

TOWARDS FLEXIBILITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Title and Presenter:

Academic Services – a change programme for flexibility in academic support

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Sub Theme & Paper Type:

Flexible People – Showcase

Abstract:

For over a year Academic Services (AS) has been engaged in a process of change. From initial discussions about how we might improve the management and operation of AS we have engaged in a wide ranging and deep rooted process of exploration and reinvention.

AS's vision is **to be at the heart of the success of the University**. This means measuring our achievement in terms of the success of those whom we support. To achieve our vision academic support as delivered through AS, must be fit for purpose in a changing environment.

It is difficult to step from a well understood world into someone else's environment. Understanding and participating in the wider university community is something we wish to achieve and we think this has a number of connections with the challenges faced by academic staff in these times.

We will explore the process that Academic Services has been through: for those involved this process has been so much more than just a reorganisation. We will highlight the way we are attempting to become more flexible and to explore the implications of our experience as it relates to the changing role of the modern academic.

We sought to involve all AS staff in this process and step one was to develop our vision and values with all AS staff. The change process has not been easy and we believe that our learning through this process may be of value to other staff experiencing change. Our process has sought to engage with aspects from the affective, behavioural and cognitive domains.

A key element of our approach has been to embed a collaborative style within AS and into our dealings with the university community. We truly want to share responsibility with academic staff in achieving their goals.

The presentation will include 10 minutes of questions where we would welcome further exploration with the audience about our approach, our experience and how we will meet the challenges and developments in supporting the teaching and learning environment by being collaborative, communicative, consultative and flexible.