

USTREAM Peer Learning Seminar
“Efficiency, Governance and Leadership”
18 and 19 April 2018
Venue: Vrije Universiteit Brussel
1050 BRUSSELS

Closing the gap between strategy formation to execution: achieving sustainable efficiency gains

Whether it be for purposes of seeking a step change in overall institutional efficiency, responding to drastic shifts in higher education policy and financing, or improving competitive academic advantage many European universities are initiating strategic transformation programmes.

And yet the research evidence over the past 20 or more years consistently shows that something like 70 per cent of all transformation programmes in all sectors, fail to meet their objectives. The reasons for this are many and varied but in a higher education context, there is little doubt that the lack of leadership, management and governance capability hampers universities' ability to transform their institutions to improve overall operating performance.

The 'science' of implementation is often resisted as being too managerial in orientation and out of step with the academic ethos of universities. In a world where universities must compete for resources, where stakeholders expect more for less and where universities are increasingly required to commercialise their outputs, implementation capability and capacity matters.

The key ingredients of strategy implementation in universities as in other organisations are effective institutional leadership (comprising both governance *and* management); organisational operating models and structure; and institutional culture. Leadership defines accountability and responsibility for strategic academic outcomes; the organisational operating model and structures provide the institutional platform for effective and efficient delivery; and culture is the all-pervasive feature of academic life defining the shared institutional beliefs that define how the university goes about delivering its academic mission

The joint EUA-HUMANE expert's roundtable seminar aims to deal with these challenges by assembling a group of institutional leaders to consider these challenges in a practical and interactive way. The focus of the programme will be on identifying critical success factors, research evidence, contemporary strategy implementation practice, and the lived experiences of participants in overcoming barriers to achieve sustainable efficiency gains in our universities.

DRAFT PROGRAMME Day 1: Wednesday, 18 April 2018 Venue: Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Pleinlaan 9 (floor -1) Seminar facilitator: Ian Creagh		
12.15-13.15	Registration, light buffet lunch and coffee	Pleinlaan 9, -1 floor
13.15-13.30	Welcome to VUB	Nic Van Craen, General Manager, VUB
SESSION ONE: INTRODUCTION		
13.30-13.50	Efficiency, leadership and governance: lessons learnt so far from the USTREAM project	Thomas Estermann, EUA Director
13.50-14.10	A view from the trenches at the University of Helsinki: the challenge of achieving lasting efficiency gains	Esa Hämäläinen, Director of Administration, University of Helsinki
14.10-15.00	Mind the gap -- why do efficiency transformation programmes fail? Contemporary thinking and practice about strategy implementation to achieve lasting efficiency gains	Paul Woodgates, Senior European Partner, PA Consulting
15.00-15.30	Coffee break	
SESSION TWO: PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCES		
15.30-16.30	Tour de table to establish participant experiences of efficiency transformation programmes Short introductions by all participants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief reflection about a personal experience of efficiency transformation programme failure: what went wrong? • The key lesson learned? 	All participants
16.30-17.30	<i>The dreamer, the realist and the spoiler workshop</i> : focusing in on two participants' 'strategic problem statements' about an efficiency programme <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desired outcomes – the case for radical change • Programme definition – designing the programme and the end state • Leadership – building capacity and enabling leaders to make change happen 	Three participant convenors of three groups
17.30-18.00	Plenary discussion: key points arising from day one to carry forward	All participants
19.00-21.00	Informal dinner at Le Mess Restaurant	Louis Schmidtlaan 1, 1040 Etterbeek

DRAFT PROGRAMME Day 2: Thursday, 19 April 2018 Venue: Vrije Universiteit Brussel - U-Residence, Generaal Jacqueslaan 271 Seminar facilitator: Ian Creagh		
08.00-09.00	Breakfast and coffee	U-Residence
SESSION THREE: PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCES II		
09.00-10.00	<i>Workshop number two: focusing on two different participants' 'strategic problem statements' about an efficiency programme</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining leadership team alignment and focus on the wider vision and strategy • Dealing with capability constraints and challenges in the multi-functional implementation team • Building a change-communications capability 	Three participant convenors of three groups
10.00-10.30	Plenary discussion: key themes arising from the participant experiences sessions	Seminar and group facilitators
10.30-10.50	Coffee break	
10.50-12.20	<i>Remember the future</i> group workshop: institutionalising professional execution capacity for lasting efficiency gains: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key ingredients for leadership, governance and management • Engaging the institutional community • Embedding new approaches 	Two convenors of two groups
12.20-12.30	Next steps, conclusions and closing	Ian Creagh, seminar facilitator
12.30-13.30	Light buffet lunch	U-Residence
13.30	Depart	