

Value for Money (VfM) briefing note for Heads of School

1. OfS Value for Money requirements

The OfS requires universities to ensure VfM for students and the tax payer in return for their investment, with their understanding of VfM expressed in terms of outcomes and inputs:

students receive Value for Money when they experience the full benefits of higher education both during their studies and afterwards in exchange for the effort, time and money they invest
taxpayers receive Value for Money when higher education providers use public money and student fees efficiently and effectively to deliver graduates, from all backgrounds, who contribute to society and the economy.

It is the view of the General Counsel that were there to be a challenge on the basis of VfM at the moment it would most likely come from the student body (or their parents) around teaching arrangements during lockdown. A analysis has been prepared to address this. However, it is clear that, however VfM is framed, we have a responsibility to students and tax payers to treat their resources with respect 'make the most of them', and we need to be able to demonstrate this.

2.

Our VfM policy states that 'Our overall strategic aim is to achieve a world-class standard of teaching and research by managing our resources effectively and efficiently'.

The University will maintain the value of a Sussex deg

	addressing risk should we invest more or differently to increase the likelihood of success? explaining the options being clear who is accountable ensuring performance is measured to determine if intended outcomes were delivered as planned or, making changes to reflect the review and learning from this.
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Appendix 2

1. Putting VfM into practice and demonstrating this

There is already a lot of good VfM practice in the University, for example

We have articulated our priorities and goals in the Sussex 2025 framework and recognised when it was published that by working towards a shared vision and having an understanding of our common goals, we [would] prioritise our efforts to deliver our objectives. Aligned with this commitment we are undertaking the 'Size and Shape' programme which aims to ensure Sussex can be a University with the best possible environment for research and scholarship and that our education is both outstanding and responds to what students want to study. It will also ensure that we are able to generate sufficient surpluses to invest in our physical and digital infrastructures and help us get closer to our strategic goals.

We have robust governance and management around projects and the Project Review Group will ensure that appropriate resource is available for projects and that we are delivering Value for Money.

We already have comprehensive policies and procedures that have been designed to deliver VfM by e.g. being simple to follow, minimising risk and securing the right outcomes for the University. In many cases training and other resource is available to support staff understanding and decision making and there is often monitoring of compliance to identify areas of risk. This means that on a day to day basis VfM can largely be achieved by following policy and processes, completing training, and asking for advice from expert services where relevant (e.g. HR, OGGC, Finance etc.).

We have an evolving and effective integrated planning and budgeting process which ultimately translates strategic and operational priorities into financial plans where appropriate levels of resource are allocated in a measurable framework. This should ensure that on a day to day basis resources are committed according to agreed priorities and that material variances to those plans are appropriately understood and authorized again supporting the delivery of good VfM.

1.1 However, whilst VfMs are often implicitly embedded into ways of working we still have some way to go to ensure all staff explicitly understand VfM to the point where it is 'embedded in our culture' and

Appendix3 - Examples of VfM application of resources in the sector

	Economy	Efficiency cash releasing	Efficiency time- releasing	Efficiency space releasing	Effectiveness	Income generation	Equity
Teaching							

Promoting effective teaching practice through staff development