Opportunities and Implications of the Higher Education Systems Overhaul (HESO) Project for the Leadership of Private HEIs in Ethiopia

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Abstract

This paper describes some of the opportunities and implications for the private higher education sector of the *Report of the Higher Education Strategy Overhaul Committee of Inquiry into Governance, Leadership and Management in Ethiopia's Higher Education System* (HESO). The report draws on visits to 11 HEIs, discussions with members of the HESO team who were drawn from 8 HEIs and the Ministry of Education and evidence from 5 witnesses. It suggests that there is a window of opportunity for the private sector to increase its influence, demonstrate how it can help to meet the Government's development agenda, contribute to the higher education reforms, improve its management and leadership and in the process gain access to various public goods.

The paper analyses:

i) what the sector can do as a whole, through its Association, for example:

- develop as an effective lobbying body;
- share experience, information and resources amongst members and with the public HEIs; and
- develop and recommend a qualification framework and credit accumulation system.

ii) what individual private HEIs need to do in order to improve:

- strategic planning, organization and operational effectiveness;
- communication and decision-making;
- human resource management and staff development; and
- systems review and cost effectiveness.

iii) what the Government and its agencies can do to support the private sector in particular:

- develop more incentives for the expansion and support of private HEIs; and
- provide access to training and to QRAA and EHESI Boards.

1. Introduction

In March 2004, the Ministry of Education (MOE) set up a Higher Education Systems Overhaul (HESO) to examine the problems, challenges and ways to improve the governance, leadership and management within Ethiopia's higher education system. The committee included heads and vice heads of public and private sector institutions, Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) higher education management advisors working in the Ministry of Education and in higher education institutions (HEIs) and a senior expert from the Ministry of Education. The report of the committee is about to be published (Ashcroft 2004).

The committee was set up because of concerns within the Government that its wide ranging reforms might be threatened by poor governance, leadership and management at all levels of the higher education sector. These reforms have been laid out in various MOE documents, for example, ESDP-II, (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 2002a) the MOE Capacity Building Program (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 2002b), the MOE's Strategic Plan 2003/4 – 2004/5 (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 2003a) and the Higher Education Proclamation Number 351/2003 (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 2003b).

In many ways, the private sector should be able to lead the way and give direction to the sector as a whole, since the focus of the reforms (greater customer-orientation, more business-like attitudes and practices, expansion of programs, institutional autonomy) is already an essential part of the way in which the private HEIs operate. The private sector is perhaps more capable of overcoming the challenges presented by these reforms and the expansion of the sector than the public universities. Because they are generally smaller, the majority of private institutions having 500 or less students (Saint 2004), they can implement and manage change more speedily and effectively: for example, private sector institutions have already established systems for financial and resource management. In addition, private sector institutions have already developed methods of identifying course-costs and income-generation that results in profit not loss; in many cases they already have active governing bodies; are less bound by Government bureaucracy; and already have experience of greater autonomy and work independently.

Of particular interest to private HEIs is the intention to expand private higher education. At present, accredited private institutions account for 24% of HE students in the country (Ministry of Education 2003). Female students account for nearly 50% of all the students (ibid). In the last year alone, student numbers in accredited private HEIs have increased by 43% (Saint 2004). Dr Teshome, the Vice Minister for Higher Education, said at a consultation meeting with Presidents of HEIs that the private sector should grow between 40 and 50% of all undergraduate student enrolment in Ethiopia within the next three years. This expansion of market share would be within a system that is set to double in the same period. Thus, if Dr Teshome's predictions are to be taken at face value, the number of students in private HE will quadruple from the present level.

Such a projected expansion has great implications for the private sector leadership. It puts private higher education in a strong negotiating position. The private sector should be organizing itself, for example to take advantage of HESO, recommendations that there should be regular meetings with the MOE so that private HEIs can influence policy and practice. These reforms and the

expansion of the higher education sector, therefore, provide a singular opportunity for the private sector to show that it is an essential part of the country's higher education capacity. It is an opportunity to show that it can help meet the challenges of an expanded system and especially provide examples of good practice that it is prepared to share and help the public sector to develop. To be credible, the private sector should demonstrate that it can provide quality education that will assist the country in meeting its development needs (see Ashcroft and Rayner 2004, also presented at this conference). In return, the private sector should expect some assistance and support from the Government and its agencies; for example, incentives in the form of tax concessions, land acquisition and ease of procurement and import of learning materials. However, these incentives can only come if the private sector can satisfy both the Government and the public that it is worthy of this assistance.

The paper discusses some of the opportunities and implications presented by the HESO report for leadership in the private sector. It is divided into three sections:

    i)   what the sector can do as a whole, perhaps through its Association;

    ii)   what individual private HEIs need to do; and

    iii)   what the Government and its agencies can do to support the private sector.

2. Research Methodology

During the early part of 2004, we (with others) visited all six of the public universities and two of the institutions that are destined to become universities over the next two years. Five visits were undertaken on behalf of the newly established Ethiopian Higher Education Strategy Institute and Quality and Relevance Assurance Agency, and three on behalf of the Higher Education Strategy Overhaul Committee of Inquiry into Governance, Leadership and Management in Ethiopia's Higher Education System (Ashcroft 2004). During each of the visits, we conducted a series of meetings with groups of senior managers, administrative managers, academic staff, and students. In two institutions we also met the VSO Higher Education Management Advisor. An agenda was provided for each of these meetings. In all but one of the visits, we were given a tour of the site that included the library, IT facilities, student facilities, a typical classroom, a typical laboratory and other facilities. Where the institution was a multi-campus operation, these tours generally included visits to more than one site. In all but one of the institutions, we also had individual meetings with the librarian, a science instructor and the IT center manager.

Thus, the study draws on a total of 34 meetings in public sector higher education institutions, observation of facilities in seven institutions and discussion with their managers in seven institutions.

The visits generally lasted between one and three days, two days being typical. During the visits, the researchers enquired about the management, leadership, strategy and policy priorities of the institution and the challenges that they face.

During every phase of the visits, each of the researchers took detailed notes of what they were told and what they were able to observe. At the end of each visit, one of the researchers wrote up these notes into an integrated account. This account was checked and amended by the other researcher. This agreed draft version was then sent to the President or the Academic Vice President (of the Institution visited) with a request that he corrects any errors. The account was amended in the light of this feedback and became the record from which this study has drawn.

In addition, the HESO team visited three non-Ministry of Education HEIs. In two they met the senior management team, in the one other, they met members of the Board of governors and in two they met middle managers. The notes of these visits were written by other members of the HESO team.

In addition, the study draws on extensive discussions with the HESO team and on expert witnesses interviewed by the HESO study including, representatives from the Teacher Education Systems Overhaul Project, the Minister for Capacity Building, a VSO HIV/AIDS expert, three experts from Center for Higher Education Policy Studies in the University of Twente and a representative of the Ethiopian Employers' Federation. It also draws on a meeting with HEI Presidents and from written and oral feedback on the draft report given by 26 (14 from the private sector) representatives of HEIs at that meeting. In addition, it draws on reading by members of the HESO team from over 71 texts.

3. HESO Recommendations

3.1 HESO Recommendations for the Private Sector as a Whole

The HESO team reported that the work of the two new university associations, one for the public universities, the other for the private universities and colleges were of great importance in terms of being pro-active and providing an effective lobby to influence Government policy and regulations for higher education.

In particular, it was recommended that the Association of Private Higher Education Institutions should ask for and be granted regular meetings with the Ministry of Education, as well as offering regular advice to the Government and its agencies such as Ethiopian Higher Education Strategy Institute (EHESI) and the Quality and Relevance Assurance Agency (QRAA): for example establishing quality benchmarks within the private sector and making recommendations to the QRAA.

The Association of Private Higher Education Institutions has an opportunity to bring the private sector together and to develop and share resources and good practice. To this end, the Association could establish a support and information-sharing network for the private sector (this conference may be the start of that), such as disseminating examples of good governance, leadership and management practice and/or developing databases of resources to enable resource sharing and pooling especially for libraries, staff training and exchange. In the long run term, this might also include considering the costs and benefits of sharing the effort in the design and/or selection of an integrated management system. Private HEIs might consider employing a part-time academic secretary for the Association (perhaps a recently retired academic manager) to facilitate and coordinate this work. This would have to be paid for by a system of subscriptions by the members of the Association.

This idea of working together to develop and share information, experience and resources should not just be limited to the private sector. As was highlighted at this conference last year (Patrick 2003), one of the issues for the Association of Private Higher Education Institutions was to address the interaction between the public and private higher education sectors. How do these two sectors currently communicate with each other? Is it planned, effective and regular? If not, how can this communication be facilitated now and in the future? How can the sharing of resources across the two sectors be materialized now and in the future?

The private sector cannot rely on others (for example the MOE or the individual public universities) to implement these strategies. Although QRAA and EHESI may play a role in building bridges between the two sectors, we would suggest that the Association of Private Higher Education Institutions should lead by example and perhaps set-up initiatives that bring the two sectors together to address particular issues or run seminars or workshops (perhaps in conjunction with the association of public universities) around particular themes. These seminars and/or workshops could also include participants from other stakeholders such as employers or Government and/or its agencies.

3.1.1 Ladder of Opportunity for Learners

The private sector may wish to initiate discussions with public universities, the QRAA, the Government and other stakeholders within higher education about the possibility of developing a ladder of opportunity for learners. Such a ladder might incorporate a range of post-Grade 12 sub degree qualifications (advanced certificates after one year full-time equivalent of study and advanced diplomas after two years) and post graduate certificates and diplomas. It is suggested that these could be 'cashed in' towards bachelor or master's degrees (depending upon their level). Such qualifications have been found in other countries to tempt more mature students into study (see, for example, QAA 2004a). They are particularly attractive to part-time students, who may not wish to face perhaps six years of evening study to gain a degree, but who wish to upgrade their qualifications while working. Continuing professional development of this kind can make a real contribution to bridge the skills gap in Ethiopia. Such students could be a new potential sources of recruits for private higher education through their extension and distance learning programs.

The Government is more likely to accept such qualifications if they are part of a credit framework that has been designed in conjunction with the public sector and QRAA, endorsed by QRAA, and backed by EHESI research and policy recommendations. This requires the private sector organizations to band together to form an effective and organized lobby that can work on several fronts at once.

3.1.2 Accreditation of Prior Learning and Mature Students

The private sector is in a particular strong position to initiate and promote alternative models of learning; there are, for example, a range of older people who have left high school without the qualifications to enter HE, but who, through training and experience at work and through further study, now have learning and understanding at least equivalent to a high school leaving grade of 2.0. If there were a developed system for the accreditation of prior experiential and other learning, such potential students might be admitted to private and public HEIs. It is the private sector institutions, smaller and probably more flexible both in terms of curriculum and organization that are better placed to develop these initiatives. Private institutions also cater for substantially larger numbers of local students, many of whom may be unable or unwilling, to move to another part of the country to continue their education even assuming that the public universities could accommodate them.

It is also not uncommon for applicants (in other countries) who have undertaken a range of training and experience that has resulted in relevant learning to be entered into programs of higher

education with advanced standing. That is, the applicant presents a portfolio of evidence (essays, analyses, transcripts of courses attended and so on) that shows that s/he has achieved a level of learning to permit (say) direct entry into the second year of a program. Such systems of advanced standing would also allow someone who had undertaken study in one HEI to transfer into another through their course without loss of time.

A number of other countries have developed such systems and the private sector HEIs could lobby for the introduction of such schemes in Ethiopia. They would need to have the public sector HEIs, QRAA and EHESI supporting them, and so again the need is clear for an effective and organized lobby (see for example QAA 2004b).

3.2 HESO Recommendations for Individual Private HEIs
Strategic planning
The HESO report makes a number of recommendations about strategic planning that applies equally to private and public sector HEIs. It suggests that it is important to evaluate progress achieved in the previous strategic planning period and to learn from such an evaluation. Ethiopian HEIs tend to be reasonably sound in their analyses of their context, frequently undertaking SWOT (strengthens, weaknesses, opportunity and threats) analyses. But often some of the elements of a good strategic planning appear to be absent.

Ethiopian HEIs sometimes set targets but they are often too generalized and list objectives and aspirations rather than the concrete and well timed activities that will lead to specified and measurable outcomes. The HESO report suggests that SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-based) targets are essential in strategic planning. This implies that real priorities are set and that the resources, critical path to completion, monitoring and evaluation systems and timing will all be part of the plan. The Council on Higher Education (2004) points to the centrality of monitoring and evolution in planning and ensuring the implementation of plans and that this should include qualitative as well as quantitative data collection so the social contribution of the HEI can be captured and policy and strategy properly informed.

Good strategic planning includes a process of risk assessment in order to identify action to mitigate those risks. Typical risks for HEIs include risks related to:
- learning and teaching systems to support excellence and the country's need for skilled labor and management;
- researching systems to support excellence and the country's development needs;

- the institution's contribution to and links with other sectors of education, the economy and society;

- ensuring fair access for under-represented groups into higher education;

- areas of strength and diversity;

- management and leadership skills at all levels;

- developing institutional, practice and procedures to support improved human resource, financial and resource management; and

- developing institutional systems and processes for the collection, archiving and analysis of data and other information.

The massification of higher education also applies to the mushrooming of private higher education institutions. The quality of many of these may be good, but there is little check to ensure minimum standards of process and output: accreditation presently focuses almost entirely on inputs. The HESO report suggests that quality and its assessment should be an important focus for the HEI's strategic planning. In another paper presented at this conference we have suggested some reasons that the private higher education sector in particular should be concerned to develop quality systems and influence the quality agenda (Ashcroft and Rayner 2004).

Some of the areas that an HEI may wish to consider within the context of its Strategic Plan are considered below. The HESO team suggests that HEIs should have a plan of action to achieve measurable improvement in each of them.

Principles to guide the organization and operation of HEIs

The HESO report suggests that HEIs should accord to good, modern organizational practice. By so operating, the institution will also develop its own management capacity and provide an example of good practice for the sector as a whole. Below are some of the principles that might guide the institution's organizational operation and structure. These are based on a range of sources, including the Business Excellence Model, the UK Management Charter Initiative (BREFI undated), the Investors in People Standard (Investors in People 2004) and Higher Education Funding Council for England good management practice guidelines (see, for example HEFCE 2000 – others can be found on the Web at www.hefce.ac.uk).

Well functioning organizations have clear line management structures, with line managers generally authorized to make all human resource and budgetary decisions, except those involving on-going expenditure beyond the current year. The line manager is held responsible to senior

managers and the head of the institution would be accountable to the governing body for these decisions. Such an arrangement would protect the institution and prevent unnecessary bureaucracy.

Effective and well managed organizations are characterized by clarity of roles and responsibilities amongst staff. With these provisons not fixed but will be adapted and redefined on an annual basis through a formal appraisal process gained through experience. This enables clarity and task focus, while ensuring that staff can develop their roles and responsibilities as they acquire experience and expertise. It also enables staff development needs to be clearly articulated by managers and members of staff themselves. Such roles and responsibilities can be defined by a system of person specification and job descriptions for each member of the staff.

Effective organizations are characterized by efficiency in the running of all meetings, including and especially the governing body and accessibility of all definitive documents and paperwork. These responsibilities are located with an individual member of the staff (in smaller organizations) or a secretariat (in larger ones). This ensures that there is only one official version of the record of business and that it is properly archived and open to all authorized staff and stakeholders. In modern organizations, such a record is kept on an intrenet (generally with some secure areas accessible only to staff). This system should operate within defined timescales, for instance for distributing agenda and paperwork for meetings and putting documents on the web and updating them.

Communication and Decision Making

The HESO report states that an important leadership priority should be the establishment of appropriate fora for communication with staff and students. As most of the private institutions are substantially smaller organizations than their public counterparts, there should be an area where the private institutions can easily implement good practice to be shared with the public institutions. Such fora may include collective meetings with staff and student bodies, formal representation groups of staff and students that regularly discuss issues with management, line manager meetings with groups of their staff and regular one-to-one meetings between line managers and the staff. The HESO report further discusses the development of a variety of means of communication: such as newsletters, open reports of all meetings must be kept in accessible places and committees and groups.

Formal systems allow staff opinion, ideas and creativity to be expressed. In addition, clear communication channels enable staff at all levels to understand decisions, priorities and plans. In smaller institutions, it is easy to assume that this can happen informally, but there are dangers that some voices may not be heard, it may be unclear where or when decisions are made, matters may be raised but not resolved, and so on. HEIs may find it more effective to have a formal consultative structure, with meetings of the staff scheduled, with an agenda and minutes making it clear which papers were received what matters were noted, what matters were left to be resolved at another meeting, what actions were required by whom and by when and what decisions were recommended to the senior management.

If communication is to be effective, focused and two-way, it is important that decision-making bodies review their operation and consider means of improving their focus on terms of reference and efficiency of operation and reporting.

Effective organizations are characterized by openness and transparency. Such openness implies that potential conflicts of interest are declared at meetings. Papers are open to all staff unless declared confidential and all open documents are stored to make them easily accessible, for instance on an intranet. Such openness also implies that the organization operates in an ethical way and that it has policies to ensure equality of opportunity and the equitable treatment of staff and clients. In the Ethiopian context, the principles of ethical public life adopted by the MOE and other government agencies might be a starting point (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 2001).

There is also a need for the private sector to communicate effectively with the outside community. In another paper presented at this conference the researchers suggest some of the ways in which the Association of Private Higher Education Institutions may be able to promote the private sector through such measures as an annual report or publishing performance indicators (PIs) for the sector (Ashcroft and Rayner 2004).

Human Resource Management

The HESO document has much to say about human resource management, for example, in relation to the appointment of senior staff such as Presidents and Vice-Presidents. One of the jobs of the leaders within the institution, and particularly governing body members, is to determine the tenure and processes and criteria for their appointment. The process is full of risks. These may be reduced if certain steps are taken. The first of these is to develop the vital person's statistics on and to consider carefully which qualifications, experience, skills, qualities and so on are really essential

for these posts and which are desirable. For instance, it is unlikely that a senior manager could perform adequately in the post without considerable prior experience of management, budgets, people, academic programs and quality. So, such experience should be specified as essential. They may not need to be an ICT expert, so it is probably a desirable rather than essential qualifications for the post that they can manipulate spreadsheets and data bases. Governing bodies and others within the private HEI sector may find it useful to consider the features of good managers when designing person specifications.

Good higher education managers will act in educationally and morally defensible ways. This requires some courage. It means that they see tackling poor performance as a moral imperative, since it will affect the lives and opportunities of staff and students. They will seek to establish open and transparent processes and in particular root out corrupt practices and conflicts of interest. They will establish systems that ensure that the weakest members of the academic community are protected and do not suffer unfair treatment: so for instance, they will ensure that systems are in place to ensure that students are not exploited or abused and that their work is fairly assessed. A respect for all members of the academic, administrative and student community is basic to the ethos of higher education and can only be achieved with conscious attention to non-discrimination. In the Ethiopian context, this implies that, in addition to gender, regional affiliation, ethnicity and disability, attention is paid to non-discriminatory policies for students and staff with HIV/AIDS.

Good managers will also pay attention to the goals and purposes of higher education. The government, students and their families, and other stakeholders invest time and money on higher education in order to secure certain societal, economic and social benefits. These require the academic manager to have clear objectives and achieve integration with institution's mission and strategic planning. It requires skill, knowledge and experience for a manager to recognize the key change drivers for the institution and identify external factors such as legal changes and developments in best practice and explore with colleagues their implications for the institution. Such analysis requires the manager to identify what has been done in the past, what has been worked, what not, draw lessons and set clear goals/targets/priorities.

The HESO team suggests that virtually all HEIs, whether public or private, will need to develop better human resource practices to cover all staff. Those processes that need consideration include appraisal, evaluation, job specification, disciplinary procedures, differential rewards, training and employing students to extend the range and opening times of services.

Whatever happens, it is inevitable that Ethiopian HEIs will face an acute shortage of staff, particularly academic staff, within the next couple of years. The expansion in higher education means that there will not be sufficient post graduates emerging from Ethiopia's HEIs to satisfy demand, irrespective of high pay (Saint 2004). This means that HEIs must prepare to meet staff shortages. They should start immediately developing more economical methods of learning and teaching that increase the ratio of student learning to staff effort (i.e. student-centered learning). There are a number of countries that have already tackled this problem and their experience can be drawn on (see for example, Ashcroft and Foreman Peck 1994). HEI leaders will need to understand that such methods require savings to be made elsewhere in order to enable an investment in libraries, pedagogic training and ICT.

The introduction of staff appraisal can be controversial but has been found to be a useful management tool that is recommended in the HESO report. Where the introduction is gradual and developmental, success and staff support are more likely to ensue. This implies that a developmental model of staff appraisal that separates the disciplinary process from appraisal should be adopted.

Among the risks of human resource management is the possibility of professional misconduct or poor performance within the institution. This can be particularly pertinent to private sector institutions which may be more susceptible to accusations of bribery or awarding inappropriately high grades to (fee-paying) students. The performance of an organization can be seriously threatened by the inappropriate performance of individual members of staff. To minimize this, institution should develop disciplinary policies and procedures to enable it to manage unprofessional, marginal or poor performance of staff. It will need to develop a process of identification of poor performance the presentation of evidence of such marginal or poor performance to the staff member the rights of the staff member to representation at each stage in the process the method of assessment and presentation of the staff member with performance targets and timescales for their achievement; rules for subsequent disciplinary action; and the rights of the staff member facing a severe sanction such as dismissal or final written warning to have access to the governing body for the purpose of appeal.

The poor, corrupt or biased performance of management and governing staff can present an even greater threat to an organization's strategic aims and objectives than the poor performance of staff at lower levels. For this reason, in most modern organizations there are mechanisms to protect whistle blowers (except those acting from malice). The institution should develop and adopt a

whistle blowing policy, with clear rules to protect against malicious complaints, but providing a safe and anonymous channel for staff (or students) to make complaints (perhaps to a designated, independent, member of the governing body). Such complaints should be sensitively investigated and recriminations against the complainant be prohibited.

Management and Co-ordination of Staff Development

The management and co-ordination of staff development must be seen as an integral part of the management arrangements of the institution and reflect the principles of best practice. Clarity about the process of staff development should ensure equity and transparency. Resources should follow institutional need. Staff development needs should, where possible, be met from within the internal capability of the institution. Where this is not possible or appropriate the use of external resources may be considered.

As has been noted previously (Wondwossen 2003) staff development for the private sector is a particularly pertinent issue. The Government at present seems reluctant to use public resources to support private sector development and is unwilling to open up its various training initiatives to members of the private sector, although HESO recommends that a quota of places on courses and other training and development opportunities should be allocated to non-public HEIs which have achieved pre-accreditation or accreditation. This allocation could occur through the Association of Private Higher Education Institutions.

The private sector is currently excluded from one of the main training activities being undertaken for teacher-educators, the Higher Diploma Program. It is also unclear how the private sector will link up with the Government's plan for all public HEIs to have their own pedagogic resource centers (PRCs). Many of the individual private HEIs will also be too small to be able to undertake any substantial staff development on their own. It is perhaps more cost-effective and therefore more realistic if the private sector considers sharing its staff development programs, perhaps coordinated through its Association.

Whoever coordinates, this activity should consult widely with representatives from different institutions, faculties, departments, trade unions and staff generally. We have suggested above that a secretariat should be established to contribute to the monitoring, evaluation and validation of activities and report annually on the scope and development of the activities and achievements to the individual HEIs and the Association of Private Higher Education Institutions.

Staff development should promote a learning organization culture and take various forms:

- In-house courses, workshops/on the job training/seminars/distance/open learning arrangements and materials including virtual learning;

- Secondment/study leave/placements;

- Participation in the wider academic and professional community;

- Individual and joint projects, including for example research;

- Study for vocational qualifications/professional qualifications;

- Working party membership/task groups;

- Counselling, coaching or mentoring; and

- External activities/conferences/courses.

Reviewing Systems and Achieving Resource Efficiency

As noted at last year's conference (Samuel 2003), many private HEIs have better developed financial and resource management systems than public HEIs. They are more business-focused: their entire existence depends upon their financial probity and security, so they have made this a priority. Since most, if not all, of their income comes from student fees and they lack access to other support in terms of funding or donation, private higher education institutions are particularly exposed to whims of market forces and fashion, for instance in the students' choice of subject to study. There are therefore opportunities for public higher education institutions to work with, and learn from, the private sector about market-responsiveness.

Where resources are limited, there needs to be a greater sharing of these resources to ensure that they are used to the maximum. This may mean that departments and faculties have to cooperate to ensure that they share the same facility, rather than expecting separate facilities. This may mean that, where opportunities exist, institutions can work with other private institutions or with the local business and public community to share resources. HEIs themselves should be resources for their local communities.

The HESO team notes that the private sector appears to be less wasteful with regard to administrative staffing than the public sector. This is not however to say that efficiencies cannot be achieved. It is suggested that every HEI undertakes an asset audit and analyses the use of each asset to determine whether it might be used more intensively (for instance, by extending opening hours of facilities). The HESO report goes further and suggests that the University associations analyze what economies and efficiencies might be made possible by sharing resources, training or planning across institutions.