

ABS Task Force

The Role of UK Business Schools in Driving Innovation and Growth in the Domestic Economy

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21ST MAY 2013

Our report

- Commissioned by the ABS at the suggestion of David Willetts
- Written by Richard Thorpe and Richard Rawlinson
- Supported by a Task Force Group
- Informed by contributions from surveys, Deans and BAM members

AIMS

- Identify practical actions to increase impact of British Business schools on innovation and growth in the UK
- Provide guidance for business schools and universities, government, industry and commerce on actions to reinforce good practice to benefit the economy

Task force

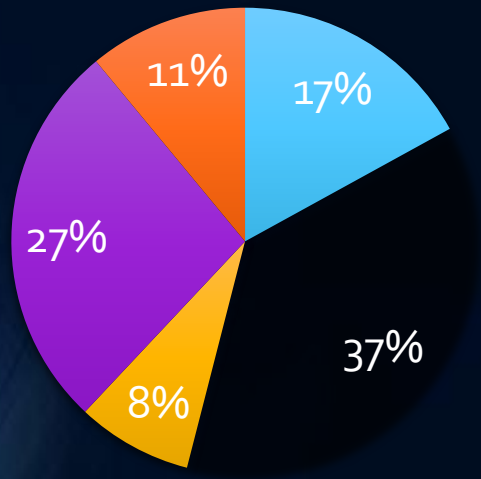
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A picture of success

- 138 business schools in the UK
- 363,846 FTE students, up 60% in 15 years, now 14% of all HE students
- 35% FTE students non-domiciled
- Successful overseas campuses
- 21 EQUIS accredited schools - more than any other European country
- 13,500 Management and Business articles submitted to RAE2008
- Important financial contribution to many universities
- Many examples of excellent engagement, in teaching and research

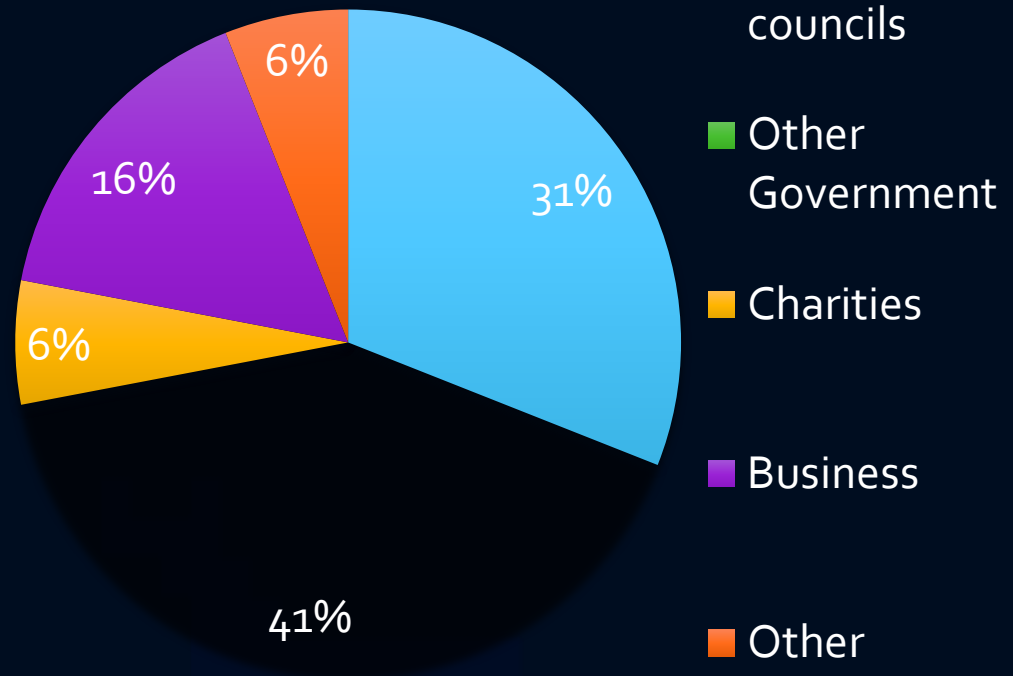
Business and management research income by source

Total spend 1999/2000: £38m



Government 54%
Business £10.26m

Total spend 2011/2012: £65m



72% £10.4m

Many commentators



- Taught courses and programmes in business schools lack relevance, topicality and application focus.
- Research undertaken within business schools does not easily diffuse into industry
- Schools criticised for lack of impact on business practice and innovation & cross disciplinary integration
- Relevance of skills developed widely criticised.
- Not enough connection and support for SMEs
- Sustainability of some aspects questioned
 - Overseas students
 - No material increase in research funding from business and commerce
- Moral purpose (connection to economic rebalancing and growth)

- What is demonstrated good practice?

How can it be replicated, scaled and become general practice?

- What are the incentives and rewards

Do they undermine innovation and engagement?



- 9 discussions of context
- 36 good practice case examples
- 6 recommendations
- 2 Themes

1. Design practice into courses

- Many and varied examples of good practice mixing practical experience and theoretical instruction
 - Constrained by capability of institutions to develop the necessary links with companies
 - Commitment dulled by some institutional incentives
 - How technology might enable
- **Manchester Met – “Agency Life”**
 - St Andrews 4 year undergraduate course
 - Nottingham Trent – in- company BA
 - Nottingham – entrepreneurship & business
 - Leeds – Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Innovation Management
 - Open University
 - Liverpool – online learning
 - Harvard Business School
 - Leeds – MSc in Manufacturing Leadership
 - Cardiff – Lean Enterprise
 - BIS funded medium sized exporters programme
 - Ashridge – AMP programme
 - Manchester Met – Retail
 - Bristol – Aspiring NHS leaders
 - Lancaster – SME owner manager programme
 - Northern Leadership Academy

2. Bring more practitioner experience into the faculty

- Product of academic incentives & the rapid expansion of business schools and their faculty
- Role of consulting work in developing and maintaining faculty business knowledge
- Practical difficulties of converting practitioners into effective teachers and researchers ... need for support, flexible career paths and recognition
- Importance of developing business doctoral education
 - Build training and practice of active business engagement into doctoral education, and development of junior faculty
 - Many developments underway recognize distinctive requirements for business doctoral education

3. Develop and manage company relationships institutionally

- Move away from individually funded projects towards multi-touch relationships
 - Placement opportunities, research links and the involvement of company staff in teaching or supporting programmes.
- Schools need dedicated, professional staff, organised to manage all this activity
 - Supported by time commitment from academic staff
- Create defined roles for practitioners within schools
- Value of connections to and through the university and to alumni

4. Improve the measurement and assessment of research impact

- Engagement is important for good research, not its antithesis
- REF: 20% weighting for impact – more for business in the future?
- Need to attach impact ratings to individuals as well as institutions
- Accreditation bodies: real and perceived emphasis on research and engagement
- Universities need to recognize and support more rounded assessment of research quality

5. Promote research in larger teams, and centres with multi-dimensional roles

- Promotes collaboration between disciplines
- Scale creates resources for dissemination and engagement
- Helps companies navigate access to business school world

- Cambridge Service Alliance
- Centre for Management Buy-Out Research, Imperial College
- Social Informatics Cluster, University of Edinburgh
- University of Nottingham Institute for Enterprise and Innovation

Good practice guidelines for research centres

- Appear as a single entity with a clear point of contact. Use the multidisciplinary of a research centre to develop a mission and vision relevant to specific areas of industry
- When part of a wider business school, articulate clearly what they can and can't do for each project undertaken. Expectations need to be managed . . .
.develop the skills to do this within the group
- Industry relations must be developed and maintained ... by members of the centre not involved with the clients
- Continual and clear communication is vital

6. Move to more distinctly defined roles for different institutions

- 138 British business schools, in an increasingly competitive market
- Specialization can help impact and engagement
- Flexibility of accreditation bodies
- Students will want a broad business education but multiple options for delivery

- Local connection
- Dedication to an industry
- International network
- Catalyst for science-based innovation
- Broader university engagements
- Innovation in pedagogy and consulting

Our main recommendations

1. Design practice into courses
2. Bring more practitioner experience into the faculty
3. Develop and manage company relationships institutionally
4. Improve the measurement and assessment of research impact
5. Promote research in larger teams, and centres with multi-dimensional roles
6. Move to more distinctly defined roles for different institutions

Two themes in our recommendations

- **Incentives**

Rebalance incentives for business schools and staff, to better recognise and reward activities that directly impact business

- **Capabilities**

Build capabilities at individual and school level, to better engage with businesses in teaching and research and to support innovation and SMEs

Incentives

For Business Schools and Universities

- Academic promotions, incentives and reward that also recognize impact and engagement
- Recognize role of practical experience in developing faculty
- Flexibility, and importance of impact in ranking and accreditation criteria

For Government

- REF and the influence of measurement of impact
- Some discretionary funding to 'encourage' SME engagement

Capabilities

For Business Schools and Universities

- Innovations within doctoral training
- Bringing experience from outside and using their talent and experience
- KTPs, business placements/sabbaticals for staff
- Organize to develop centres and to manage company relationships

For Government

- Increased collaborative/matched funding for research grants, KTPs etc
- ESRC capacity development for management and business should continue to come from targeted, 'ring fenced' funding

The new shape of the university 2011-2020

