including a special meeting of the Board on 19th October 2009), and will decide its future approach to further borrowing and other possible sources of finance, including the possible capitalisation of the University's residences.

- ix) *To complete the construction of the National Pollen and Aerobiology Research Unit and new halls of residence at the St John's Campus.*

The new halls of residence and the National Pollen and Aerobiology Unit opened in September 2009

- 7. Progress against the targets in the six areas included in the 2008/09 statement is summarised at [Appendix 1](#).

Strategic Priorities 2009/10

8. In 2009/10 the University's key strategic priorities will be:-
- To undertake a mid-cycle review of the University's Strategic Plan, 2007-2012, and to recommend amendments to the Board of Governors as appropriate.
 - To improve further rates of student satisfaction, retention, progression and achievement; this will include the implementation of measures to improve the tracking of students identified in 2008/09 and to encourage better engagement with the assessment process, and a review of assessment strategies.
 - To ensure that application levels for the University's undergraduate courses are at least maintained at the levels achieved in 2008/09, and to develop further study opportunities at postgraduate level to increase the proportion of the University's student population taking postgraduate level qualifications
 - To complete Phase A of the city campus development and to plan and prepare for the move of the Business School to the new site in 2010 and to review and agree the nature of and timescale for Phase B.
 - To prepare a new estates strategy which will integrate into one strategy the development of the University's three main sites.
 - To maintain a surplus budget, within the limits in HEFCE guidance, in order to retain the confidence of funders in the University's ability to manage the capital development programme and to assure the University's capacity to deal with anticipated further constraints on public finances.
 - To support staff to develop the skills and capabilities to achieve high levels of staff and student satisfaction and achievement.
9. Within the areas highlighted by HEFCE, the following priorities have been identified:-

Governance and Management

- To agree with the Board of Governors, a framework for the Board's next review of its own effectiveness (scheduled for 2010/11)
- To achieve a positive outcome of the HEFCE Assurance Review (scheduled for October 2009)
- To implement the new 'Framework for Staff Development: High Achieving Staff in a Well-led University' (adopted in July 2009)
- To build on the progress made in establishing a fundraising programme through the Endowment Committee, and the strategy on Alumni Relations.
- To ensure that the University's Audit Committee is able to discharge its new responsibility to give an opinion on the accuracy of the University's data.
- To ensure that all the recommendations and actions arising out of the Risk Maturity Audit (completed in 2008/09) are fully implemented.
- To monitor the capacity and effectiveness of the University in managing the expanded estate, including the new Halls of Residence.
- To develop a strategy to maximise the use of University facilities for external conferences and other events.
- To respond appropriately to the Single Equalities Bill.

New Academic Developments

- To complete the review of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy.
- To prepare for the implementation of Academic Board's decision to relocate reassessment from September to July with effect from the 2010/11 session.
- To monitor the pilot on electronic feedback to students and to consider its roll-out in 2010/11
- To consider further the recommendations arising out of the thematic review of the independent study (completed in 2008/09) and to agree any changes for implementation in 2010/11

- To implement and evaluate the revised arrangements for annual monitoring, now referred to as 'Annual Evaluation'.
- To begin preparation for the Institutional Audit, scheduled for 2011.
- To complete the review of the University's arrangements for considering academic offences, and the Procedures for Investigating Allegations of Cheating.

Research and Knowledge Transfer

- To implement the new strategies on Research and Knowledge Transfer, Enterprise and Innovation.
- To ensure the successful launch of the new Allergy Testing Service, part of the University's National Pollen and Aerobiology Research Unit.
- To ensure the successful launch of the new research centre, 'The Association of Dementia Studies'.
- To respond appropriately to the outcomes of the University's application for research degree awarding powers
- To begin preparations for the next research assessment exercise, the REF
- To stimulate further progress in the number of successful applications for external funding.

Estates and Facilities

- With Worcestershire County Council, to achieve financial close on the PFI project to build a Worcester Joint Library and History Centre and to move to the construction phase of the project.
- To undertake a masterplanning exercise of the Grove Farm site.
- To evaluate, and adjust as appropriate, the plan for Phase B of the city centre campus
- To agree the scope and location of the provision of additional indoor sports facilities
- To achieve the University's environmental targets for 2009/10, including the milestones in the Carbon Management Programme and to prepare for the new carbon reduction commitment.

Regional Activities

- To agree the arrangements for taking forward the work of the Lifelong Learning Network, the funding for which will cease at the end of the 2009/10 session.
- To contribute to a strategy for HE in Herefordshire, in the context of any decision on the future of the policy on HE centres.
- To monitor the success of the University's Graduate Internship Scheme
- To continue to co-operate with and respond positively to the City of Worcester's scrutiny of the impact of the University on the City.
- To work with partner colleges and other organisations to ensure that HE provision meets the needs of the population with particular reference to the challenges associated with the recession.

International Activities

- To complete a review of the University's international activities and in particular measures available to increase the number of non-EU students.



CORPORATE PLANNING STATEMENT: 2008/2009 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

A	KEY STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	PROGRESS
1.	To improve further the University's performance on the achievement and retention of students, through enhancement of the student experience; this will include a review of the first year experience of undergraduate students	The recent publication of the HEFCE Performance Indicators shows that the University has achieved a satisfactory level of performance against its benchmarks. There has been a further improvement in the number of students who achieved a good degree (i:e a 2:1 or 1 st), 49% in 2007/08, although this remains low in comparison with other universities. The University remains concerned about the number of students who fail to submit assignments and who fail at the first attempt. All Institutes have been required to review arrangements for assessing and tracking students and to put in place additional mechanisms to support students 'at risk'. A number of new initiatives, using the opportunities presented by new technology, have been identified which will be implemented in 2009/10. Through the Student Retention and Achievement Working Group, a University-wide discussion of issues affecting retention and achievement has been conducted (Pre-Entry; Induction; Course Structures; the First Year Experience: Personal Tutoring; Re-Assessment and Non-Submission) has been conducted and a number of new initiatives will be taken forward as a result. Academic Board has agreed to re-locate re-assessment from September to July from 2010/11 onwards, in response to evidence that students are more likely to engage with and

		be successful in re-assessment, if it is timed to take place earlier.
2	To pursue initiatives to ensure that the University at least maintains application levels achieved in 2007/2008, and to develop provision at UG and PG levels to prepare the University to face the demographic challenges ahead and to meet its growth targets	Applications through UCAS for 2009 entry have increased by 12.06%. There has also been an increased in applications from postgraduate and international applicants. The principal focus for curriculum development at undergraduate and postgraduate levels remains a determination to ensure that courses are relevant and market driven. New courses which will come on stream in 2009 and 2010 include: Advertising, Business Systems Management, Counselling, Education, Forensic Psychology, Marketing Advertising & Web Design, Accounting, Marketing and Tourism
3	To build further on the quality and excellence of the University's academic provision, and ensure that there is sufficient investment to, support the further development in a number of key subject areas and to build on innovative practice in others (e.g. Education)	The University continues to invest in facilities that contribute to an outstanding student experience. New laboratories for science teaching (part of the new building that will house the National Pollen and Aerobiology Research Unit) will open in September 2009.. New teaching accommodation for teaching Art & Design courses will also open in September 2009. Plans to re-locate the University's Business School to the new city centre campus are well-advanced and the Business School will re-locate to its new premises in the summer of 2010. A third generation Astro-turf facility, to enhance learning and teaching in Sports Coaching and related courses, will be constructed in the first part of the 2009/10 session. In August 2009, the University will acquire a former school adjacent to its St John's Campus which will relieve pressure on existing facilities. The programme of refurbishment of existing facilities will continue and by September 2009 the University will have largely completed its 'modern classroom' initiative. As well as these developments, the University continues to invest in other aspects of the learning infrastructure, in particular learning technologies, which are designed to support academic provision across the University's academic institutes. Funding through

		the Teaching Quality Enhancement Fund has supported a number of projects designed to enhance learning and teaching: examples include [Marie to provide]. The Academic Development and Practice Unit (established in 2007/08) has been the focus for a programme of activities designed to support the enhanced quality of academic provision.
4	To prepare and submit an application for Research Degree Awarding Powers	The University's application was submitted in October 2008. The QAA's Advisory Committee on Degree Awarding Powers (ACDAP) agreed that a prima facie case had been made and the scrutiny of the University's application commenced in March 2009. The cycle of visits culminated with a 2 day visit by the Scrutiny Panel in September 2009 and it is anticipated that, a recommendation arising out of the Scrutiny will be presented to either the December 2009 or March 2010 meeting of ACDAP.
5	To maintain a surplus budget, within the limits of HEFCE guidance, in order to retain the confidence of funders in the University's ability to manage the capital development programme, and its ability to service an increased level of debt, ensuring that there is sufficient flexibility to respond to new opportunities and changing circumstance	The forecast out-turn for 2008/09, prior to external audit, shows a surplus of £1,798,000 prior to the release from the revaluation reserve (3.5% of income)
6	To utilise fully the functionality in recently acquired software better to inform the University's schools and colleges liaison and widening participation strategies	Further implementation of the LINK software has enabled the provision of improved information to the University's Widening Participation Unit on the backgrounds of applicants to the University and current students. This information is now informing the Unit's work and has been helpful in the development of the University's Widening Participation Strategic Assessment.
7	To develop further a culture of excellent	The University's Leadership Development Programme is now well

	achievement, building on recent developments, especially through the transformational leadership programme	advanced. More than 70 managers have attended the core two day programme and a number of learning sets are being supported. Additional Strengths-based Leadership training has also been undertaken. An accredited (Level 6) Team Leaders' programme has been piloted in Information and Learning Services and will be rolled out to other parts of the University in 2009/10. The University's Reward Scheme is now well-embedded and there is widespread recognition that they exist to reward 'excellent achievement'. This is reflected in the number and quality of applications from academic and support staff, including in the latter category a growing number of applications for team awards. A continuing professional development framework, "A Framework for Staff Development: High Achieving Staff in a Well Led University", has been approved by the University's Executive Management Board
8	To complete in large part Phase A of the construction of the city centre campus, and to complete an interim re-evaluation of the plans for Phase B of the development, in the context of changing economic circumstances	The first part of Phase A of the city centre campus (two halls of residence) opened in September 2009; the second part of Phase A (the refurbishment of the Worcester Royal Infirmary to house the University's Business School and a new Well-Being Centre) is well-advanced and will be completed in the summer of 2010. The Board of Governors, at a special meeting in May 2009, considered the strategy for a 5-10 year programme of capital developments, in the context of Phase B of the City Campus development and the recent acquisition of land at Grove Farm and the possible acquisition of land close to the St John's campus that has recently become available. It was agreed that the immediate priorities was the further development of the city centre campus, especially in relation to providing a link with the Worcester Library and History Centre, and the provision of additional indoor sports facilities. It was recognised that the timescale and precise nature of the Phase B development needed to be reviewed in the context of the changed economic circumstances, especially in light

		of likely further cuts in public spending and uncertainty around the availability of additional student numbers. The Board will address these issues further at forthcoming meetings (including a special meeting of the Board on 19 th October 2009), and will decide its future approach to further borrowing and other possible sources of finance, including the possible capitalisation of the University's residences.
9	To complete the construction of the National Pollen and Aerobiology Research Unit and new halls of residence at the St John's Campus	The new halls of residence and the National Pollen and Aerobiology Unit opened in September 2009

B	GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT	PROGRESS
1	To ensure that the changes to the executive management of the University, in particular the establishment of the Executive Management Board, are monitored for their effectiveness.	The newly established Executive Management Board has met on a monthly basis. Two of its meetings have taken the form of away days and these have been extremely valuable in the discussion of various strategic items. The size of the Board and its relative responsibilities with the Vice Chancellor's Advisory Group have presented challenges and it has been agreed that the current arrangements are not "quite right". Further changes are under consideration.
2	To guarantee the proper governance and conduct of the University's subsidiary companies, including maintaining effective reporting structures between the companies, the University and the governing body	The Board of UW Developments Ltd has met quarterly and the directors of the company have met monthly. All the relevant arrangements have been put in place (Memorandum of Understanding, Loan Agreement, Development Agreement, etc) and the reporting mechanisms between the Company, the University and the governing body have been established. A member of the governing body attends meetings of the Board and the Clerk to the Board of Governors serves as the Boards Nominated Officer. Specialist legal advice has been obtained as appropriate and the advice of the University's External Auditors, has also been obtained.

		The University's Audit Committee has approved the External Audit Plan, which will include a review of the company's operation and its representation in the group accounts.
3	To assess the impact of the Leadership Development Programme on the University's capacity for effective leadership	Reference has already been made to the Leadership Development Programme under Strategic Priorities (see A7 above). The Leadership Development Project Team is seeking feedback from staff who have engaged with the Programme and a report will be made to the University's Executive Management Board in 2009/10
4	To implement the Staff Professional Development Framework	A draft Framework was presented to EMB in December 2008; the Board agreed that the draft Framework was appropriate and asked the Working Group to undertake further work. A final draft of the Framework has been discussed with representatives of all academic and service departments who agreed that the Framework provided a valuable resource to take forward the continuous personal and professional development of all staff. The EMB will be asked to adopt the final draft of the Framework, entitled 'A Framework for Staff Development: High Achieving Staff in a Well led University', at its July meeting, and the Framework will be launched in 2009/10.
5	To ensure that the newly established Data Management Unit provides a service consistent with the University's requirements for effective data and information management	One year on, the development of the DMU has already delivered a number of benefits: through the LINK software more flexible provision of data to support the annual monitoring exercise; enhanced provision of data on widening participation for the Widening Participation Unit and on origin of students for Communications and Development; improved management information for examination boards; significant developments of SOLE for students and staff which will enhance the tracking of students and will facilitate numerous interventions designed to improve student retention and achievement
6	To prepare an appropriate response to developments relating to national bargaining	Through the EMB and the Personnel Committee, and after consultation with a wide range of staff, including a staff survey on

	including a decision on whether to opt out of the national arrangements, and to manage effectively any industrial action which may be taken arising out of a national or local dispute	reward mechanisms, the University agreed to remain in national bargaining. The implications of the decision including a commitment to endorse and observe the UCEA guidance, were explained to staff directly and through the Joint Consultative Committee
7	To implement and monitor the impact of the Alumni Relations and Development strategies	The second alumni garden party will take place in July 2009 and over 200 alumni have already registered. There have been a number of communications with alumni and the new organising infrastructure is now in place. The University's Endowment Committee has been convened and has met on several occasions, supported by an endowment working group. The development office is now fully established. This work will be taken forward in 2009/10 by Professor Judith Elkin, who as Deputy Vice Chancellor Emeritus, will have a specific responsibility for this area of the University's activities.
8	To implement new arrangements for dealing with emergencies	Revised arrangements for dealing with emergencies have been developed, especially in light of the threat of a Swine Flu Pandemic. A full report will be made to the July meeting of the EMB
9	To implement recommendations arising out of the COBIT review of the University's management and governance of IT systems	The most significant recommendations of the COBIT review are being implemented, including the development of an over-arching IT strategy and a project management framework. The audit's timing was deliberate, to coincide with the new management structure in ILS. A follow up audit is scheduled for September 2009, although it is acknowledged that the full response to the audit will involve a 2-3 year programme of work.
10	To review the University's arrangements for TRAC, both in the context of the TRAC returns and the use internally of TRAC data	The annual internal audit of TRAC will be completed in June 2009 and a report will be made to the September meeting of Audit Committee, which will also receive a presentation on TRAC, its methodology and key messages for the University.
11	To ensure that the University meets the requirements of the 'single conversation'	The University met the timescale for the 'single conversation' in December 2008 and expects to do the same in 2009. The timescale

		for the adoption of the Corporate Planning Statement 2009/10 is being revised to fit better with the new timescale.
12	To further develop mechanisms for obtaining student feedback and involving students in quality management	Academic Institutes implemented the revised module evaluation and student feedback policy in 2008/9, and will share good practice in managing and making use of data in 2009/10. A proposal to extend a pilot initiative with student focus groups and to pilot other methods of eliciting student feedback at the course, Institute and University levels will be piloted in semester 1 2009/10. The Academic quality Unit has worked with the Students Union to identify ways of strengthening the student representative system. This will be implemented and monitored in 2009/10
C	NEW ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENTS	
1	To undertake a review of the University's postgraduate provision in order to identify possible new opportunities for extending the course offer	This review is underway at Institute level and Institutes are developing and bringing forward proposals for new provision. However, this remains a key area of development and the University's proportion of postgraduate students remains low
2	To monitor and evaluate the impact of the new procedures for the validation and re-validation of courses, and the more focussed and risk-based approach to annual monitoring	In large part, the new procedures for the validation of courses have been successfully implemented, and a full evaluation will be carried out for September 2009. There is a general consensus that the flexibility afforded to Institutes is beneficial, although there is still some way to go before this is fully embedded. The greater emphasis on risk assessment and risk management for annual monitoring has led to a revised process – to be termed annual evaluation – focusing on forward –looking action plans. This will be implemented in 2009/10. The role of the Audit and Review Committee has developed positively. There is still enthusiasm at Institute level to ensure that the focus should continue to shift from 'QA' to 'QE'
3	To complete a review of the first year experience	See A1

	of students taking BA/BSc courses in the Undergraduate Modular Scheme, to enhance the student experience and to improve rates of retention.	
4	To continue to develop new course provision that is delivered flexibly and incorporates work based learning	Work on the work based learning framework has continued, although the framework is not yet fully in place. At Institute level, there have been numerous example of curriculum development which aims to achieve more flexible modes of delivery: for example, the Leading to Excellence Programme in the Business School; the project in the Institute of Humanities and Creative Arts to deliver language training through e-learning; and in a number of Institutes the further development of blended delivery utilising the systems in place and drawing on the good practice that has been identified through a number of JISC projects
5	To continue to develop collaborative working with partners, ensuring that the revised strategy on collaborative provision, is widely disseminated and understood, and that revised procedures for partner approval and review are effectively implemented	The revised strategy has been approved by the University's Executive Management Board, and is being taken forward through the various Strategic Planning Groups, whose introduction has enhanced the quality of partnership working and communication with a range of FE and other partners. The revised procedures for partner approval have been fully implemented and the procedures for the quinquennial review of partnerships have also been revised and re-approved.
6	To review and update the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy and implement the recently adopted Curriculum Design Policy particularly with respect to inclusion, student employability and community engagement and internationalisation	The review of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy was started and will be completed in 2009/10. A new input group on equality and diversity issues in the curriculum was established and has come forward with proposals with respect to inclusion in the curriculum. A second new input group on student employability and enterprise was also established and work on employability in the curriculum is being taken forward through a secondment to the Academic Development and Practice Unit.

7	To implement a system for the electronic receipting of assignments and to agree a suitable mechanism for electronic feedback on assignments	The system for the electronic receipting of assignments has been introduced and has been well received by students. The system will be extended and made mandatory in 2009/10 and the assignment hand-in dates will be captured in the student record system. This will enable a system of automatic reminders to students, with simultaneous copy emails to module tutors, to be introduced in 2009/10. A pilot programme involving all institutes has been agreed to run in 2009/10, when electronic feedback to students on a small number of modules in each Institute will be provided through SOLE
8	To identify and address issues in the assessment process which may limit student achievement (e.g. clustering of assessment deadlines, methods of assessment etc).	This has been taken forward under the review referred to at A1; this will continue to be a priority area of development in 2009/10
9	To review policy and procedures on assessment for disabled students	The new procedures were presented to ASQEC at its June meeting
10	To implement the recently adopted Schools Liaison Strategy, to develop and adopt a College Liaison Strategy and a revised Widening Participation Strategy.	The Schools Liaison Strategy is being implemented through a small group chaired by the Director of Regional Engagement. Work on the widening participation strategy is being taken forward through the work to meet the new HEFCE requirement that all institutions submit a Widening Participation Strategic Assessment by 30 th June 2009
D	RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER	
1	To monitor the impact of the newly established Research and Business Development Unit; especially in the context of HEIF4 and the support provided to Research Centres	The Business Development Office has undertaken a project, working with both academic institutes and research centres to identify and develop a "product portfolio", which will be used to market the various applications arising out of the University's research and knowledge generation activities. The Office has further developed the University's SPEED and Business Enterprise activities and has led on the development of the new graduate internship scheme
2	To review, through the Graduate Research	A new and enhanced programme of training and development

	School, the training of postgraduate research students in Research Methods and the training of supervisors, and to develop further the arrangements to support researchers, particularly in applying for research funding and publications	activities for students and staff has been introduced and has been well attended and received. The accredited research training programme for PhD/MPhil students has been reviewed and revalidated. The staff/student training programme included workshops on applying for research funding and writing for publication; these have been well received, especially by more recently appointed staff. A 'Writing Retreat' was organised and those who attended found the experience extremely beneficial; this will be repeated.
3	To adopted a revised Research and Knowledge Transfer Strategy which will take into account the outcomes of the RAE, the review of the role of the Research Centres, and the requirements for the system which will eventually replace the RAE	A sub group of Academic Board, chaired by the Vice Chancellor, was established to take this work forward. A 'Research and Knowledge Transfer Framework' and an underpinning draft Research Strategy, were presented to Academic Board at its July meeting. A separate 'Knowledge Transfer, Innovation and Enterprise' strategy is also in preparation
4	To maximise the potential of new academic institutes, particularly at Head of Institute level, to enhance the University's research capability.	Representatives of the academic institutes have been much engaged with the process detailed at D3; each Institute will in due course put in place strategies to support the new University Research Strategy
E	ESTATES AND FACILITIES	
1	To complete the construction of NPARU and the new halls of residence on the St John's site, and Phase A of the city centre campus.	See A9 and A8
2	With Worcestershire County Council, to appoint a contractor for the JHLC, and to ensure that the contract and supporting back to back legal agreements, are fit for purpose and represent the University's interests	A preferred bidder (Galliford Try) has been identified; financial closure for the PFI contract is scheduled for October. The Stakeholder Agreement is in an advanced stage of preparation and will be presented to the University's Management Board and Governing Body in October 2009
3	To evaluate and adjust as appropriate, the plan for Phase B of the city campus	See A8
4	To achieve the University's environmental targets	These have been achieved and in this and in other areas of the

	for 2008/2009, including the milestones in the Carbon Management Action Plan	University's Environmental Strategy, good progress, has been made (the University's position in the Green League Table has further improved and the University is now placed at 22, an improvement of 71 places on 2007)
5	To monitor the impact of the new management structure in the Estates and Facilities function	There is evidence that the appointments are beginning to have a positive impact on the management of this area of the University's activities. The new structure will be fully in place by the start of the 2009/10 session; this will be important, given the continuing expansion of the University's estate and the University will need to continue to invest in this crucial activity.
6	To complete on time the summer refurbishment programme in readiness for the start of 2008/2009 session and prepare in advance and in good time the programme for summer 2009	The summer 2008 programme came in on time and the 2009 summer works programme is already underway. It is anticipated that the majority of work will be complete before the start of the session, although because of delays in the planning process, the new Astro turf facility may not be ready until October.
7	To monitor changes to timetabling arrangements, and their impact on effective space utilisation and on the student experience, and to identify further adjustments for implementation in 2009/2010	All indications are that the changes have had a positive impact and the timetable for 2009/10 is well advanced with substantially fewer outstanding issues than in previous years.
F	REGIONAL ACTIVITIES	
1.	To achieve the milestones in the Business Plan for the Lifelong Learning Network	The key milestones have been achieved. The work of the LLN will now extend beyond the original end date; attention has now shifted to ensuring that the work of the Network is taken forward beyond the end of the 2009/10 session when technically it will cease to receive funding.
2.	To ensure that the University make a full contribution to the development of HE in Herefordshire, and in particular, to lead on the application for an HE centre in the City of	The University has led on the further development of HE in Herefordshire and the work of the LLN has made an important contribution. An "expression of interest" in a HE Centre for Herefordshire has been submitted by the deadline (30 June 2009)

	Hereford	
3	To extend and enhance the University's network of contracts with employers, including through the University's engagement with employer representative groups such as the Chamber of Commerce and the Federation of Small Businesses	The University has continued to work closely with the Chamber and the Federation and, principally through the Graduate Intern Scheme, is seeking to support members of the two organisations in their response to the difficult economic climate. The Business School, through its own advisory board, has further developed its own links with employers and has run a number of well attended events. The Schools contact with the CBI has been especially fruitful. The work of other Institutes has also raised the profile of the University with employers, especially in the fields of health, education and sport. This is an area for further development in 2009/10.
4	To co-operate with, and respond to, the City of Worcester's Scrutiny of the impact of the University on the city.	The first phase of the Scrutiny – on housing – has been completed, with the conclusion that the University has worked effectively to limit any possible adverse impact on the City as a result of its expansion.
5.	Through the University's new strategy on collaborative provision, to work with partner colleges and other organisations to ensure that HE provision meets the needs of the population of the University's region, including the higher level skills agenda	This work has been taken forward through the strategic planning groups that have been established with all partner organisation running more than one programme of study and through the Lifelong Learning Network steering committee. The HE in Herefordshire group has made sure that this is addressed through its discussions about the application for an HE Centre in Herefordshire.
G	INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITIES	
1	To achieve the target for recruitment of students from non-EU countries	There was only a modest increase in the number of students from non-EU countries, although this was achieved despite there being no delegation of students from the Xangchui province. There has been a further increase in the number of applications in 2008/09, and in the number of offers. Considerable effort has been invested to ensure that the University has responded effectively to the UK Border Agency's new regulations.
2	To implement, and monitor the impact of, the	There has been some progress in this area but this will be carried

	University's internationalisation strategy	forward to 2009/10 when it will be given a high level of priority.
3	To review and evaluate the University's International Recruitment Strategy, including an assessment of the impact of the strategy on recruitment from individual countries.	The VCAG has commenced a review.