

## Foundation Degree (FdA) in Public Services Information Management

## BA(Hons) Degree with Public Service Management

<b>Report on student progress: Academic Year 2005-2006</b>
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### Commentary

This is a composite report on the progress of the students enrolled upon the Foundation Degree (FdA) in Public Services Information Management at the University of Winchester for the academic year 2005-06. In addition, the report includes data on students who had previously been awarded the Certificate in Public Services Information Management and have now completed the additional modules which enable to graduate with a BA(Hons) Degree in Business Management with Public Services Management. The report is written so that the progress of the whole group of students can be indicated and hence individuals are not identified. The median mark is given rather than an average as the median mark reflects the 'middle' position once the marks have been arranged in ascending order and gives a value less likely to be affected by extreme values. The Module Descriptions have been extracted from the Module Description Sheets written as part of the validation process are provided here as they give a more accurate representation of the module contents than is suggested by the module title alone.

*The results repeated the pattern of previous years in that all students performed particularly well in the modules studied with a median mark in excess of 60 for each of the 15 modules in which they participated. The academic year is noteworthy in that at the conclusion of the academic year, the following 'headline' results have been obtained:*

### **3 students graduated with a BA(Hons) Degree in Business Management with Public Service Management:**

Philippa Eldridge	(First class Honours)
Sarah Hughes	2(i)
Christopher Tee	(First class Honours)

Another **eight** students should complete the requirements for the successful award of the BA(Hons) in Business Management with Public Service Management by January, 2007.

## **The operation of ‘accelerated progression’**

When the Foundation Degree was validated, special provisions were written into the course to allow students to make an accelerated progression through the stages of the degree which also shortened the time required to undertake a full Honours degree. In order to qualify for *accelerated progression*, students are required to submit a large portfolio in which they can demonstrate they have successfully met at least 80% of the learning objectives associated with six Level 1 modules drawn from the BA(Hons) in Business Management. The preparation of this portfolio has been undertaken during the ‘June to September’ period with support materials being provided for them and made available on an e-learning basis. The results are presented to the AP(E)L Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences each September and subsequently transmitted to the Registry for the compilation of award calculations (for some students). In addition, provision is made for students to undertake *work-based* learning versions of some modules in which considerable use is made of web-based materials, principally during the June-September period. Some tutorial support is provided but students typically form a cohesive self-teaching group and have achieved results that are comparable with modules studied in the conventional manner.

Of the 5 students who enrolled on the first year of the Foundation Degree (which commenced in Semester February 2006), 2 students elected to write an *accelerated progression* portfolio. Both students successfully completed their portfolio by September, 2006 and are now successfully enrolled in the second year of the programme. This cohort also undertook a work based learning module as described above and are ‘on track’ to complete their Foundation degree in February, 2008 (after two calendar years of study) The decision by three students not to proceed further at this stage was taken as a result of work-related reasons (e.g. in one case, leaving the employ of Hampshire County Council) but the possibility remains of resuming the course at a later date.

A summary table of all students upon all years is provided below.

# Foundation Degree (FdA) in Public Services Information Management

## BA(Hons) Degree with Public Service Management

### Summary Table

Course	Median Mark
<b>First Year</b>	
BS1035 Public Services Information Management	62.0
BS1904 Computer Applications for Business	68.0
BS2903 Communication and Organization	62.0
<i>Successful completion of 'accelerated progression' portfolio</i>	
<b>Second and Third Years</b>	
BS2910 Local Government- Continuity and Change	68.0
BS2912 Public Administration in Britain	61.5
BS2902 Management Accounting	71.0
BS2914 Quality Management and Customer Care	65.0
BS2908 Employment Resourcing and Development	62.0
<b>Fourth Year</b>	
BS3914 Public Service Delivery	66.0
BS3916 Thinking about Management	64.0
BS3915 Strategic Management	66.0
BS3912 Managing e-Business	69.5
BS3905 European Culture and Institutions	64.0
BS3909 Information Systems in Business	69.0
BS3002 Final Year Project ( <i>double module</i> )	70.0

**Professor M. C. Hart**

October, 2006.

**Extracts from the Report of the External Examiner  
(Prof. Jennifer Rowley, University of Wales, Bangor)**

Prof Jenny Rowley continued her rôle of External Examiner this year, making use of her previous experience on the FdA in Management and BA in Business Management in writing her report. Key points raised are:

**Standards:** *“The standards for this course are well established, and students respond well to their understanding of the expectations concerning achievement ”*

**Student Performance:** *“Student performance on most modules is good. They perform particularly well in the practical exam in BS1904 which demonstrates that they have a robust set of IT skills to support their later studies. The only module that gives a little cause for concern is BS2914, Quantitative methods, in which the mean is 42%. It can be difficult to give students the confidence to perform well in this kind of module, but tutors should be encouraged to seek out assessment approaches which support student achievement. ”*

*(Note by Professor Hart:.*

*There appears to be some confusion here. BS2914 refers to Quality Management and Customer Care and not Quantitative Methods The external examiner may have been misled by a spreadsheet which (incorrectly) included those who had not taken the examination as a mark of 0 and referred only to a subset of students. The mean for the whole of this module is actually 55.1% and that of the FdA PSIM students as 64.8%)*

**Assessment:** *“I am confident that the processes for assessment and examination are conducted appropriately. Feedback to students is particularly helpful. It would, however, be useful to undertake an analysis of the potential effect of group work on the overall profile of student marks.”*

**Quality:** *“The students are positive about the quality of the course.”*

**Response to previous reports:** *“I am content that issues that I have raised in previous years have been addressed.”*

**Overview and Comments:** *“This is a well established course which is well run, and carefully developed to meet evolving student needs. This course makes a useful contribution to the development of public sector information systems competence in the region.”*

## Foundation Degree (FdA) in Public Services Information Management

Year One students
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### BS1035 Public Services Information Management

#### Module Description

We now live in an information age in which the typical ‘worker’ is likely to be the professional worker and the typical ‘product’ the information that he/she processes. This module indicates the ways in which information is conceptualised before exploring the importance of information strategies at an organisational level. The module then explores the ways in which a Management Information System is constructed with particular reference to public sector examples. The module examines in depth the progress being made both at international, central government and local authority level to make services available to the citizen electronically with case studies indicating the benefits to be gained and the typical problems encountered in such programmes.

BS1035 Public Services Information Management (5 students)					
Essay: Range	Essay: Median	PDP: Range	PDP: Median	Total Mark: Range	Total Mark: Median
57-68	61	62-70	63	<b>60-69</b>	<b>62</b>

### BS1904 Computer Applications for Business

#### Module Summary

This module conveys a basic understanding of computer hardware and software (including the principle of operating systems) in order to enhance an understanding of the main type of computer based business decision support-support and communication packages e.g.

A word-processor package allows reports to be written and information presented in a variety of formats.

A spreadsheet allows data to be manipulated and presented as tables or graphically.

A database to allow for large amounts of data to be stored systematically and be easily retrieved.

An Internet browser and how to develop data for display on the internet.

BS1904 Computer Applications for Business (5 students)					
Project: Range	Project: Median	Examination: Range	Examination: Median	Total Mark: Range	Total Mark: Median
58-70	62	85-97	90	<b>66-76</b>	<b>68</b>

Comparison- Non-Foundation Degree in Public Services Info. Management students: 60

## **BS2903 Communication and Organization**

### *Module Summary*

This interdisciplinary module aims to develop an understanding of the key factors that underpin the development of effective communication within an organisational context. It allows students to consider and better understand the inter-relationships between organisational structure; communication and information technologies. Students will study the underlying theoretical principles of both Communication and Organisation and will apply these in simulations and workshop exercises. Students will work to further develop their communication skills and to effectively use computer media to this end.

<b>BS2903 Communication and Organization (2 students)</b>					
Assignment: Range	Assignment: Median	Examination: Range	Examination: Median	<b>Total Mark: Range</b>	<b>Total Mark: Median</b>
57-62	59.5	63-64	63.5	<b>61-63</b>	<b>62</b>

*Comparison- Non-Foundation Degree in Public Services Info. Management students: 63*

<b>Year Two/Year Three students</b>
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### **BS2910 Local Government: Continuity and Change**

#### *Module Summary*

This module details the changing face of local government and the debates over its financing and reform. Students will learn the ways in which local services are managed, delivered and made accountable to local populations. The unit will explore the differences between national services locally delivered and those services provided, or organised, by local authorities themselves. Case studies will be made of local service provision e.g. in social services and education.

<b>BS2910 Local Government (8 students)</b>					
Assignment: Range	Assignment: Median	Examination: Range	Examination: Median	<b>Total Mark: Range</b>	<b>Total Mark: Median</b>
58-80	66	57-72	70	<b>58-75</b>	<b>68</b>

*Comparison- Non-Foundation Degree in Public Services Info. Management students: 60.5*

### **BS2912 Public Administration in Britain**

#### *Module Summary*

The module introduces students to the variety, complexity and lines of accountability to be found in the public sector in Britain. The impact of the 'New Public Management' will be examined in some detail, insofar as it helps to explain the new organisational and institutional arrangements associated with the creation of agencies and the drive for economy and efficiency in public service delivery. At the same time, students will learn to appreciate how models of management derived from the private sector have been introduced into the public sector, transforming administration into management and, in turn, redefining traditional concerns in public administration such as ministerial accountability and the role of Audit.

<b>BS2912 Public Administration in Britain (8 students)</b>					
Assignment: Range	Assignment: Median	Examination: Range	Examination: Median	<b>Total Mark: Range</b>	<b>Total Mark: Median</b>
58-70	62.5	46-66	58.5	<b>53-65</b>	<b>61.5</b>

*Comparison- Non-Foundation Degree in Public Services Info. Management students: 45*

## BS2902 Management Accounting

### Module Summary

This module combines some of the most important accounting concepts and decision making models of the two semester management accounting and financial accounting modules recommended for students majoring in business management. It is a basic review of the value and purpose of accounting for non-accountants. Accounting simply means explaining, and this is what is explained in this abbreviated module – how business managers use accounting information – both qualitative (words) and quantitative (numbers) to help them manage. Managers must know where they have come from, where they are now and what is likely to happen. Both the short and longer strategic run must be considered in order to provide the most effective and efficient leadership. This is not easy. All managers face the unknown future together. In this regard, the main purpose of this module is to learn some basic accounting theory and practice to enable managers to assess financial strength and predict success.

<b>BS2902 Management Accounting (8 students)</b>					
Report: Range	Report: Median	Examination: Range	Examination: Median	<b>Total Mark: Range</b>	<b>Total Mark: Median</b>
59-82	70.5	53-80		<b>62-80</b>	<b>70.5</b>

*Comparison- Non-Foundation Degree in Public Services Info. Management students: 57*

## BS2914 Quality Management and Customer Care

### Module Summary

The course will examine the ‘classic’ contributions to quality in the light of the contribution that they make to TQM and BPR. There will be a particular emphasis on the problems of quality operationalisation and quality measurement and the implications that may have for the implementation of a quality improvement programme. Customer Care will be examined in some detail, both at the conceptual level and at the level of the formulation and evaluation of Customer Care policies in a variety of sectors. The course will examine the measurement problems implicit in programmes of Customer Care and will examine quantitative and qualitative approaches to quality measurement. The course will examine the growing European literature upon quality processes and make an assessment of the cross-cultural approaches to quality improvement philosophies.

<b>BS2914 Quality Management and Customer Care (8 students)</b>					
Assignment: Range	Assignment: Median	Examination: Range	Examination: Median	<b>Total Mark: Range</b>	<b>Total Mark: Median</b>
53-75	64	56-68	65	<b>55-72</b>	<b>65</b>

*Comparison- Non-Foundation Degree in Public Services Info. Management students: 53*

## **BS2908 Employment Resourcing and Development**

### *Module Summary*

This is a Work-Based learning Module (WBL). The module is aimed at providing students with a critical understanding of the framework and concepts that underpin a professional and ethical approach to the employment and development of people. Included in the module will be an exploration of the policies and practices applied in the recruitment, selection, socialisation, and development of employees in order to enhance the performance of the employing organisation.

<b>BS2908 Employment Resourcing and Development (8 students)</b>		
Assignment: Range 63-66	Assignment: Median 64.5	<b>Total Mark (median): 64.5</b>

*Comparison- Non-Foundation Degree in Public Services Info. Management students: 53*

## **BS3914 Public Service Delivery**

### *Module Summary*

The module will give business studies students an understanding of the role and workings of public service organisations. The operation of public service has to be located against the background of the UK democratic institutions and processes. The module will specifically focus on the changing nature of public services in the UK and its implications for those who manage within public service organisations.

<b>BS3914 Public Service Delivery (2 students)</b>					
Assignment: Range	Assignment: Median	Examination: Range	Examination: Median	<b>Total Mark: Range</b>	<b>Total Mark: Median</b>
62-68	65	60-63	61.5	<b>61-66</b>	<b>63.5</b>

*Comparison- Non-Foundation Degree in Public Services Info. Management students: 58*

## BS3916 Thinking about Management

### Module Summary

This module encourages you to think about the processes of thinking itself and presents you with different styles of the thinking process, both linear and non-linear, for you to apply in managerial problem solving and in writing a *critique* of an article in the modern management literature. The module develops your knowledge of current trends in management thought and philosophy and invites you to subject these to a critical scrutiny. In the later stages of the module, you will study ways in which you can think about the ways in modern organisations are managed and controlled and in which organisations, and the individuals within them, can transform themselves into *learning organisations*. You will also critically examine the role of values and of ethics in management thinking and understand the ways in which these concerns are reflected in 'green business'. Your groupwork skills will be developed by working with others to research and then present your findings upon a topic of current managerial concern. In this process, you will also be encouraged to reflect critically upon the ways in which your own thinking processes and learning skills have been developed and applied whilst working with others.

<b>BS3916 Thinking about Management (3 students)</b>					
Assignment: Range	Assignment: Median	Examination: Range	Examination: Median	<b>Total Mark: Range</b>	<b>Total Mark: Median</b>
58-65	62	65-66	66	<b>62-66</b>	<b>64</b>

Comparison- Non-Foundation Degree in Public Services Info. Management students: 59.5

## BS3915 Strategic Management

### Module Summary

The module considers the process of Strategic Management in three parts, namely, the Analysis of the external business environment as well as internal competences and cultures; the Choices available to enterprises, given their cultures and stakeholder expectations as well as business opportunities and the Implementation of strategic change within organisations.

It does so, drawing upon current academic theories and provides a platform for debate for several conflicting approaches to the management of the strategic process.

Through the use of case studies, the student is provided with opportunities to consider strategy both at corporate and operational levels and it is a feature of the module that 'real-world' issues are exposed and considered from a variety of business types ( profit and not for profit etc.)

The module also aims to provide the student with a holistic appreciation of business and the parts that Marketing, Finance, HR , IT and Operations play in the formulation and implementation of business strategy

<b>BS3915 Strategic Management (3 students)</b>					
Assignment: Range	Assignment: Median	Examination: Range	Examination: Median	Total Mark: Range	Total Mark: Median
58-71	66	58-71	66	<b>58-71</b>	<b>66</b>

Comparison- non-Public Services Info. Management students:

61

## BS3912 Managing e-Business

### Module Summary

This module considers how managers can apply new information and communication technologies to enhance the performance of their organisations. The module takes an integrative approach drawing on new and existing perspectives and models from many disciplines such as information systems, strategy, marketing, operations and human resource management.

<b>BS3912 Managing e-Business (4 students)</b>					
Assignment: Range	Assignment: Median	Examination: Range	Examination: Median	Total Mark: Range	Total Mark: Median
68-72	69.0	70-76	71.0	<b>69-74</b>	<b>69.0</b>

Comparison- non-Public Services Info. Management students:

65

## BS3905 European Culture and Institutions

### *Module Summary*

This course aims to make students more fully aware of the historical basis and the current development in the institutions of the European Union and the wider European family of nations. The institutions of the European Union will receive a detailed analysis as well as the ambivalence displayed by successive UK governments in recent decades. The module includes the critical study of the European business environment and critically analyses the nexus of cultural issues operational throughout Europe. The course aims to give students the appropriate insights so they can contribute to an informed discussion of the ways in which European institutions will develop in the future, particularly in the light of emerging global trading blocks in the world economy.

<b>BS3905 European Culture and Institutions (4 students)</b>					
Debate: Range	Debate: Median	Examination: Range	Examination: Median	<b>Total Mark: Range</b>	<b>Total Mark: Median</b>
66-66	66	47-66	58	<b>57-66</b>	<b>62.5</b>

*Comparison- Non-Foundation Degree in Public Services Info. Management students: 60*

## BS3909 Information Systems in Business

### *Module Summary*

The course will demonstrate the ways in which Information Systems are integrated and deployed into businesses within the overall strategic objectives of an organization. In particular, it will cover the competitive advantages (and the risks) offered by Information Systems.

Students will study the impact of Information Systems on an enterprise, and gain understanding of project management, a key aspect of deploying IS in business.

<b>BS3909 Information Systems in Business (3 students)</b>					
Debate: Range	Debate: Median	Examination: Range	Examination: Median	<b>Total Mark: Range</b>	<b>Total Mark: Median</b>
72-73	72.5	60-73	66	<b>66-73</b>	<b>69.0</b>

## **BS3002 Final Year Project**

### *Module Summary*

The final year project gives students the opportunity to select and research a topic of their own choosing under the guidance of a tutor. The project topic needs to be underpinned by an appropriate area of literature or else make use of such literature in its analysis. Projects may be written from within one of the disciplines represented in the Business Management degree or may be inter-disciplinary in nature. Students who have undertaken work-based learning will be encouraged to let a project grow out of a problem or area to which they have been exposed in their placement. If students undertake some empirical research (e.g. a survey utilizing questionnaires) then the student will need to justify their selection of methods and be aware of the methodological underpinnings underlying their choice of method, and the ethical obligations of collecting data from individuals. In the case of students taking one of the specialist pathways, the project must be in an area related to that specialism.

<b>BS3002 Final Year Project (3 students)</b>	
Range: 64-71	Median: 70

*Comparison- Non-Foundation Degree in Public Services Info. Management students: 61*

Professor M. C. Hart

Agreed at Course Committee, October 2006.