



The Association of Business Schools (ABS)

Draft Strategic Framework

2011-2014

Our Mission:

To promote the interests of our members and the business and management education, research and development they provide, nationally and internationally, so as to improve the quality and effectiveness of management, entrepreneurship and leadership for the benefit of society at large.

Our Role:

ABS promotes the study of business and management to help improve the quality and effectiveness of managers in the UK and internationally. Formed in 1992, ABS works with a wide range of relevant stakeholders and similar organisations in the UK, Europe and around the world to influence the international management education community.

Our Members:

At the start of this plan, we have 119 full members, 9 Affiliates (including 2 from outside the UK) and 4 Reciprocal arrangements (including 3 from outside the UK). The UK membership represents collectively over 260,000 * full time equivalent students. This represents 14% or 1 in 7 of the total UK Higher Education population.

* (based upon HESA 2009/2010 data).

OUR STAKEHOLDERS:

- The ABS membership
- UK and devolved government and relevant agencies
- UK Universities
- Employers, employer representative and professional bodies
- Students, potential students and their families
- Business school alumni
- Research organisations
- Regional, national and international organisations and agencies
- Regional, national and International media

MAIN INFLUENCING FACTORS FOR BUSINESS SCHOOLS AND ABS:

Political factors:

- 1) UK and devolved government policy. In particular:
 - a. Regulation and Devolution
 - b. New and divergent funding & fee regimes at all degree levels with uncertainty on numbers, possibly moving to a more free market in the medium term
 - c. Reduced research funding and probable concentration in fewer institutions
 - d. Strict UK Border Agency visa rules for non EU students and staff
 - e. Wider competition - From FE colleges and national and international private providers is already happening and is being further encouraged
- 2) Sustainability and Responsible Management –including the environmental, social, financial, moral and ethical impact of business schools in society. This will continue to grow in importance in terms of learning and teaching, research, regulation and organisational behaviour change nationally and internationally.

Economic factors:

- 3) Emergence of strong new providers in the market nationally and internationally
- 4) UK business schools increasingly reliant on international students and/or third stream activity for maintaining numbers and obtaining growth
- 5) The challenging financial and economic context over the next three years

- 6) Major changes in funding models with different effects on institutions resulting in a fragmentation of the sector
- 7) Possible Institutional mergers and new business models emerging
- 8) Reducing UK student numbers at UG and PG levels – reaction to new fee regime and demographics

Social factors:

- 9) Faculty recruitment, retention and development, shortages of faculty including Deans and the role of professional support services
- 10) Increasing complexity of leadership roles in business schools
- 11) Increasing importance of accreditations and rankings
- 12) Increasing demands for performance information
- 13) Changing student demographics, expectations, learning styles and attitudes
- 14) University restructurings where business and management is (in some cases) being absorbed more into general social sciences
- 15) New multi-disciplinary research clusters being created with particular emphasis on STEM disciplines

Technological factors:

- 16) The use and impact of new technologies and innovations
- 17) Increasing demand for new and sustainable infrastructure and processes

Our Aims:

1. Effective Representation, Promotion, and Lobbying

1a. To be the authoritative voice of business and management education in the UK within an increasingly international environment and to develop influential policies and promote, communicate and lobby on these at regional, national and international levels as appropriate.

MECHANISM

Regularly monitor and analyse the business and management sector regionally, nationally and internationally and via our Executive and Steering

CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS

To improve the uptake and use by our stakeholders of our information, analysis, lobbying

Committees and in consultation with members and other relevant bodies to develop effective policy and lobbying positions and publish relevant outputs.

Hold regular formal and informal meetings, briefings and contacts with high level representatives of stakeholder bodies to exchange views, present data and influence policy.

To be proactive in lobbying key stakeholders and responsive in representing views via consultation exercises.

and public outputs.

To have a measurable impact on policies affecting members and ensuring a consistently high media profile and access to policy makers.

1b. To Represent and promote the interests of all ABS members.

Provide for all external stakeholders comprehensive information about ABS members and their specific contributions to business, management, and leadership development in terms of learning and teaching, research and third stream activities.

MECHANISM

Obtain all relevant data and conduct analysis for example from HESA, UCAS and email surveys so as to produce and disseminate positive information in a variety of formats including the ABS website and relevant publications.

Developing robust common positions on key issues and delivering these to policy makers in a consistent and effective manner.

CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS

To improve the extent and use of our information and analysis by our stakeholders.

To collaborate successfully with relevant organisations to promote the interests of the business and management education community.

Produce and disseminate a range of public and media outputs and services including:

- media bulletins,
- website and links
- annual publications,
- PR Seminars
- and the ABS news centre

together with meetings, briefings and conferences.

To improve upon the actual amount and nature of media coverage gained for ABS and members and to seek to maintain and enhance this.

To increase the level of contacts with key stakeholders and the level of collaborative lobbying activity.

1c. Enhance Communications within and between the ABS membership.

MECHANISM

Through: building a range of sophisticated benchmarking tools and conducting surveys which offer increasingly tailored data runs and analysis eg, by region and self referencing groups and clusters etc, together with regular contacts and focussed events, development programmes and communications.

CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS

To enhance the number, scope and effectiveness of our communications within and between our members.

To deliver acknowledged value in terms of service and information provision to members as assessed through member feedback.

2. To Improve Practice and Quality

2a. To share ideas and good practice and create high level networking opportunities for members and others.

MECHANISM

Through timely and relevant events in a variety of formats including conferences, seminars, good practice exchanges, research projects and workshops. Also, where appropriate to co-brand and

CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS

To run a number of events which attract wide participation and are well evaluated by participants and to show continuous improvement via satisfaction surveys.

promote the events of member schools, partners and other related organisations.

2b. Enhance and improve the quality of business and management education and research in conjunction with stakeholders especially quality assurance and accreditation agencies at the national, European and international levels so as to influence policy and practice to the advantage of our members.

MECHANISM

Hold regular formal and informal meetings, briefings and contacts with high level representatives including, for example: Funding bodies, QAA, efmd and EQUAL members etc to exchange views, present data and influence policy.

Continue to produce and develop the ABS Academic Journal Quality Guide into the most authoritative and internationally recognised Guide of its kind.

CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS

To demonstrate our collective influence on a range of relevant stakeholders in the quality field at national and international levels and provide between 15 and 20 examples which have the potential to benefit or have already benefited our members per annum.

To measure and report on the use and uptake of the Guide nationally and internationally.

2c. Provide relevant Executive Development programmes and other development opportunities for all staff and faculty within business schools and wider Universities.

MECHANISMS

Development a wide range of programmes, coaching/mentoring and one-off events with clear targeting to particular individuals and groups including alumni of previous

CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS

To maintain and enhance by the level of participation achieved and the positive evaluation by participants.

To increase number of non-business

programmes.

school participants in development programmes

3. To Develop beneficial Networks and Alliances

To build on and extend beneficial networks at the regional, national and international levels and establish alliances in support of the mission of ABS.

MECHANISM

To engage constructively with a range of other representative organisations regionally, nationally and internationally (both academic and business), so as to improve networking opportunities, extend our influence and in particular cases to form alliances, reciprocal arrangements and/or contractual partnerships for mutually beneficial purposes.

Of particular importance are the British Academy of Management (BAM), the European Foundation for Management Development (efmd) and the Higher Education Academy (HEA), together with IoD and CBI but all organisations within our stakeholder groups identified above are also included.

CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS

To improve the nature and number of these networks and alliances and our impacts and their successful outcomes.

4. Optimise ABS as an efficient and sustainable organisation

Optimise the financial, organisational and sustainability aspects of ABS so as to extend the range and quality of services offered to members on a sound financial, efficient and sustainable basis.

MECHANISM

Via Fees, sponsorship, commissions, events and external funding arrangements.

CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS

To achieve optimization and report this information in detail via the budget and

Actively pursue income growth opportunities through exploiting the skill base of the association and potential partnerships

Annual Report.