



CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY INSTITUTIONS PILOTING THE LIVING VALUES GUIDANCE (by theme)

Summary

The challenges encountered by the individual pilot universities can be seen [here](#). In summary these are:

- a. promoting a common set of values and a common language for everyone;
- b. institutional size and complexity, particularly being decentralised and having more than one campus;
- c. the challenges of engaging staff and students;
- d. lack of leadership or other capacity;
- e. lack of engagement with external stakeholders;
- f. national political and economic circumstances devaluing the relevance of the discussions;
- g. losing momentum;
- h. conflicting priorities – short term pressures militating against longer term goals and
- i. change of university leadership.

In terms of the broad themes under which the difficulties were experienced the following were identified:

Institutional mission

Identifying and communicating what universities are for, who they are meant to serve and who should pay for them.

Finding a renewed sense of purpose for the university and making a new contract with the public about how they can support one another.

Promoting a common set of values and a common language for everyone.

Institutional size and complexity

Complexity and size of the University, particularly where there are several campuses or campuses in different countries.

The university is large and largely decentralized.

Difficulty of engaging staff and students

Raising awareness of the importance to engage all members of staff and students in a discussion about values/reluctance of members of staff to engage.

Getting the timing right where students were concerned. (It would be best to catch students' attention when they were still new to the University, that is, during the orientation days, in fresher's week.)

Lack of induction regarding values to staff who, in most cases were unlikely to pick up value concepts by themselves.

Surveys, where several have been issued recently and a low level of response (and concomitant lack of reliability or validity) may be consequences.

Reconciling the opinions and needs of academics and students.

The lack of student engagement in the process.

Lack of leadership or other capacity

Lack of capacity – leadership, finance, human resources

Initiative over-load and resistance to new projects relative to existing ones.

Losing momentum in the project.

Process defects

Lack of the necessary instruments and institutional capacity to meet the expectations of staff and students and to promote selected values.

Not listing key behaviours associated with the Statement of Values.

Documents not being completed

Lack of engagement with external stakeholders

The lack of external stakeholder engagement in the process.

Change of University Leadership

A change of Vice-Chancellor part-way through the process.

The intention to review and reflect upon our values explicitly sits somewhat uncomfortably with a process that is actively (yet not didactically) re-engaging the University and its communities with its values, while potentially pointing to how these values may be evolving.

Disagreements about the project or desired outcomes

Disagreement between university managers and staff on the role of the values project as a means of reorienting the goals of the institution.

Conflicting priorities

The need to respond to more urgent short-term priorities and this detracting from attention to the values project.

Implementation concerns

The real work will begin when the Living Values pilot has finished. To implement both fundamental and institutional values at all levels across the university as a whole. To integrate the values in everyday practice. This, of course, is a never-ending process. But keeping the discussion alive is what makes the values live.

External context

National political and economic circumstances can affect and influence the project with some groups devaluing the relevance of the discussion.

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