



SEMINAR
Ghent University
Friday 27th to Saturday 28th March 2009

Incentives

Abstracts

Incentives are means to motivate someone to pursue an objective that the incentives' author wishes to achieve. We will restrict ourselves to the means deployed by the university, not those deployed by the endowing government or third parties.

In the university context, incentives are employed to achieve quantitative and qualitative objectives in the field of education, research and scientific service.

We start from the principle that a university doesn't have unlimited means at its disposal to set up all possible incentives, and therefore has to define priorities.

At the seminar, the intent is to trace which objectives universities consider to have most priority, and which incentives they motivate the members of the university community with to achieve these objectives.

The intent is not to make a list of possible goals and matching incentives, but to make an inventory of those incentives that a university deploys nowadays to reach certain objectives.

The seminar will cover both incentives as an HR measure and as a management tool in an organizational context.

The Use and Abuse of Incentives in the UK Context. Reflections from Cambridge and Warwick"

Jon Baldwin, University of Warwick (UK)

Jonathan Nicholls, University of Cambridge (UK)

Universities are communities that work effectively only if complex interaction between the organisation and its members, particularly its academic members, is optimal. Incentives are often intangible but no less important in the light of that.

The University of Cambridge can point to 800 years of history and tradition, a legacy of outstanding success based, largely, on perceptions of independence and autonomy and on both symbolic and actual participation in the governance and management of the institution. The University of Warwick founded in 1965 has embraced similar principles but in a modern, entrepreneurial way. A way that has drawn much comment and admiration as it has continued its relentless march up national (and international) league tables.

This seminar will offer some reflections on the way two distinctive but successful British Universities operate and will explore some of the paradoxes that characterise the post-modern institution.

Incentives in the Higher Education System and in institutions as part of a French Human Resources Strategy

Bernard Baraton, Secrétaire-général and Arnaud Le Gouanvic, Cabinet Chief, Ecole Nationale Supérieure d'Arts et Métiers (FR)

Among the French History, and since the recent development of “massification” in the Higher Education system, it seems that incentives opportunities in the French system were always confronted to a kind of “historical” impossibility : the “public” status of the agents, with its many restrictions, the “Passion” of egalitarianism in politics and French philosophy, the complex system of status and own mechanisms in each group of public agents, the need of Laws in order to afford primes and bonuses to the best agents... were all obstacles to that new way of thinking.

From a certain point of view, “incentives” strategies were inconceivable in public administration, and even in contradiction with the tradition and philosophy of equality for all the public agents by opposition to private initiatives.

Nowadays, with the new trend of “public management” and “evaluation strategies” based on determination of the merit's degree of the agent by comparison to the goals fixed to him, the obstacles of the past seem to be reduced, even if incentives strategies still remain a kind of new challenge.

The Law “Pécresse” of 10th of August 2007 marks a new step in the general trend that conduct to take more and more care about efficiency, especially for the supervisory leaders and head offices managers.

Devoted to promote autonomy for the Universities, to give them more freedom and responsibilities than ever, the new Law help French Higher Education institutions to manage themselves better (budget and salary mass directly managed, possibilities of qualification in jobs position...) and contribute to let them use their means as they wish, regarding to their local purposes and own strategy.

This new way of thinking acting by Law encourage institutions to conduct a politic leading by research of efficiency, reinforcement of supervisory and managing staff and give more powers to the Presidents, who can now develop an initiative aiming to recognize the best agents, according to a large process of management by goals, evaluation and indicative gains for the agents.

Arts et Métiers ParisTech, as a prestigious Higher Education French institution, is a part of this new trend leading to autonomy and can give an example of this new “*Challenge*” in which incentives opportunities reveal an essential goal : being efficient in management by projects, in order to record a significative clue of progress.

Tenure track system for scientists: As illustrated by career opportunities for women in science at the University of Groningen

Lambert Verveld, Rijksuniversiteit Groningen (NL)

Most European universities – one should only take a quick glance on the internet through the available strategy plans and agendas for the future of many universities – aim high. Universities want to belong to the top in the international comparison.

The popularity amongst decision and policy makers of Essential Science Indicators, the THES ranking of universities, the Shanghai list, etc. speaks for itself.

Not all universities belong to the top 50 or the top 100 in these lists. Those universities are confronted with the question how they are going to improve their research and education performance, while at the same time they are being challenged to fulfill many other societal and business development goals.

In short, competition is tough and means are scarce.

People are of course the main asset of universities, it is the quality of our researchers and teachers that decides whether we will climb or descend in the various rankings. And it is our quality that attracts qualified new staff to our universities. Success breeds success, and the other way around.

How do universities motivate their staff to perform at their best and how do we make sure that our talented staff members get all the opportunities. And how can universities make sure that staff members that are functioning below agreed levels, leave university and start another career outside universities.

Traditionally many European universities offer career paths for academic staff that can end in a full professorship (if you're lucky!). But many academics have to wait for a professorship to become available, while in the meantime they are working in a position that doesn't always offer them the space and opportunity to create their own environment. As a result, many academics are not being challenged, since the rewards in terms of career opportunities are very often unclear.

In the University of Groningen the traditional method of appointing academic staff has been changed radically in the faculties of Science, Social Sciences and Medical Sciences.

Since 2002 the faculty of science has introduced the tenure track system as the leading policy for academic careers. Young talented scientists are being attracted and selected with a clear career path.

After their selection and appointment as post doc/lecturer or Assistant Professor they get an appointment of five years in which the staff members will have to prove themselves and in which they have to fulfill preset criteria (quality of publications, proven track record of external research funding, etc.).

After five years, the performance of the staff member will be assessed according to the preset criteria. A negative assessment will result in the termination of the appointment after a total duration of six years. A positive assessment will lead to appointment as tenure and a promotion to adjunct professor with *ius promovendi* on a salary level of associate professor. There is another assessment at the end of a further 5-year period at which moment a full professorial appointment will be evaluated. If this proves favorable, promotion to full professor will follow.

Why is this attractive? Because it offers opportunities to young people who believe in themselves and it is also honest to those for whom an university career is not the best option.

At the same time the Dutch universities want to increase the number of women in the top scientific positions. The number of women in the higher ranks in Dutch universities is relatively low, compared to most other European countries.

To promote the participation of women the University of Groningen offers a prestigious fellowship programme, named after Rosalind Franklin, whose X-ray studies of DNA were crucial to solving its structure. □ These fellowships are being offered only to

women and were first initiated by the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences in 2002. The fellowships in the faculty of science for instance are awarded to outstanding women scientists from any of the disciplines mathematics, physics, astronomy, chemistry, biology, pharmacy, environmental studies, computing science and artificial intelligence. Quality is decisive, not the field of work.

Presently, 16 fellows are working at the faculty of science.

The programme is being implemented in all the other faculties as well.

These woman-fellows are being offered career opportunities according to the tenure track system.

The question is whether these changes in HRM policy is paying off. Are we achieving our goals? In other words: do the incentives work? Are there disadvantages? How is it being managed in financial terms?

These and other issues will be discussed in the presentation.

Incentivization – Government/University Relations in Ireland

Michael Gleeson, University of Dublin, Trinity College (IE)

Incentivization of institutions and individuals take different forms. This presentation reviews how the Irish Government, through a national planning process (National Development Plan 2000-2006) made Research & Development, at academic level in third-level institutions, and encouragement of companies to assimilate the results of R & D into their products and processes, a priority.

This resulted in very substantial funding – €2.5 bn for Research, Technological Developments and Innovation (RTDI). This funding was provided on the basis of competition, priorities to be agreed, clear management structures for research to be in place at institutional level, and inter and intra institutional cooperation. Financing, then, is a major incentive.

A second element of incentivization has been the establishment by the Universities Funding Agency of a revised Resource Allocation Model, which encourages behaviour in a certain way. Individual institutions have also established internal Resource Allocation Models.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are in the process of development for institutions and individuals, but little progress has been made to date.

Inter institutional cooperation is actively encouraged and supported by Government funding – the need being to avoid duplication and carry out world-class research. Should this apply to Administrative and Support Areas?

Finally, is it always wise to develop or respond to incentivization programmes purely because funding is available?

Universities - subjects to national inducement policies. Hard choice between alignment, redefining and creating

Esa Hämäläinen, Theatre Academy, Helsinki (FI)

In the Finnish national HE policy, steering rational has been dramatically changing since the 80'2. Bureaucratic and authoritative state-planning was gradually replaced by competitive steering based on more indirect governance techniques. These include e.g. use of common HE databases, performance-based resource allocation models (RAM), annual target negotiations, quality assurance and enhancement systems.

As state agencies, the Universities have had to follow the lead. The big multi-faculty universities, like the University of Helsinki, have at the same time created their own modifications of the national steering mechanisms. In some cases, like the quality assurance techniques, they also have transformed the national systems considerably. The smaller universities on the other hand, are not in that position. Sometimes, the national techniques do not hit the target – this typically meaning that they do not adapt the same techniques at all, this being evident in the resource allocation model adopted by Theatre Academy Helsinki.

When the rationale of HE policy changes, the need to adjust or transform the steering techniques arises. Currently, the degree of legal and financial autonomy of Universities is increasing. What kind of implications does it have to the national HE policy? What kind of inducement techniques will the state adapt? How are the Universities reacting? Clearly, the universities want to free themselves from common national solutions and create their own answers. This may cause difficulties for the state to induce common policies and techniques. This may also be challenging for the collaboration among the universities.

Incentive Policy at Ghent University

Prof. Koen Goethals, Ghent University (BE)

This contribution will focus on the use of incentives in several domains of university policy. Incentives can take different formats, can be applied in different ways and can be used for different outcomes in several areas.

Taking as examples different policy decisions at the level of the Flemish community as well as their conversion towards specific strategies of Ghent University (UGent), several types of incentives will be presented that apply at different levels of the university organization, that relate to different groups (students as well as personnel) and are aimed at different outcomes within the academic responsibilities.

Where relevant, the interaction between different incentives will be described as well as the way they potentially offset or reinforce each other or affect other processes and strategies within the university.

Incentives in different fields and with different objectives will be described, with examples from UGent in:

- The recruitment and retention of top level academic personnel
- The stimulation of both the quality and quantity of research outcomes
- The activation and stimulation of research valorization
- The career development of different personnel groups
- The control of high quality, student supportive and efficient education programs
- The administrative duties at different layers of the university organization

Presenting different cases, the strong potential of well chosen and balanced incentives in the performance of the general strategy of the university will be illustrated. Furthermore, the employment of institution specific strategies in response to incentive programs at the level of the Flemish Government will be described using different examples. A case will be made for the careful implementation of different incentive programs, considering that depending on the echelon where a particular incentive is implemented, it can be active, neutral or counteractive.

Finally, the financial aspect of different types of incentives will be discussed and compared, suggesting that the budgetary strategies and guidelines towards particular incentives should be carefully selected and implemented.