



Leadership and management excellence



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Foreword by the Vice-Chancellor



Tammy Baker



The University of Bristol is a leading research-intensive university that is also committed to first-rate teaching and learning and to the development of enterprise. Academic excellence is its priority, but the University knows that it can only maintain its competitive international position if it is ably led, well managed and fully engaged with the economic, social and cultural life of Bristol, the South West and beyond.

The University has worked hard to build strong links with industry and other partners and to ensure that the quality of its leadership and management is high. It has embarked on an ambitious programme of further improvements in these areas.

This document provides a brief insight into the University's track record as a leader in the city, the region and the HE sector and outlines some of the work that is under way to maximise its efficiency and effectiveness as an organisation with an important local, national and global remit.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eric Thomas'.

Professor Eric Thomas

Standard & Poor's

The University of Bristol has achieved an AA Credit Rating from Standard and Poor's.

"The rating on the University of Bristol is supported by a broad course range, high academic standards, and one of the best reputations in the UK university sector."

- Standard & Poor's, 2002

University Planning



The University has just completed the University Plan 2003-2008, which is underpinned by a hierarchy of further plans, including themed strategies for research, education, enterprise, people, finance, estates, information and communications and marketing. The Plan builds on the following vision, created by the Vice-Chancellor and approved as a result of extensive consultation with staff across the University as well as through Senate and Council.

The University of Bristol will be defined by the following characteristics:

- *A clear vision in which academic ambitions are the cornerstone of all planning*
- *Research intensive - combining individual scholarship with focus, critical mass and thematic areas of activity*
- *A diverse, socially representative and able student population experiencing an education which is intellectually demanding and provides relevant skills for the 21st century*
- *Internationally competitive and profiled*
- *Collaborative - locally, nationally and internationally*
- *A mutually supportive and equal working environment in which all staff feel their needs are recognised, valued and rewarded*
- *No two tribes - support services are responsive to customer needs, academics value the importance and role of support services*

- *Working with students to provide the best environment for their education and well-being*
- *Growth in postgraduate students*
- *Increased financial independence*
- *Decision making which is consultative, transparent, inclusive and well communicated*
- *An organisational structure that collocates decision making, financial control, administration and accountability*
- *Acknowledged contributor economically, socially and culturally to the city and region.*

The University Plan is designed to translate this vision into more specific goals and to articulate the strategic policies needed to achieve them, in the knowledge that careful planning is essential in managing competing demands.

Top Management

The University of Bristol has a first-class top management team with extensive experience in both business and academia.

- *“Bristol’s senior management has a clear strategy to maintain and improve the university’s position at the forefront of UK research-led universities while maintaining its excellence in teaching and research.”*
- **Standard & Poor’s**
- Five senior managers have attended the HESDA Top Management Programme – the Vice-Chancellor, two Pro-Vice-Chancellors, the Director of Academic Affairs and the University Secretary.
- The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Eric Thomas, is Chairman of the Bristol Enterprise Centre Board and a member of the Board of the South West Regional Development Agency.
- Professor Sir John Beringer, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, is Chairman of the Governing Council of the John Innes Centre, Norwich – a world-leading independent research centre in plant and microbial science.
- The University is a sponsor of the Common Purpose programme, working with leaders in other sectors of the community to identify and execute best management practice and groom the leaders of tomorrow. A number of senior staff have been active participants in Common Purpose.
- Lay membership of the University includes many individuals with extensive business and management experience. The Chancellor, Sir Jeremy Morse, is a former Chairman of Lloyds Bank Plc. The Pro-Chancellor, Derek Higgs, is a former Director of Prudential Plc and the current Chairman of Partnerships UK Plc and Business in the Environment, in addition to holding a number of non-executive directorships. He has also been appointed by the government to undertake an independent review of the role and effectiveness of non-executive directorships. The Chairman of Council, Moger Woolley, is a former Chief Executive of DRG Plc and now holds a number of non-executive directorships, including those of Avon Rubber Plc and Bristol Water Holdings Plc. The Council Treasurer, Tim Thom, is a former partner in Price Waterhouse.

Mr Derek Pretty, MBA has been Registrar of the University since 1999. He has extensive commercial and financial experience, having spent much of his working life in retailing. He was a Main Board Director of a number of major retail groups, including Woolworth Holdings Plc and Kwik Save Group Plc.

Financial Planning

The University of Bristol's high academic and entrepreneurial reputation has been achieved within a system of strong financial control and robust income generation, growing surpluses and cash inflow and high capital investment.

- *"Bristol has achieved all of its financial objectives in the past and is well positioned to build on this track record of success."*
– **Standard & Poor's**
- The University has achieved a consistent year-on-year increase in financial surplus over the past five years:

	1997/1998	1998/1999	1999/2000	2000/2001	2001/2002
Income	£164.6m	£169.9m	£176.9m	£191.8m	£209.3m
Surplus	£0.1m	£2.1m	£2.4m	£3.1m	£4.1m

This surplus is projected to increase still further over the next five years.

- As part of the University's review of academic organisation, the budgetary process has also been reviewed, resulting in a new method of budget allocations to academic departments. This will support improved financial planning and the achievement of plans throughout the University.
- The University is actively involved in the activities of the Joint Costing & Pricing Steering Group (JCPSG). Bristol was one of the eight pilot institutions for the Transparency Review of Research, and hosted the National Co-ordinator for Costing and Pricing, Sue Delve, from 1998-2002. The Registrar, Derek Pretty, is a member of the Steering Group.
- The University's excellence in financial planning and management is reflected in the AA credit rating achieved from Standard & Poor's.
- The Process Review currently under way, together with implementation of the Financial Strategy, will enable the University further to rationalise costs and to deliver ever more efficient support to academics and researchers.
- The University is currently undertaking a review of its policies and procedures with regard to value for money, with a view to creating and implementing an integrated Value for Money Strategy and ensuring that proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness are in place across the institution.

Estates

The University of Bristol is committed to the delivery of a major capital investment and regeneration programme that directly facilitates the provision of world-class research and teaching.

- *“The delivery of the vast majority of the estates programme on time and on budget is a significant management accomplishment and a credit strength.” - Standard & Poor’s*
- The University has an excellent record in managing capital projects in recent years. Since 1998, seven major building projects have been delivered on time and to budget, at a total cost of £36.6 million. Achievements include:
 - Integrated Signalling Laboratories, total value £10.3m
 - Centre for Sport, Exercise and Health, value £5m
 - South Block Chemistry refurbishment, value £4.1m
- In order to enable the University to respond to calls from HEFCE and other sponsors of capital projects, a system has been instituted to allow faculties to consider and prioritise their future capital needs. These priorities are then used to produce an overall ranking of demands across the University, to enable effective management decisions to be made as and when funding opportunities arise.



Mike Phipps has worked for the University for 14 years and has been Bursar since 1998. He is active in the Association of University Directors of Estates and is a Board member of the Energy Consortium. Of recent building achievements, he says, “The key success of these projects has been a major shift in project management strategy focusing on design risk. We have overturned conventional thinking that Design & Build forms of contract can’t be used for complex building projects. We do it – and successfully.”

Human Resources

The University of Bristol is committed to creating a mutually supportive and equal working environment in which all staff feel their needs are recognised, valued and rewarded.

- The University has 15 departments that have attained the Investors in People standard, and is committed to achieving accreditation for all departments within Support Services by July 2004.
- The University is currently working with staff and trades unions on the Reward Project, entailing the creation of a single pay and grading system designed to be logical, transparent and equitable for all staff.
- The Positive Working Environment Project has been initiated by the Vice-Chancellor to consider, via widespread consultation with staff, ways of enhancing existing organisational and management practices within the University.
- The University has attained a silver standard under the national Opportunity Now campaign, with a gold in the 'motivation' category, through its implementation of a range of initiatives designed to maximise the potential of female staff, including Management Training for Women and the Women's Research Group.
- The University has implemented a range of strategies and policies in the area of human resources, on subjects including a Human Resources (People) Strategy, an Equal Opportunities Policy, a Disability Statement and a Race Equality Policy. The latter policy has been designated by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) as a good example for the sector. These policies are supported by academic research in the world-leading Centre for the Study of Ethnicity and Citizenship.
- The Staff Review and Development scheme is an essential part of the University's commitment to developing staff and to delivering a high quality service. This includes an expectation that all staff, from manual workers to professors, meet at least annually with their line manager or a senior colleague.
- The University runs an extensive Staff Development programme which includes specialist training for Heads of Department as well as courses available to all staff on intermediate and advanced management skills.

The University of Bristol Contract Research Online Survey (CROS) allows the University to gather a range of staff opinion data and then to share best practice with other institutions to improve performance across the HE sector. As a result of this project, Bristol was the only university to reach the finals of the 2002 *Personnel Today* Awards, in the category of 'Excellence in Human Resource Management through Technology'. The CROS framework has been taken up by HEFCE and has been used by 20 other research-led universities in the past year.

Governance

The University of Bristol is committed to developing and implementing transparent and effective strategies, policies and risk management procedures to facilitate and inform the decision-making process.

- The University has developed clear and robust policies on Risk Management, Conflicts of Interest, Research Conduct, Research Misconduct, Fraud and Public Interest Disclosure.

The University is leading a project under the HEFCE Good Management Practice programme on Risk Management. ARMED (Active Risk Management in Higher Education) is intended to:

- provide HEIs with advice, procedures and guidelines on good practice;
- assist heads of department with proactive management;
- help governors and managers identify, measure and control risk.

Part of the project is the development of a website giving advice on a range of legal risks relating to staff and students across 26 separate units.

- The University has an Ethics of Research Committee that is responsible for managing research-related ethical issues across the University, as well assisting with the development and implementation of a University Ethics Policy.
- A Process Review programme has been initiated to re-engineer the major processes within the University, with the aims of eliminating duplication and unnecessary complexity, improving co-ordination and raising the standard of services offered both internally and externally. The programme will draw upon the experience and creativity of

staff and on good practice outside the higher education sector.

- The University has completed a review of its academic organisation, which will be implemented from the academic year 2003-2004. This has included the review of administrative, budgetary, management and reporting arrangements within departments and faculties, enabling identification and implementation of best practice.
- The University has created a more streamlined Council structure with 32 members, down from 67 members in previous years. This has enabled increased operating efficiency and has speeded-up the decision-making process.

Information Services

The University of Bristol is committed to developing information services that are innovative, service-oriented and provide access to the best available information and computing resources.

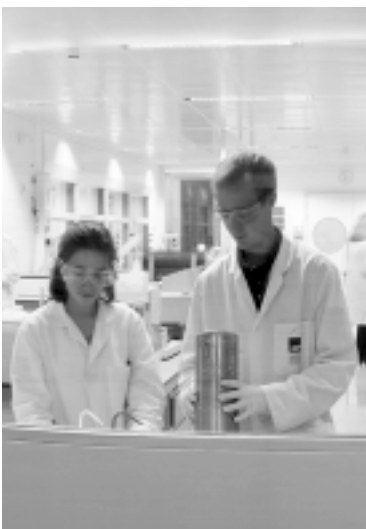
- The University's Nomadic Network Service has received the 2003 Award for Excellence from the Universities and College Information Systems Association. This service provides wireless access points for users on the University campus, as well as enabling users to connect to the campus network from remote locations.
- The University has established a web-based Integrated Research Information System (IRIS) to provide a central access point for all research-related information, whether originating at University, faculty or departmental level. This incorporates BOFINS (Bristol Online Financial System), which facilitates improved financial management of research grants by allowing principal investigators to record, monitor and manage project expenditure online and in real-time.
- The Portal Project, currently being developed, will provide a single, personalised access point for all University information and services.
- The Institute for Learning and Research Technology (ILRT) is affiliated to the Information Services Division at the University and is one of the largest units of its kind in UK higher education, with around 70 staff and an annual turnover of nearly £3 million. Part of the work of ILRT is core-funded by the University, to enable the provision of professional support, advice and training in the use of a range of learning technologies and environments to members of University staff.
- The University is implementing the PRINCE 2 project management methodology for managing the portfolio of projects within the Information Processes and Strategy Programme, including the Portal Project.
- The University is currently undergoing a re-branding exercise, to enhance and standardise communications both internally and externally. As well as a revised University logo, this exercise includes the development and launch of a new corporate website offering higher standards of navigability and accessibility.
- The University has been successful in a bid to the Economic and Physical Sciences Research Council to establish an e-Science Centre of Excellence, supported by research strengths in particle physics, digital media, earth sciences and bioinformatics.

Supporting World-Class Research

The University of Bristol is committed to fostering an environment that facilitates innovative, world-class research and that consolidates its position as an internationally competitive, research-intensive university.

- 76% of all research staff are working within departments graded 5 or 5* in the 2001 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), from a total of over 1,000 research-active staff. The number of University departments in these top two grades has risen to 36 from the 20 achieved in the last RAE in 1996.
- The Research & Enterprise Development Division (RED), established in 1999-2000, is increasingly seen as a model of good practice within the HE sector for driving the commercialisation of research from the laboratory to the marketplace.
- The RED team is highly skilled and experienced in both research and commerce, with several members of staff having come from knowledge-driven industry. Of the 25 administrative staff, eight have doctorates and four have MBAs.
- RED directly supports the management of major academic research projects, providing the services of project managers. Projects within the RED portfolio total over £30m, and include the Bristol Laboratory for Advanced Dynamic Engineering (BLADE) and 3C (Computing, Communications and Content) Research, formed in collaboration with regional businesses in the telecommunications, media, entertainment and IT sectors.

The project manager for the Bristol Laboratory for Advanced Dynamic Engineering (BLADE), Dr Peter Ereat, is experienced in corporate business advice, research, technical consultancy and product development, as well as senior project management. He says, "A consistent and 'quality' approach to our work will engender confidence in BLADE activities, and a greater willingness of sponsors to fund research."



- The RED team includes eight Enterprise Leaders – senior academics working in key departments to promote and support enterprise among colleagues and students. This is a Bristol innovation that is proving extremely successful and is becoming a model for other universities.
- RED has appointed a dedicated customer care specialist and a marketing specialist, to assist academics in adopting a professional approach to their research.
- The University has seen a sustained increase in indirect cost recovery on industry contracts, following the introduction of tighter controls and improved incentives for departments. Bristol is on track to achieve its target of a 70% recovery rate by 2004.

Teaching and Student Recruitment

The University of Bristol is committed to fostering a diverse, socially representative and able student population and to working with students to provide the best environment for their education and well-being.



- *“Bristol has secured its top place...by having 24 teaching subjects rated excellent – something few universities can boast – along with one of the lowest dropout rates in the UK.” – The Sunday Times*
- The University remains one of the most popular universities in the UK, with some 39,000 applications for a little over 3,000 undergraduate places in 2002. Competition is particularly fierce in certain subjects, with 30 or more students vying for each place. Admissions procedures are currently being reviewed to ensure that the University has a clear, fair and transparent system to enable the recruitment of exceptionally able students from all backgrounds. In doing this, the University is considering examples of international best practice.
- The University is involved in a range of schemes under the auspices of the South West Widening Participation Project, including SMART (Student Mentors, Ambassadors and Trainers), which aims to develop local partnerships to allow students to work as ambassadors at both internal and external events.
- The recruitment of postgraduate students will be one of the first processes to be addressed in the University's Process Review, as this is seen as fundamental to the role of a research-led university operating in a competitive environment.

The University in the Community

The arrival of a new Vice-Chancellor in 2001 signalled the start of a major re-evaluation of the role of the University in the region and a move towards becoming an institution that acts locally as well as globally.

The University has received the 2003 Heist Gold Award for its 'Raising Research' public relations campaign. This project has been immensely successful in improving relations with the local community (among other stakeholders), and in improving the public's understanding of research activities at Bristol. Particular achievements include the appointment of a Research Publicity Officer, the inauguration of *re:search* magazine, which is circulated to over 4,000 targeted individuals, and an extensive programme of public lectures and events, many held off-campus.

- The University is a member of the Bristol Partnership, a local strategic partnership established in November 2001 to improve local services and the quality of life in Bristol. A key part of its current activities is the development of an integrated Community Strategy.
- The University has actively supported the city's campaign to become European Capital of Culture in 2008.
- The University played a leading role in the review of Bristol City Council's plan for strengthening local democracy.
- The University is actively engaged with Race for Opportunity, a campaign to encourage employment opportunities for members of ethnic minority communities. The University is involved in a number of initiatives, including the provision of mentors to offer support in inner-city schools and the co-sponsorship of a high-profile careers, training and recruitment event with a diversity focus, to be held in Bristol in May 2003.
- The Director of Academic Affairs, Dr Paul O'Prey, is a member of the Editorial Board leading the development of the Bristol Core Cities Prospectus, working with members of the South West Regional Development Agency and Bristol City Council.
- As part of a wider strategy to improve local relationships, the University has worked closely with the Bristol Citizens' Panel (which has over 2,000 members, drawn from across the city) to examine its role and reputation within the community and to help shape the direction of future communications.
- As part of its Community Outreach Development Programme, the University has appointed an Outreach Development Worker with the specific remit of improving relations with the local community. Other Programme initiatives include advice sessions for potential mature students at local community centres, and the organisation of a Volunteer Celebration and Recruitment Fair in March 2003 to facilitate and encourage volunteering in the community by University staff.
- Members of the Public Programmes Office presented a paper at the European Urban Research Association in April 2003 on "Re-Engaging the Community: The University of Bristol's Outreach Development Programme".

