

Course designs and costings

1. A course fee of £9000 may be set against the following expenditure.

- 1.1 Top slice the fee by, for example, 30% or £2700, to cover the estimated cost of central administrative services and common facilities such as libraries and catering provision.
- 1.2 Required income of £2800 for an average student workplace. This total is based on:
 - 1.2.1 an average workplace area of 3.5 square metres;
 - 1.2.2 teaching space forming half the gross internal area of an institution;
 - 1.2.3 annual space cost of £ 100 per square metre;
 - 1.2.4 space utilisation level of 25%.

Space costs are generally exceeded only by the budget for staff salaries.

- 1.3 It is assumed salary costs per lecturer average £85 per hour; This total represents an annual employment cost of £42,000 and an average teaching load of 500 hours per year. The teaching load represents approximately 17 hours a week for a 30 week teaching year.

The course costs are influenced by the design of courses. It is rarely possible to increase lecture hours to fund tutorial time. The following calculations support this assertion.

Teaching	Groups	Students	Salary	Cost Student
Lecture	1	100	£ 85.00	£ 0.85
Tutorial	10	10	£ 850.00	£ 8.50

The cost of an additional weekly tutorial for students could involve the cancellation of many lectures.

2. There are major obstacles to the revision of course designs.

- 2.1 Lecturers often consider their primary responsibility to be the undertaking of academic research.
- 2.2 The preparation and presentation of effective learning materials often involves considerable time and effort but generally does not enhance career prospects.
- 2.3 There are important developments in higher education such as the CAMEL project co-ordinated by the University of Leicester. This study could have important implications for many course designs. The introduction of innovative strategies is, however, slow. Course designs often change gradually and possible financial benefits do not seem to promote developments.



Stellae Limited
 Corpus Christi House
 West Walk
 Leicester
 LE1 7NA

T +44 (0)116 249 3900
E dgr@stellae.com

www.stellae.com



- 2.4 Institutions may allocate very limited funding for in-service teacher training and comparable staff development activities. Such studies do not enhance career prospects.
- 2.5 University course fees for international students are often three times the level for UK students. Collaboration with overseas institutions to promote homeland course delivery is limited.

Competition with Australian, New Zealand, Canadian and American institutions is already intense. Dutch, German and French universities have introduced degree courses delivered in English. The policies of many countries regarding course fee levels and employment are more liberal than in the UK.

On 17th May 2012, the Higher Education Policy Institute published the results of a survey involving 5000 English students. The findings of the study give support to the observations made in this paper. It was noted that first and second year students have an average contact with staff of 13.9 hours per week. This contact involves lectures, seminars and tutorials. Average contact time compares with 13.7 hours of contact noted in a similar study conducted 6 years ago.

	Universities	
Contact time	Pre 1992	Post 1992
Hours per week	28.6	25.9
Lectures	13.1	12.4

From September 2012 all universities will be required to publish the nature of staff – student contact time on their courses. It has, however, already been established that taught hours vary significantly between disciplines and universities. Some consider the differences raise questions concerning the compatibility of degree qualifications.

Students paid fees of £3000 per year and this has often increased to £9000 per year. Technical developments provide the opportunity to diversify the contact between staff and students but traditional methods of contact have continued to dominate. There is a widespread belief amongst students that their courses do not represent value for money.

Stellae includes staff with extensive experience of teacher training for lecturers in further and higher education. One member of staff has served as a national adviser on staff development activities in universities. An important priority of the timetabling process is to maintain the high quality of study programmes.