



Review of Services, Advice & Guidance for Students (SAGS)

Preliminary Results & Recommendations
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Yvonne McLean, Inkling Training

Content

Context

Summary of Key Messages

Staff Proposals

Strategic Options

Conclusion

Recommendations

Strategic Context: Alignment of Priorities



MANCHESTER 1824

The University of Manchester

**GOAL TWO
HIGHER
LEARNING**

To provide superb higher education to outstanding students from all backgrounds and to produce graduates distinguished around the world for their professional employability, leadership qualities and broad liberal education.

STRATEGIES FOR HIGHER LEARNING

1. To ensure the 'Paradise of a Manchester Education' in all programmes and to introduce a broad-based curriculum which values all undergraduate students to develop non-discipline specific skills.

The University has adopted a former Department of the 'Paradise of a Manchester Education' to inform curriculum development, delivery and assessment across all its undergraduate programmes. This paradigm approach is designed to ensure that all Manchester graduates leave the University with advanced critical thinking and higher order conceptual reasoning and analytical skills, mastery of a discipline, broad intellectual and cultural awareness, a sound preparation for professional and vocational work in a particular area, or informal basis upon which to develop personal values and make ethical judgements, awareness of the challenges of citizenship and leadership in diverse, global environments, advanced skills of written and verbal communication and a personal commitment to equality and diversity. The University is committed to providing an international learning environment for all its students and, where appropriate, incorporating an international dimension in its curriculum, including the opportunity for study abroad.

The University is also committed to providing its students with the opportunity to develop key employability skills central to their future success. This includes involving student voices in the educational experience currently provided by its Manchester Leadership Programme, which provides opportunities for students to combine formal learning and enterprise skills training with community work.

2. To ensure that all students have a high quality personalised learning experience and frequent personal contact with academic staff.

The University is committed to providing Manchester students with a personalised educational experience, which learning to interact in rather than passive and individual students have frequent, meaningful opportunities to engage personally with teachers, mentors and advisors, formally and informally. The University is therefore committed to developing its curriculum to allow more resources to be devoted in the provision of a high-quality, personalised learning experience, as well as emphasising personal support from lecturers, tutors, mentors and advisors. The University is also encouraging increasing use of their Award for Learning Excellence (ALE).

3. To ensure exemplars for access and achievement programmes to identify and attract the very best students to Manchester, regardless of background.

The University seeks to attract the very best students, regardless of background, and is committed to exemplary far access and admissions processes designed to identify exceptional national and international students, including those with disabilities or non-traditionally disadvantaged backgrounds. The University also recognises that far and non-traditional admissions policies need to be underpinned by general, well-based and multi-faceted scrutiny and supporting programmes.

4. To engage students at School, Faculty and University levels in the regular evaluation of all aspects of their Manchester educational experience.

The University regards student feedback as a mechanism for ensuring the development of quality learning experience and places a high priority on facilitating systematic feedback to programme, discipline, School, Faculty and institutional level as well as encouraging the student representation to play a role in the oversight of all educational programmes. As an institutional level, great attention is paid to the findings of internal Course Unit Satisfaction Surveys and to the results of the annual National Student Survey for the year undergraduates.

5. To place Manchester in the vanguard internationally in the use of on-line learning environments.

The University is committed to enriching teaching and learning through the provision of highly interactive on-line learning materials and specialised learning environments providing for personal interaction between staff and students and with fellow students. The primary aim is to ensure campus-based learning through the development of high-quality interactive learning resources. For the University also recognises the importance of developing its global profile through world-class on-line and campus learning programmes. The University has already made significant progress in implementing Blackboard (Bb) as its Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) platform and plans to roll it out to all on-line courses by the end of 2011/12.

6. In consultation with students, to improve the quality, range and responsiveness of student support services and facilities.

The University is committed to providing students with excellent student support services and to enhancing an already impressive range of student facilities existing from an outstanding array of academic, sport and recreational resources, and the significant collections of the Manchester Museum and Whitworth Art Gallery, to some of the best recreational and sporting facilities in the country. Having its capital planning priorities in a commitment to augment the learning environment by introducing a state-of-the-art 'Learning Commons' by September 2012.

7. To ensure and maintain an excellent learning and teaching environment for the student experience.

The University is committed to employment in promotion policies and procedures that value support and reward excellent teachers. It also values highly all other staff engaged in enhancing the quality of the Manchester student experience.

TARGET

To be ranked in the top 10 of Russell Group Universities by 2015 and the top five by 2020 in terms of overall student satisfaction as measured by the National Student Survey.

ANNUAL KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIs)

In monitoring progress towards its Goal Two target, the University will use the following KPIs:

KPI 2.1 Annual improvement in overall student satisfaction as measured by the NSS and the University's internal Staff Satisfaction Surveys.

KPI 2.2 Annual improvements in student retention and progression rates.

KPI 2.3 Annual improvement in ranking among Russell Group universities in terms of graduate employment outcomes.

KPI 2.4 Annual improvement in student satisfaction with the quality of learning materials and student support provision provided by the University.

KPI 2.5 Survey by faculty increases in the number of students completing learning materials at least weekly or at least from the start of the semester to the end of the semester.

ADVANCING THE MANCHESTER 2015 AGENDA

The Strategic Plan
The University of Manchester

Strategy Point 6:

In consultation with Students, to improve the quality, range and responsiveness of student support services and facilities

Relevant KPIs:

KPI 2.1

Annual improvement in overall student satisfaction (aim is to be in top 10% of universities)

KPI 2.2

Annual improvements in student retention and progression rates

KPI 2.4

Annual improvement in student satisfaction with the quality of learning materials and student support provided online by the University

2011/2012 Edition

Confidential

Project Charter for Workshops on Improving IAG Provision at UoM

Objectives	Deliverables / Milestones	Scope
<p>To engage staff via 3-4 workshops in :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Identifying duplication, gaps and rethinking use of existing resources for IAG •Assessing emerging vision, ideas and priorities for IAG provision throughout UoM •Generate new ideas for a consistent and student centred approach •Collate information and present findings 	<p>31/08/11 – Budget agreed</p> <p>Workshop 1:</p> <p>02/09/11 - Plan confirmed 07/10/11 - Agenda confirmed 04/11/11 - Review and write up complete</p> <p>Workshop 2:</p>	<p>Included: Planning and running of workshops including format, content(presenting emerging thoughts on IAG, good practice etc) attendees, venue, external speakers and write up.</p> <p>Not included: in depth analysis, research, benchmarking or detailed recommendations for change management initiatives.</p>
Sponsors		
<p>Tim Westlake – Director for The Student Experience</p>	<p>11/11/11 - Agenda confirmed 02/12/11 - Review and write up complete</p>	Context
Time Frame		
<p>Workshops on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14th October – DSE Staff • 16th November – Schools • 13th December – Both groups • Students group - tbc 	<p>Workshop 3:</p> <p>09/12/11 - Agenda confirmed 13/01/12 – Present all findings to IAG working group</p>	<p>These workshops form part of a wider review and will provide information for a subsequent change initiative for IAG provision within the DSE</p>
Team		Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Jenny Wragge - Project Leader •Sarah Beer •Katy Woolfenden •Mike Mercer •Yvonne McLean (Inkling Training) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Staff engaged in IAG change process from the start •Increases cross functional working •Inputs to wider project of improving IAG services in order to enhance the student experience.

Author : Yvonne McLean

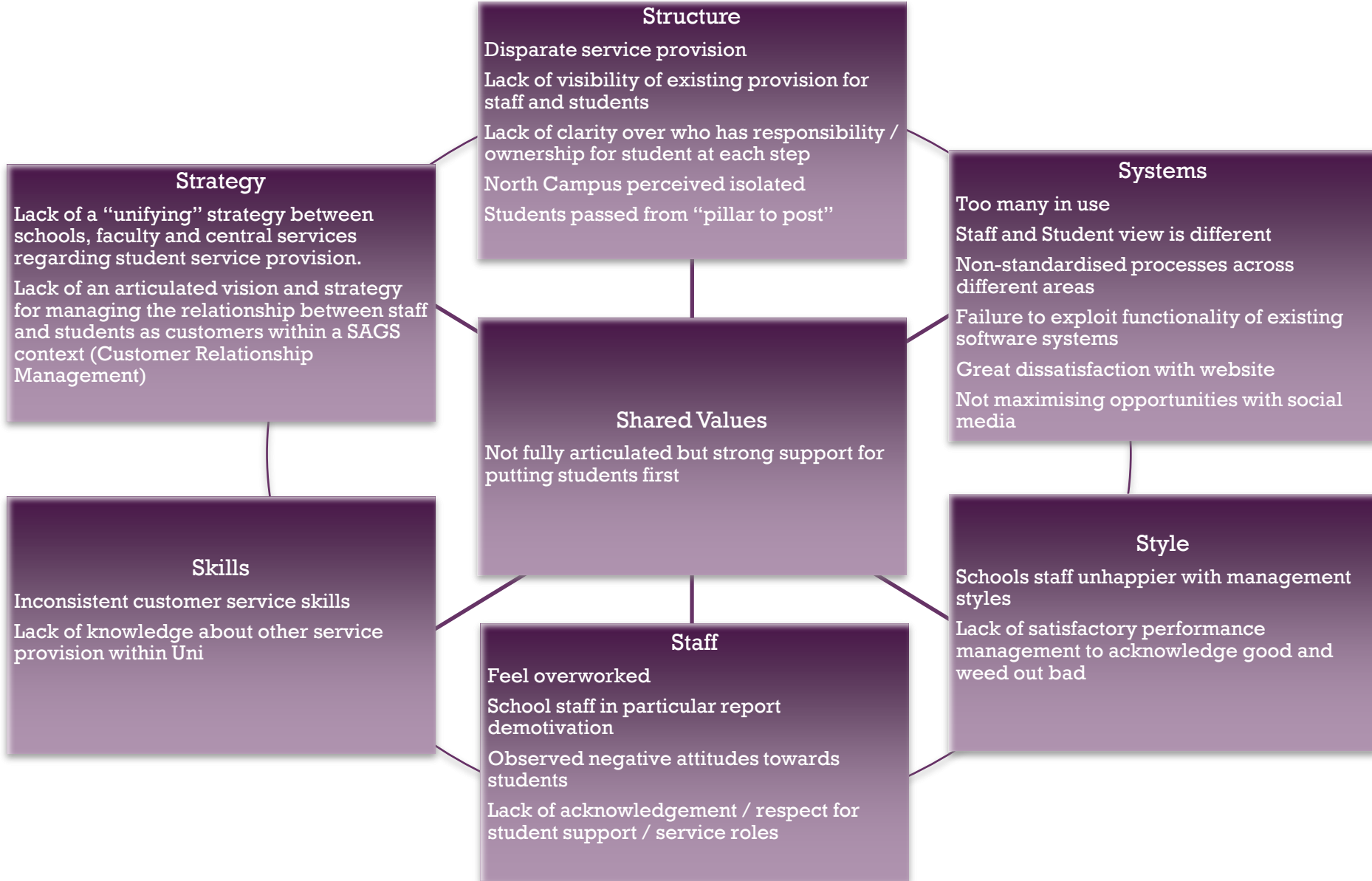
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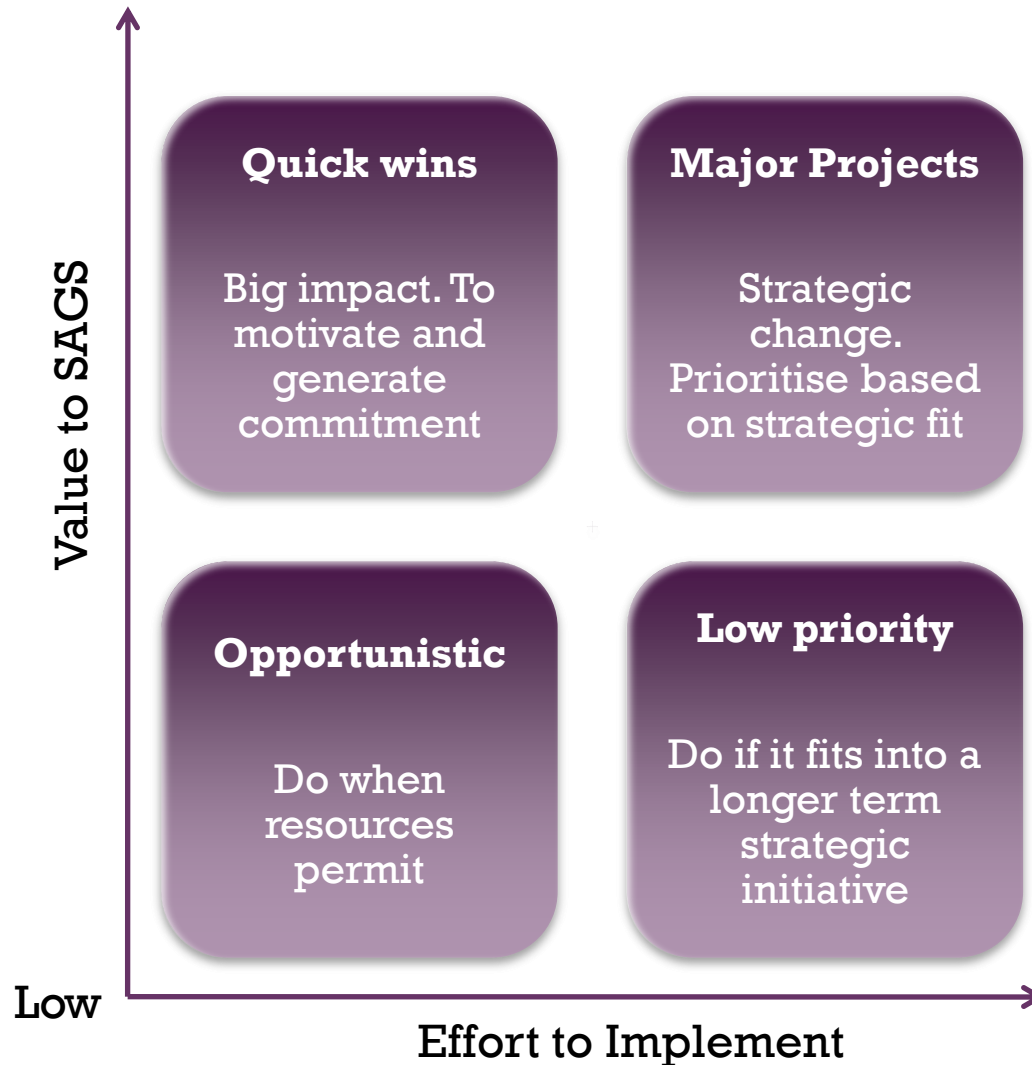
SAGS Review Timetable

Event	Delegates	Outputs
Workshop 1 14 th October	Directorate for the Student Experience and other central services	Identification of problems and possible solutions
Workshop 2 16 th November	School based staff	Identification of problems and possible solutions
Workshop 3 and 4 7 th and 10 th December	Students	Identification of problems and possible solutions
Workshop 5 13 th December	All PSS staff	Agreement on key problems. Prioritisation of initiatives
Present findings from workshops and early recommendations January	Tim Westlake, SAGS Working group, SAGS Steering Group	

Summary of Staff Key Messages



Prioritisation Approach for Staff Ideas



Staff Proposals for Quick Wins

Quick wins

Big impact. To motivate and generate commitment

Major Projects

Strategic change. Prioritise based on strategic fit

Opportunistic

Do when resources permit

Low priority

Do if it fits into a longer term strategic initiative

Structure

- Improved signage / remove 'blu-tacked' paper signs / template for ad-hoc signs
- Staffed reception areas in every building
- Standardised and lengthen office and reception opening hours
- Name badges for student facing staff
- Dedicated 'hub' of experts PSS and school staff
- Electronic noticeboards
- Use North Campus more – tell people what is there
- 'You are here' pointers on external maps. Campus map app / venue app. Interactive campus maps links buildings, staff and services
- Spokes – smaller hubs offering some services at Fallowfield, North Campus, Victoria Park, think about off campus student needs, opening hours, Skype, technology
- Expansion of 'Ask Me' concept

Systems

- Improved website (quick ref page to central service) including improved directory search

- Standardised procedures and forms for students
- Campus solutions 'student view'
- Area on CS to track advice between central and school
- "Tell Tim" system to keep Tim informed of potential ideas / change
- Online and telephone bookings for referrals to services eg careers
- Rewrite policies in plain English, policy search clear, concise, clear out old stuff
- Electronic faqs. Asking questions on virtual posts / forums

Skills

- Staff training – customer service, procedures and systems, better networking provision and job swapping

Staff

- Incentives / performance related benefits / PSS award scheme
- Communication – keep everyone updated and in the loop

Staff Proposals for Major Projects

Quick wins

Big impact. To motivate and generate commitment

Major Projects

Strategic change. Prioritise based on strategic fit

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Structure

- Move all inclusive student services under one roof
- Comments option allowing students to feed back to staff – dealt with queries
- Develop relationships with Student Union to have joined up plan – training – assist running training.
- Highlight the value to academics / PSS ? management of networking central and localized services
- Physical hub for central services – include umsu? But first contact at school level (more personal)
- Same services offered by each school – using the same terminology
- Spoke and hub – all specialist services under one roof

- IT systems – access to same system – CRM
- Different mobile Apps – registration, graduation, school apps
- Website overhaul – single site – student journey / lifecycle

Skills

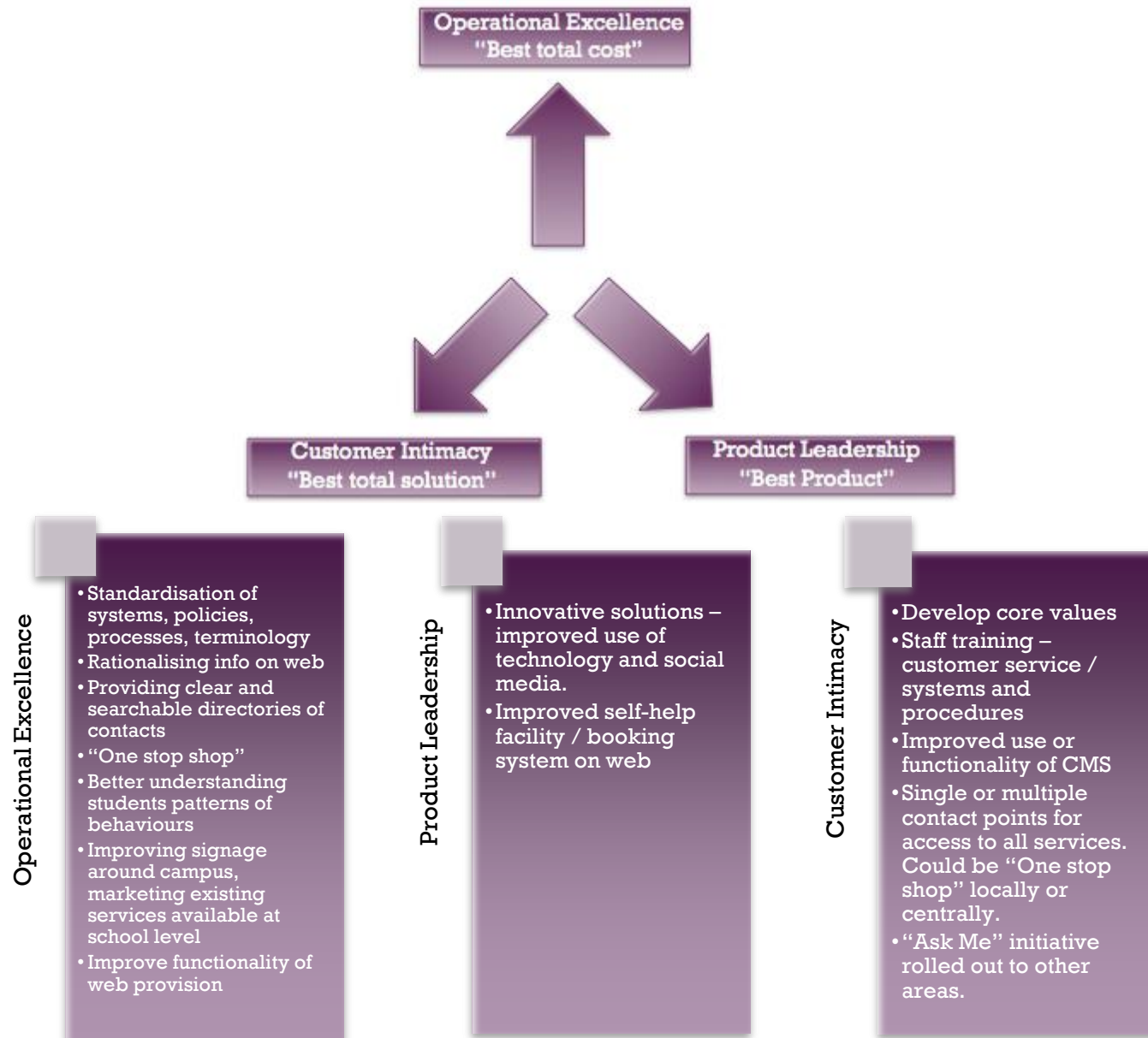
- Ongoing compulsory and improved induction for staff and students
- Student secret shopper scheme as part of review of processes
- Defined structure and standardised job roles to ensure continuity of IAG

Staff

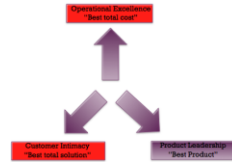
- Dedicated P+DR team to arrange training and job swaps

Systems

SAGS Strategic Options



SAGS Strategic Options



Option 1: Standardisation & Staff Development Operational Excellence or Customer Intimacy (depending on the focus given to contributing elements)

- Leave location of services and organisational structure as is
- Standardise systems, terminology, office hours and procedures
- Create a set of core values for services, advice and guidance
- Introduce a strong customer service culture
- Focus resources on staff training
- Advertise services available at each point of delivery (including schools)
- Some investment in provision of online help

Benefits

- Maintain engagement from all staff
- Addresses the fundamental issue of staff skills and attitude
- Allows for cross-functional working between central services staff and school based staff under one banner (SAGS)

Risks

- Conflicting priorities of schools staff (serving academics and students) may mean a diluted service.
- Change not tangible or radical enough to produce significant results.
- Difficult to change staff perception of roles when doing same job.

SAGS Strategic Options



Option 2: Centralisation

Product Leadership or Operational excellence (depending on the focus given to contributing elements)

- Centralise all student-facing service provision, including school based (into University Place or a cluster of well-signed buildings) and make it a “one stop shop”. Separate outlets at Main Campus, North Campus and Fallowfield.
- Separate “back office” and student facing activity to increase responsiveness.
- Students able to ring one central phone number, book online (both staffed by a helpdesk team) or see someone at a reception desk who can either help them directly or book an appointment with someone who can.
- Investment in technology (including web) and social media
- Working offices in different places if space a restriction.
- Account Management approach between central staff and schools staff with designated contacts.

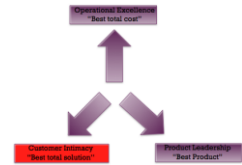
Benefits

- Student facing, transparent, consistent, visible system.
- Improved customer service through greater specialisation in advice and guidance skills.
- More self-help fits in with student lifestyles.
- More accessible and inclusive service for students off-campus (medicine, distance learners)

Risks

- Possible loss of ‘intimacy’ between student and school office, and students’ sense of belonging.
- Possible resistance by staff could delay implementation or reduce effectiveness.
- Restriction of space available could reduce impact of service if ‘back office’ staff working in different locations.
- High cost of implementation with lack of certainty on impact on student experience.

SAGS Strategic Options



Option 3: Hub & Spoke Customer Intimacy

- Create a “hub and spokes” approach.
- Specialist provision remains centralised.
- Enhance general provision available in schools, selected buildings and/or selected Faculty venues around campus.
- Standardised systems and processes so that access point for general, school or central query can be either central or local.
- Re-organise line management responsibilities
- Strong branding to identify service at every point of access
- Some investment in provision of online help

Benefits

- Multiple access points for help
- Enhances role of schools in delivering SAGS
- Increases visibility of service
- Strong branding across campus and embedding in schools could increase sense of whole institution working together

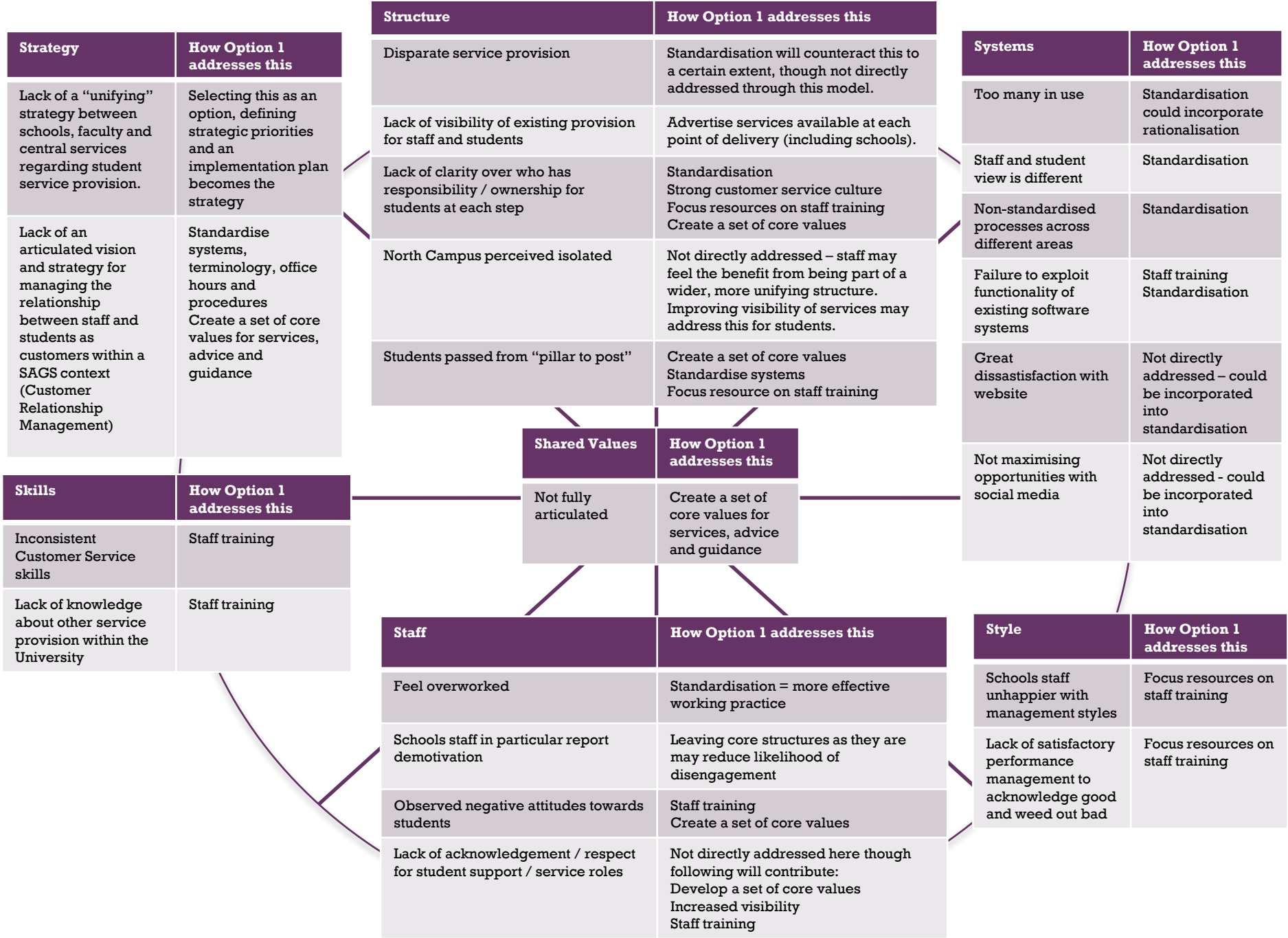
Risks

- If not supported by sufficient resources at school level, little difference will be made.
- Potential increase in headcount or restructuring existing roles or teams – impact not quantified.

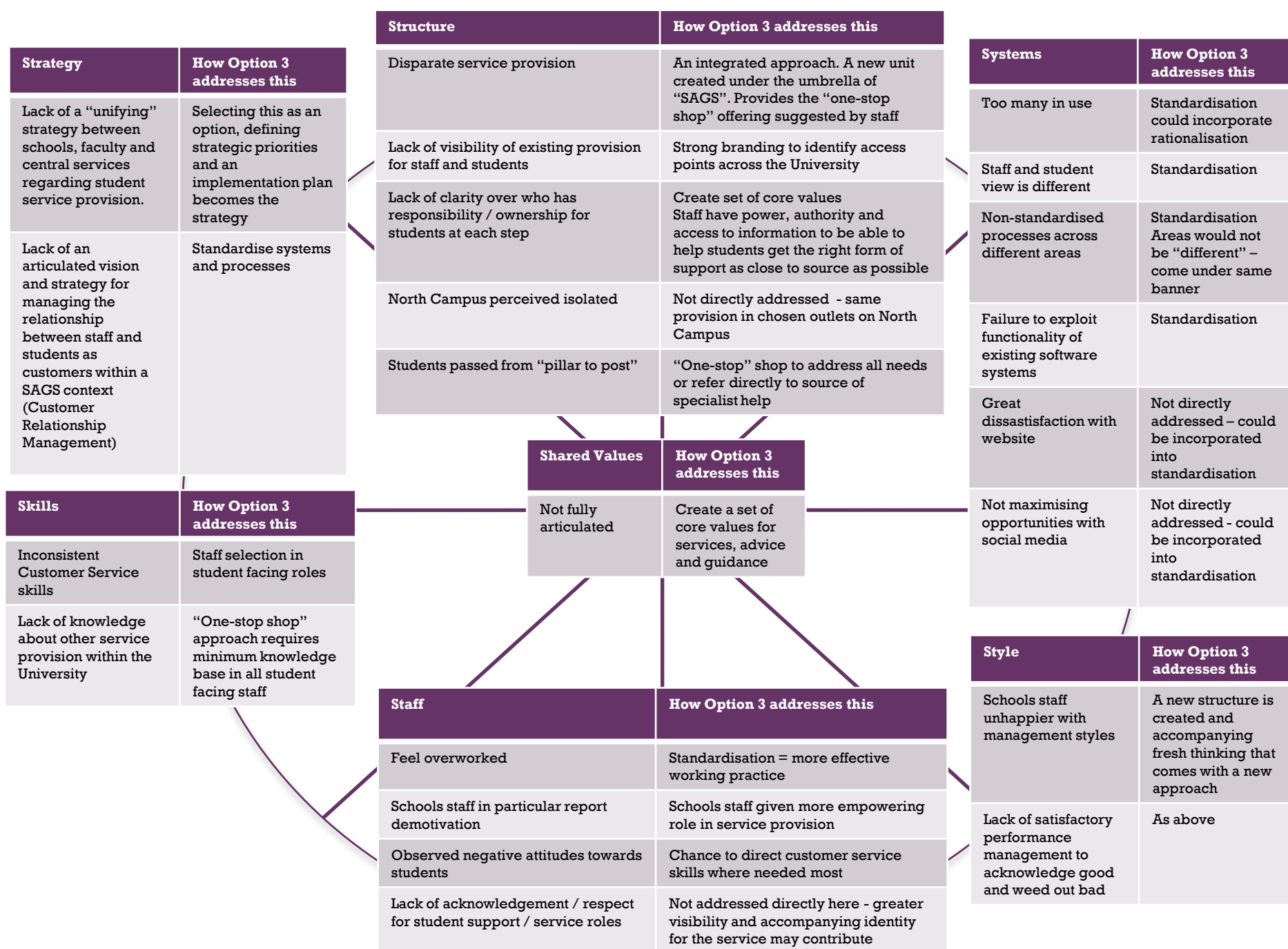


Strategic Options 1+3 Comparison

	Option 1	Option 3
Differences	No change / movement in staff roles	Could involve changes / restructuring of roles
	Focus is on staff attitude, training, culture to improve results	Focus is on integrated structure, clear lines of authority and strong branding to improve results
	Enhances existing service provision	Creates new service provision
	Increases visibility by advertising service provision locally	Increases visibility by strong branding
	Enhances joint working (between schools and central service) by standardisation, clarifying roles, responsibilities and defining contacts	Enhances joint working (between staff and central services) by staff belonging to the same unit across the University and also being embedded in schools
Similarities	Improved access to information and services at distributed points of access	
	Enhanced role of schools in service provision	
	Address staff skills, knowledge and attitude issues	
	Underpinned by clear values	
	Develops Customer Service culture	
	Assumes some level of investment in online provision	
	Once values established and service clarified, could use both options as a basis for proactive enhancement of the student experience in addition to the focus on existing reactive response	



The McKinsey 7S Framework – How Option 1 addresses problems identified



The McKinsey 7S Framework – How Option 3 addresses problems identified

Conclusions

■ Background

- 5 workshops involving PSS staff, students and student reps (see appendix):
- Delegates identified current problems with IAG, now SAGS, developed & prioritised solutions.

■ Observations

- Limited student participation and contribution in these workshops
- The large number of tactical and incremental solutions as opposed to larger or strategic change initiatives, may have been as a result of more junior grades in attendance.
- Professional Support Services, specifically SAGS, are provided by two independently managed staff groups; with different objectives, management structures and ways of working. Consequently, a shared purpose and values has not been articulated in terms of advice and guidance. Arguably, staff do not currently feel a shared identity other than under the loose umbrella of PSS.

■ Must haves

- A number of recurring themes were captured from workshops which should be considered whichever direction is taken. These are detailed in Quick Wins and Strategic projects table
- Specifically, these are around an improved website provision, adoption of a CRM culture, standardisation of systems and procedures, a 'one stop shop' approach and branding: visibility and signage.

Recommendations for Further Work

- Create a common purpose: Define and communicate a joint Vision, Identity and Core Values to unify the provision of SAGS within Professional Support Services to deliver 2015 Agenda
- Define the specific elements comprised in the “Student Experience”
- Clear measures to show impact of the proposed strategic options on Student Experience
- Full engagement with other key stakeholder groups (eg senior managers, Heads of School Admin, students)
- Review external benchmarking/best practice to inform decisions on strategic options
- Centralised vs Localised service delivery model: Identify impact on student experience of any geographical change in delivery of individual service activities
- The theme of “Places and Spaces” from workshop 2 has not been used to form the strategic options as it was considered outside of the scope of this piece of work. However, it was a strong theme articulated by school and faculty staff and would be impactful in its contribution to a more directly relevant piece of work.



Appendices / Refs

- Report of day 1
- Report of day 2
- Raw data from all workshops

Workshop Delegates

- 5 Workshops 14 October – 13 December
- Delegates
 - Approximately 90 PSS staff from central services and schools – mainly grades 4-7
 - 13 students
 - Supporting information taken from an online survey of 693 students
 - 3 student reps present at staff workshops