Birmingham Professional Forum

Lee Sanders, Registrar and Secretary
Wednesday 20 June, 2-3pm
Agenda

- Introduction
- Recruitment & Admissions: challenges and opportunities in 2012
- Curriculum Review: informing our Learning and Teaching strategy
- UBSport: Birmingham activity in Olympic year
- Circles of Influence
- Questions
What’s new in 2012?

…and how Birmingham has responded to the new regime

Tracey Lancaster, Adam Meakin, Roderick Smith, Thomas Veit
External Relations relay team
Major changes to the nature of the market in 2012:

1. Changes to the applicant pool
2. Decision making
3. Flight to quality
4. The WP market reaction
5. The threat from overseas
6. 2013 and 14
What’s happening in 2012 nationally

- Applicant numbers down by about 50,000
- Advantaged down more than disadvantaged
- Applicants took longer to make decisions
- Deferrals up again

Different behaviour in August?
- more direct clearing applicants?
- more adjustments?
- more re-applicants?
What’s happening in 2012 at Birmingham

- Applicant numbers down by about 4,000
- A2B has done very well
- Applicants took longer to make decisions
- Deferrals up again
- Some subjects have bucked the trend
  - Chemical Engineering, Computer Science, Physics, Medicine
- But some have done worse
  - Drama, Modern Languages, Music, Theology, Biosciences, Management, Economics, Politics
  - Some of these drops in applications due to higher grades being asked
Decision Making

- Significantly later decision making – 25% waiting to make decision in last week
- Increased Open Day and Applicant visit day attendance – visiting more than once
- Younger cohorts for future Open Days?
- Increased parent involvement
- Competition
Birmingham’s Response

- Most comprehensive conversion activity round to date
- All stages of applicant cycle – enquirer to student
- All areas – UG/PG/Home/International/BFA
- All activities – Email, Print, Contact Centre, Online Chats, Personalised web
- Across the professional services – Colleges, Academic Services, External Relations, HAS
Birmingham’s response

- Contact Centre with student callers – UK and international
- Participated in the Student Finance Day on 14 November
- Online chats with advice about the financial packages – throughout cycle
- Revamped AVDs – recruitment at the convenience of the market
- Enhance information about Employability – role of Alumni
- Bespoke, tailored communications
Flight to quality

- Clear correlation between academic quality and decision-making
- Evidenced in research – less about services and more about ‘reputational’ quality measures
- High cost remains associated with evidence of quality
- Growing recognition of the fee as an investment/tax rather than a debt
Birmingham’s response

- Investment in Birmingham Fellows
- Investment in facilities (value by proxy)
- Personal tutoring aligned to the academic career of the individual in addition to pastoral support
- Evidence of success – use of alumni, both old and young
The reaction of the WP market place

- Concerns about the ‘total cost’ of a University degree
  - 29% of our intake fall into the WP category, 75% from state schools
- Increased concerns about value of a degree
- Heist research suggested disproportionate concern amongst WP groups
- Some evidence of erosion in the lower income market persists
Birmingham’s response

- A2B applications up by 11% to in the region of 1,000
- In detail, face to face financial explanations have reaped benefits
- Responding to the need for cash bursaries – more meaningful to applicants
- Focus on employability – beyond the vocational
- Continued strong performance in our recruitment from State schools (75%) and lower income bands
International Recruitment

- Challenges
  - UK Government Immigration Policy
  - Increased competition within the UK and other overseas countries
  - Global economic climate
- Opportunities
  - Key markets continue to grow (Far East, South Asia, Latin America, Nigeria/Ghana)
  - Growing footprint for UoB’s International activities beyond recruitment
Birmingham Response

- Close cooperation with Colleges/Schools
- Admissions / Marketing communication liaison
- Professionalising international recruitment practices (e.g. Agent management)

Innovation
- BFA launch
- Nigeria representative pilot
- On-The-Spot offers
- Language Mirror Websites (Japan, Korea)
- Streamed Pre-departure briefings
2013 and beyond – recruitment practices

☐ The nature of recruitment and working with primary and secondary schools
☐ Requirement to continue to provide high levels of finance information and advice
☐ Importance of academic quality – focus on REF
☐ Growth in recruitment activity for parents and teachers
☐ More personalised, contextualised recruitment activity
☐ Continuum of support from recruitment to induction
The outcome of the UCAS Admissions Process Review

- Post-qualification application has been kicked back into the long grass
- Some changes will be implemented for 2014 entry onwards
- Further changes will follow
- They should improve the experience for both applicants and admissions staff
Some of the changes to be implemented for 2014 entry

- myUCAS web portal for applicants
- Mandatory fields and data validation in online application form
- Ability to upload supporting documents
- More exam results uploaded
- Improved terminology
- Improved guidance on completing references
- Improved facility for universities to provide feedback
Some more changes to be implemented for 2014 entry

- Universities able to view full conditions of firm choice for their insurance applicants
- Additional data fields in the online application form
- Better, joined-up working between e.g. UCAS and SLC
- Pop-ups to guide applicants through the process
- Ability to tailor at least part of the Personal Statement to different course choices
- Enforced better use of insurance choice
Possible changes to A levels

- May be made harder with longer and more open questions
- Less modular so linear rather than bite-size
- Limited chances to re-sit so less opportunity to improve after a poor performance
- University involvement in setting them
One thing is for certain – in the world of student recruitment and admissions change is the new norm!
Undergraduate Curriculum Review:
Initial Headlines

Paul Marshall
Director of Registry
Introduction

- Key action arising from the Strategic Framework
- Designed to draw out a series of key principles defining the distinctiveness of our student academic experience in the twenty-first century
- Focused on increasing breadth and graduates’ knowledge of global challenges
Process

- Senate discussion in March 2012
- Two facilitated workshops for each theme:
  - Research & Cultural Engagement
  - Engaging Students
  - Curriculum Design
  - Employability & Skills
- Outputs collated for UEC, Advisory Board and Steering Group and refined
- Aim for L&T Strategy for November Senate
Communications

- Regularly updated intranet site: [www.intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/curriculumreview](http://www.intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/curriculumreview)
- Two open meetings – 14 & 20 June
- Birmingham Professional Forum – 14 June
- Buzz articles
- Student Workshop – 28 June
- College open meetings planned for Autumn 2012
Emerging Priority Areas

- Major review of assessment portfolio to reduce summative assessment and refocus on teaching delivery and formative assessment
- Increased use of interactive delivery methods
- Reconsider how we provide breadth in UG curriculum (skills vs. knowledge):
  - Review of MOMD system
  - Review of Joint Honours
- Embedding of GPA initiative
Emerging Priority Areas (2)

- Increase employer engagement in curriculum design
- Find ways of rewarding extra endeavour and capture additional credits within a GPA system
- Enable students to how their discipline emerged and how it relates to others
- Intensive multi-disciplinary project at the end of first year
Emerging Priority Areas (3)

- Integrated approach to internationalising the curriculum
- More integrated and visible way of rewarding teaching
- Using Liberal Arts to deliver further opportunities for students
  - Balance Personal Skills Award with an Advanced UG Study award
UBSport:
Birmingham activity in Olympic year

Zena Wooldridge
Director of UBSport
Birmingham 2012

- Campus Dressing
- Olympic Torch Relay
- Jamaican Pre-Games Camp
- UoB Olympic hopefuls
- Sporting Heroes
- Other sporting events
Torch Relay

- Day 43: Sat 30 June
  - Derby to Birmingham
- Evening Celebration in Cannon Hill Park
- Day 44: Sun 1 July
  - Birmingham to Coventry
Jamaican Track and Field Team

15th July – 26th July 2012
Pre-Olympic Camp

- Unique opportunity
- Why here?
- Delivery Plans
- Media & PR
- Community engagement
- Challenges
- Media Profile for UoB
UoB Olympic Hopefuls

- Naomi Folkard ~ Archery
- Simon Mantell ~ Hockey
- James Fair ~ Hockey
- Vicki Hawkins ~ Water-Polo
- Dave Webb ~ Marathon
- Louise Hazel ~ Heptathlon
- Hannah England ~ 1,500m
- Luke Gunn ~ 3,000m Steeplechase
- Dean Miller ~ Para 800m & 1,500m
- Lora Turnham ~ Para Cycling
- Pamela Relph ~ Para Rowing
UoB Olympic Heroes

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

WE ARE TRANSFORMING TALENTED ATHLETES INTO STARS OF TRACK AND FIELD

Hannah England
Our Biochemistry graduate and UK 3,000m Indoor Champion, 1,500m Silver medallist at 2011 IAAF World Championships.

Birmingham Heroes: Making inspiration count

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

WE ARE GIVING DEAN THE EDGE FOR BRITISH SUCCESS

Dean Miller
Our Sport and PE graduate. International middle distance runner and medal winner.

Birmingham Heroes: Making inspiration count

www.birmingham.ac.uk
Other Events over the Summer . . . . .

Fri 20th to Fri 27th July

Birmingham SkyRide
Sun 19th August

www.squashworldmasters.com
Circles of Influence
Questions?

Lee Sanders, Registrar and Secretary