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Using the 'Balanced Scorecard' Method to Evaluate and Plan Writing Centre Provision: a Case Study of the Coventry Online Writing Lab (COWL) Project

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Abstract

In the UK higher education context, central services such as writing centres are coming under management scrutiny and writing developers are being asked to demonstrate the impact of their work. This article discusses one way in which writing centres can evaluate their provision for evidence of effectiveness and to gauge their potential for expansion. Taking as a case study the development of the Coventry Online Writing Lab (COWL) at Coventry University, England, the article reports on the use of the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) technique (Kaplan and Norton, 1992) to examine how extending one writing centre's provision through the development of an online component has been considered and justified. The BSC is an evaluation tool that takes into account stakeholders' perspectives, internal institutional processes, finance and budgets, and staff development needs, and sees these as integral and important drivers of an organisation's results (Grayson, 2004: 1). The article discusses the benefits and limitations of such an approach within this case study and its implications for strategic planning for writing centres and other forms of university writing provision.

Introduction

Writing centres have been an important part of higher education in the United States for many years and are growing in numbers in universities worldwide.¹ Many students, academics, and those working in the field of Academic Writing value writing centres for the dedicated, one-to-one and small-group support they provide to students on their writing. However, writing centres regularly come under management scrutiny, and writing centre directors must be prepared to demonstrate the impact of their work and to plan strategically when expanding their centres' provision.

This article discusses one way in which writing centres can assess their provision in order to provide evidence of effectiveness and to gauge potential for expansion. Focusing on the development of the Coventry Online Writing Lab (COWL) as an extension of the Centre for Academic Writing (CAW) at Coventry University, England, the article outlines how one writing centre team made use of the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) technique (Kaplan and Norton 1992) to evaluate and make decisions about adding a new type of student writing provision to their centre. Taking COWL as a case study, the article demonstrates how the BSC method can

¹ The US writing center movement of the 1970s resulted in writing centers being established in a large number of US higher education institutions (Murphy and Law 1995: xi).

help writing centre directors to better predict and weigh up the benefits and shortcomings when considering introducing new forms of writing provision, and how it can provide a way for writing centre directors and programme leaders to continue to evaluate such services on an ongoing basis.

CAW and COWL

CAW was established at Coventry University in 2004. As articulated in the centre's mission statement, CAW seeks to assist students across the University in becoming scholarly readers, writers and thinkers (CAW 2011). To achieve this aim, CAW provides advice to students working on all types of undergraduate and postgraduate writing as well as guidance to staff on teaching writing in the disciplines (WiD). Since its founding, demand for the Centre's provision has grown exponentially, and this has led the CAW team to look for innovative solutions both in terms of the scalability and accessibility of its services. In 2008, CAW secured government funding from the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC)² to carry out a project to research and develop COWL as the online component of CAW's work. The aim was to create an online writing centre (OWL) to provide a facility for online writing tutorials. COWL was seen as important because it would enable access to writing support for the increasing number of students who study remotely.

CAW offers many different forms of writing support to students and academics.³ As with all writing centres, resources need to be managed wisely, and it is imperative to develop provision strategically and to consider the impact of potential new initiatives carefully. Since the COWL Project was a major initiative intended to address a significant gap in provision and because it carried resourcing implications (in terms of staffing, computer hardware, software, publicity, and other materials), the Head of CAW deemed it necessary for the COWL Project team to utilise a formal mechanism to assess proposed developments and to align the project with pedagogical and institutional aims.

The Balanced Scorecard Approach

Many scholars have highlighted the need for writing centres to evaluate their work.⁴ In carrying out evaluations of writing centre provision, scholars often utilise methodologies drawn from social sciences such as Psychology or Education, and some have counselled against using models from the business world. For example, Bell's seminal 'When Hard Questions Are Asked: Evaluating Writing Centers' (2000: 12), guards against 'management-oriented' approaches to writing centre evaluation, in which '[a] manager identifies a decision to be made, an evaluator collects information about the pros and cons of alternatives, and the manager decides what to do'. Bell (2000: 13) warns that this type of evaluation typically serves the priorities of 'senior administration' rather than those of the writing centre, and cautions that it can lead to decisions being made by senior managers who are not well-attuned to writing pedagogies. Instead, Bell (2000: 14) recommends 'objectives-oriented evaluation', which aims to specify objectives and to determine 'the extent to which the objectives have been met'.

In considering the need to develop an online arm of CAW's provision, however, the Head of CAW, who was also the Director of the COWL Project, chose to take a combined

² JISC 'works with colleges and universities in the innovative use of digital technologies across education and research' (JISC 2010a).

³ This writing support includes: writing tutorials and workshops for undergraduates and postgraduates, Academic Writing modules, 'Dissertation Writing Sessions' for third-year undergraduates, 'Active Writing Sessions' for postgraduates, and 'Protected Writing Time', Scholarly Writing Retreats, and Writing in the Disciplines' (WiD) consultations for academics.

⁴ See, for example, McCracken (1979), Lamb (1981), Neulieb (1982), North (1984), Roberts (1988), Hylton (1990), Lerner (1997, 2001, 2003), Leff (1997), and Carino and Enders (2001).

'management-oriented' and 'objectives-oriented' approach that could allow her and the COWL Project team to make decisions in line with both the writing centre's pedagogical objectives and the University's strategic aims. The philosophy behind this decision is that whilst writing centre directors need to work within the confines of business demands such as those dictated by their institutions, they also need to stay true to core writing centre beliefs and practices that enable students to mature as scholarly writers through collaborative discussion with writing tutors (Lunsford, 1991). The BSC method offers the possibility of reconciling this tension that writing centre directors face.

The BSC approach followed by the COWL Project team derives from the field of Business Management. The BSC was developed by Kaplan and Norton (1992) as a strategic management tool, and has been described as an organisational 'dash board': a way of providing a concise summary of the key success factors of an organisation and of encouraging the alignment of an organisation's various business functions (De Geuser, Oyon and De Maeyer, 2006: 17). It is a technique that encourages the connectedness of key organisational elements through the exploration of cause-and-effect relationships. The approach is a useful tool when a team is required to make decisions about a function or evaluate a process or provision. Benefits of the BSC approach are that it serves to evaluate the performance of an organisation systematically and against its own key success factors, and that it can function as both an evaluation and planning tool. In applying the BSC method to COWL, the project team quickly realised the complex nature of the writing centre's position in developing viable services.

The BSC views the vision and mission statement of the organisation as central to its process and it is these that act as critical drivers of performance (Grayson, 2004: 1). The first step of BSC analysis, therefore, is to identify 'the organisation's mission and vision for the future' (Grayson, 2004: 1). Although CAW has its own mission statement focusing on developing a 'whole-university' scholarly writing community (CAW, 2011), this mission sits within the larger Coventry University mission and corporate plan, which are, in turn, driven by government priorities for higher education, research, graduate employment, and economic growth. At the start of the COWL Project in 2008, the University's mission as 'a dynamic, enterprising and creative university committed to providing an excellent education enriched by our focus on Applied Research' was underpinned by core values including: providing 'client-focused' services, 'modern IT', 'diversity, fairness and equality of opportunity', staff development of 'knowledge, skills and capabilities', and 'well-structured academic and pastoral support' (Coventry University, 2008: 2).

Identifying key success factors led the project team to recognise that the mission of the COWL Project was closely aligned with CAW's mission to create an institution-wide community of confident, independent scholarly writers and communicators. The team also confirmed that COWL's aim to 'evaluate the current provision in online writing support at Coventry University and elsewhere and to develop a comprehensive, integrated platform of technologically enhanced writing support mechanisms' (Simkiss, Ganobcsik-Williams and Morris, 2009: 2) was clearly associated with the University's core values.

Another, crucial area for evaluating the success of the COWL Project was how well it would meet the aims of the funding body. By prompting the project team to consider the project's wider effects, the BSC method assisted the project team in clarifying to what extent COWL would help JISC to achieve the aims of its 'Transforming Curriculum Delivery through Technology' programme through which the COWL Project was funded. It also helped the project team to consider COWL's role in engaging with JISC's overall mission to manage 'research and development programmes in the use of ICT in teaching, learning and research to build knowledge; develop services, infrastructure or applications; and provide guidance and leadership' (JISC, 2010b). In using the BSC evaluation tool to analyse the multiple layers of aims, objectives, missions and values surrounding the development of online writing provision, the COWL development team gained insight into the agendas to which CAW's new online provision could seek to contribute and would be held accountable.

The COWL Scorecard

As a method for ensuring that multiple perspectives are taken into consideration, the BSC encourages a balancing of project teams' efforts between:

[. . .] stakeholders' concerns, financial management, internal [institutional] processes, and organisational capacities. The key elements in each of these perspectives are defined and interrelated to show how one affects another. The flow of elements and their interconnection constitute the strategy. (Grayson, 2004: 1)

The BSC has been widely adopted (De Geuser, Oyon and De Maeyer, 2006: 5) and its categories can be altered to fit particular contexts. The COWL development team divided its analysis into four areas: stakeholders, finance and business, internal processes, and staff development.⁵ These headings were mapped onto a table or 'scorecard' in four equal sections and a list of factors was generated under each heading.⁶

Using the BSC to inform the development of COWL as a new type of CAW provision required the project team to identify potential effects of COWL in each of the four BSC areas, and to explore how these effects inter-related with or 'balanced' each other in terms of probable benefits and drawbacks. In this way, the BSC method afforded the team a system for articulating and examining different perspectives on the project and on the interactions between these perspectives, and for assessing the importance of these positions in terms of senior management concerns.

The BSC can be used as an iterative evaluation mechanism, with each new writing centre development project or initiative determining its own cycle of when and how often review is necessary. The COWL Project evaluation team chose to make use of the BSC during the first year of the project and to use it as a review tool throughout the project's lifespan. The project team did this by considering, at project board and steering group meetings held at regular intervals throughout the two-year project, the aspects we had mapped on COWL's scorecard, and by updating and using the information underpinning these categories to make decisions about developing COWL as a new form of provision. To demonstrate how this process worked, the following section outlines the project team's key considerations relating to the category of 'stakeholders', and suggests how findings from this category linked or 'balanced' with those in other categories on the COWL scorecard.⁷

COWL Stakeholder Analysis

The BSC approach encourages a thorough analysis of stakeholders, the individuals and groups having 'a direct, significant and specific stake' as well as those having a secondary or 'indirect interest' in the results of a research or development project or initiative (Gawler, 2005: 1, 3). While there are many tools for conducting stakeholder analysis, the COWL Project team found the BSC approach to be useful in that it urged us to consider the interplay between stakeholders. Following the fundamental step of situating the project within the values and mission of CAW, the University, the funding body, and government priorities for

⁵ The project team focused on 'staff development' as the main area of relevance to COWL of the BSC category 'organisational capacity'.

⁶ See Ganobcsik-Williams (2011:14) for a visual representation of this table as discussed at the final COWL steering group meeting in October 2010.

⁷ The project team gathered information on stakeholders' perspectives in a number of ways, for example, by conducting a survey of Coventry University students, interviews with staff involved in the project, and a feedback survey with students who took part in COWL's online writing tutoring trials. The project team also sought feedback on oral presentations they gave to the funding body and the wider UK higher education community throughout the project. See the *Final Report of the Coventry Online Writing Lab (COWL) Project* (Ganobcsik-Williams, 2011) for details.

higher education, the project team and steering committee⁸ considered who CAW's and COWL's internal and external stakeholders were, what they might think about COWL, what impact they might have on COWL, and what they might want to gain from COWL. The main stakeholders identified were students, writing centre staff, lecturers in the disciplines, the University's other professional support services, the University, the funding body, the UK higher education community, and other writing centres and professionals in the field of Academic Writing.⁹

In terms of primary stakeholders, the project team recognised that students are at the heart of writing centre work, and that they constitute stakeholders as well as the main beneficiaries. Students are entitled to fair access to support services and equality across the student body, and a major challenge for CAW in this respect is that its existing provision is focused on a traditional model of campus-based students while the University has increasing numbers of non-campus based students on distance and blended learning courses, work-based learning programmes, students with childcare and other 'caring' responsibilities, and students with accessibility issues. The University also has franchise partners and a new London campus whose students will need to access CAW's services remotely. In addition, the changing nature of the student body through widening participation and internationalisation means that there is a growing demand on centres providing study skills such as Academic Writing. Increasingly, students also expect more flexible and personalised learning which means they want more say in how, where and when they study.

The project team surmised, therefore, that from a student perspective, online writing tutorials and other forms of online writing support would be useful and welcome. As a way of testing this hypothesis, the 'COWL Student Survey', conducted by the project team between April and July 2009 and to which 141 students responded, demonstrated that a 'market' of Coventry University students who are interested in utilising CAW's services from a distance already exists.¹⁰ Forty-nine percent of respondents (67 students) said they had accessed CAW for help with their Academic Writing. However, 67% (93 students) noted that they typically do coursework and other studying at home as opposed to on-campus, and 16% (22 students) said that needing 'to be physically on campus' is a limitation of CAW's current provision. Students also indicated in significant numbers that they would be interested in email writing tutorials, one-to-one writing tutorials using web-conferencing software, online writing seminars, and online writing support materials (Ganobcsik-Williams, 2011: 28-29). While this provision will be of particular value to non-campus based students, the 'COWL Student Survey' showed that students in general have expressed interest in using online writing development services and resources provided by COWL.

As students comprise the largest stakeholder constituency and are the main group who are likely to benefit from online writing support, the COWL team began the project by concentrating its efforts on examining software and platform choices to enable synchronous and asynchronous online writing tutorials for students. As a result of trialling software and

⁸ The project team and steering group were made up of a number of stakeholders, including staff based in Coventry University's e-Learning Unit (eLU), Centre for the Study of Higher Education (CSHE), Student Services, Languages Centre, Faculty of Engineering and Computing (FEC), and the departments of Paramedics and Economics, Finance and Accounting. External stakeholders serving on the steering group included Brett Lucas of the Higher Education Academy (HEA) English Subject Centre; Dr. Colleen McKenna, expert in Academic Literacies and online learning from the Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching, University College London; and the COWL Project's 'Critical Friend', Professor Peter Hartley, Director of the Centre for Academic Practice at the University of Bradford.

⁹ Employers were also identified as stakeholders because of their need to hire graduates with good writing and communication skills. The COWL Project team accounted for this need in terms of the pedagogies for scaffolding students in writing in academic and professional genres that CAW's writing tutors were already utilising. In hindsight, the project team could have given more thought to graduate employers as key stakeholders.

¹⁰ See the *Final Report of the Coventry Online Writing Lab (COWL) Project* (Ganobcsik-Williams, 2011: 39-44) for the 'COWL Student Survey Questionnaire' in full.

pedagogies for online writing tutoring with students and writing centre staff in Autumn 2009, however, the project team found that an equal—and initially perhaps a greater—degree of attention needed to be given to addressing the concerns, skills, and workplace development needs of the writing centre's employees. Academic Writing Tutors and members of the CAW administrative team are particularly affected by COWL, as tutors will conduct online writing tutorials and administrative staff will support students and tutors in booking and engaging in online tutorials. In thinking about staff development needs as outlined on COWL's scorecard, the project team considered how CAW staff would feel about the introduction of the new provision and what effects it would have on both how they work and on how they relate to students. To inform this discussion, semi-structured interviews with eleven members of staff involved in the COWL Project were conducted (Broughan, 2010).¹¹

The interviews revealed that a major concern for Academic Writing Tutors was that online writing provision would not be able to provide the emotional support students need. Tutors discussed the human aspect of their role when working with students and emphasised that they enjoyed this part of their job. Many predicted that online writing tutoring would not enable them to develop this type of relationship with students, which they believed necessary for building students' levels of confidence in their writing. In the tutors' experience of conducting online tutorials during COWL's research trials: '[Y]ou don't really get that eye contact online, so essentially there is going to be something lost', and '[I]t's faceless. [. . .] you have this draft that comes from nowhere and you send it back into the void' (Broughan, 2010). Overall, tutors felt that the development team's enthusiasm for new technologies had the potential to overshadow pedagogical practices, and expressed the view that writing centre pedagogy should drive COWL developments rather than technology. As a result of the points raised by tutors, the project team made a concerted effort to become more aware of how pedagogies and technologies might be combined in ways that would retain the relational aspect of tutoring in an online environment, and worked toward achieving such provision. The Head of CAW also took a decision to invest in more training sessions than originally planned for tutors to engage in learning about and developing online writing tutoring skills and pedagogies.

Members of CAW's administrative team who were interviewed and those who took part in the project board and steering committee meetings also expressed reservations about COWL. Administrators and receptionists anticipated that the online booking system replacing the centre's paper appointments diary and booking procedures would afford them less control over the scheduling and monitoring of tutoring appointments. Although by the end of the project, some members of the administrative team had fewer reservations about the booking system and some were looking forward to starting online booking for all CAW tutorials, others continued to be concerned about the introduction of this new technology. Their concerns caused the project team to think in depth about the implementation of the new online processes and to be more sensitive to change management processes.

Other student support services at the University such as the Library, Dyslexia Support Unit, and Student Services also had a stake in the potential work of COWL. Their stakeholder demands were based around the need to have a specialised, professional and accessible online service to which they could refer students. While the COWL development team initially included members of the University's e-Learning Unit (eLU) to help to identify, customise, and trial online writing conferencing technologies and Moodle as a platform for online tutoring, as the project progressed, substantial technical support for the tutoring was provided by members of the eLU and the University's IT Services, and it became clear that these stakeholders would need to take a formal, ongoing role in identifying, supporting, and evaluating technologies used for COWL.

These stakeholders, as well as the other stakeholder groups identified at the beginning of this section, are listed in the first column of Table 1, 'COWL Stakeholder Analysis', which appears

¹¹ The interview questions and 'Participant Information Sheet' are available from the COWL Project website (<http://cuba.coventry.ac.uk/cowl>) and the *Final Report of the Coventry Online Writing Lab (COWL) Project* (Ganobcsik-Williams, 2011: 50-52).

in the Appendix to this article. Column two of the table gives a sense of stakeholders' own voicing of their perspectives, and column three indicates how CAW and/or COWL will address these perspectives. Column four suggests how stakeholders' concerns link with other areas of the COWL scorecard. It also shows how a multi-faceted awareness of stakeholder concerns has enabled the project team to clarify responses to senior management in terms of COWL's potential effects on student retention and completion, staff development, scalability of writing support, and future project funding and impact.

Prioritising Stakeholder Perspectives and Balancing COWL's Scorecard

Identifying COWL stakeholders' needs and attitudes enabled the project team to weigh up and prioritise them. While the team initially placed emphasis on the needs of students and on the array of technology choices, as the project's research and development work progressed the importance of the views of writing tutors and administrative staff as primary stakeholders became clear. Referring to the stakeholders listed on COWL's scorecard helped the project team to compare the demands of stakeholder groups; for instance, to consider what students might want (e.g. available online writing support) against what writing tutors are currently employed to provide (writing tutorials during daytime and evening hours on weekdays and on Saturday mornings). As data pertaining to COWL was collected, the project team was able to return to the stakeholder list with updated information for comparison. For example, the team realised that while the 'COWL Student Survey' revealed that there is a sizable number of students who will be interested in online writing support, there are also large numbers of students who will prefer face-to-face writing tutorials on campus at CAW, as evidenced by the present high demand for on-campus tutorials and by the 42% of students who participated in the project's trials of online writing tutorials who said they would still prefer a face-to-face tutorial (Ganobcsik-Williams, 2011: 25).

While prioritising stakeholders' needs is crucial for the success of a project or initiative, 'stakeholders' is just one of the four areas mapped on COWL's scorecard. Therefore, in order to achieve balanced decision-making, the COWL development team also regularly assessed the ways in which priorities in the four areas did or did not align with each other, and sought to examine and reconcile mis-alignments. To align 'staff development' and 'stakeholders', for example, the project team decided to make the online tutoring service effective by ensuring that a programme of staff development in online writing pedagogies would be put in place for writing tutors. This 'balanced' decision also linked with the University's 'internal process' of requiring continuous professional development for all staff and with 'finance and business' in terms of the writing centre's staff development budget. The project team found that by focusing on the interaction of factors in these ways, the COWL scorecard could be brought into balance.

Conclusion

This article has sought to provide a snapshot of a writing centre team's use of the BSC technique to inform the decision-making process underpinning the development of an additional form of writing provision. Benefits of this approach include the use of the BSC to assess whether a component of a project will make a relatively important or relatively unimportant contribution to a project's aims. In terms of COWL, the BSC also encouraged, and sometimes forced, the project team to critique possible tools and delivery methods from various perspectives. In giving the team the ability to defend their decisions by providing a way of showing how decisions were reached, the BSC enabled the project team to develop greater transparency between the various contributions of each area articulated on COWL's scorecard and their links to the overall goals for developing COWL. The BSC also helped the project team to formulate a balanced view of the critical drivers of performance for CAW and COWL, and to examine whether improvement in one area may have been accomplished at the expense of another, as well as where synergies between areas might be achieved. Finally, the BSC approach presented the team with a framework by which to evaluate COWL

as a project and by which to demonstrate how both the project and COWL services would contribute to the overarching mission and vision of the University.

While the BSC technique can be employed effectively as a way to evaluate and plan writing centre provision, its use may be less well-suited to other types of evaluation in writing centres, for instance, to collecting data on students' progress as writers. The BSC could be utilised, however, as a framework for mapping such data collection as one of a number of factors that needs to be considered as part of a larger project or decision-making process.

It is important to be aware that no one evaluation or planning tool will ensure the success of the mission of a writing centre or other form of university writing provision. Strategy needs to be derived from the key elements required so that specific approaches can be formulated that will make sure all areas are aligned and lead towards desired outcomes. The BSC provides one system for making decisions aimed at advancing the goals of a writing centre or other organisation. Once the decision-making process regarding the development of writing provision is completed, the BSC tool can also be used to prompt ongoing evaluation. Development teams or writing centre directors can establish measures and targets for each of the principal areas on their scorecards, and propose key actions for each that are aligned with elements of their overall strategy and with the outcomes that are to be achieved. Performance against each measure can then be assessed to gauge if progress is being made. It is measurements such as these, alongside the scorecard, that can provide a basis for strategic planning and effective management of writing provision.

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Appendix

Table 1. COWL Stakeholder Analysis

Stakeholder	What are COWL's stakeholders saying?	How will CAW/COWL address these perspectives?	How do stakeholders' perspectives balance with other areas of COWL's scorecard, and how do they address senior managers' concerns?
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want a more personalised approach to learning • We want more flexibility • We want to be able to access writing support off-campus • We want help when we need it • We want to be able to fit our studies around work and family commitments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COWL will offer students the opportunity to access writing tutorials without having to be on campus • COWL will offer both synchronous and asynchronous appointments • COWL's online booking system will make it easy and fair for students to seek advice and support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Processes– COWL may impact student retention and completion • Finance and Business– limited budget even if students want more writing tutorials
Writing Centre Staff Writing Tutors Administrative Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want to offer a quality service to students • We want to help students develop their own writing identity • We want to feel valued by students • We want to work with students and their writing by developing a relationship of trust and support • We want to be driven by pedagogy and not technology • We want students to have fair access to our services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COWL Project team has listened to the concerns and ideas of Academic Writing Tutors and Administrative staff and is addressing these in developing COWL • COWL Project team is mindful of how pedagogies and technologies might retain the relational aspect of tutoring in an online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff development– learning new transferable skills and engaging in ongoing professional development • Finance and Business & Internal Processes – University must recognise that CAW staff time spent on online writing tutorials is equivalent to time spent on face-to-face delivery

		<p>environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAW is investing in a learning and development programme for CAW staff 	
<p>Professional Support Services (e.g. Library, Dyslexia Support Unit, e-Learning Unit, IT Services, Student Services)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want to be able to cross-refer students • We may or may not agree to provide dedicated technology support and development for COWL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COWL will offer fair and co-ordinated provision of online writing support opportunities to students • CAW will agree to Service-Level Agreements for technology support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Processes—CAW will work with other services • Finance and Business—limited budget even if technology support for COWL must be financed
<p>Lecturers in the Disciplines</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We need to feel empowered to offer writing support • We don't have time to develop good quality academic writing learning materials that we can use with our students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COWL will offer lecturers online consultancy on teaching Writing in the Disciplines (WiD) • COWL will offer good quality academic writing learning materials in electronic form which can be contextualised and that are available to all teaching staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance and Business—addresses issues of scalability in that more students can be reached • Finance and Business—addresses efficiencies in that centrally developed high quality resources can be shared and contextualised • Staff Development—COWL materials will scaffold lecturers in teaching writing and provide continuing professional development
<p>The University</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want to improve student satisfaction and success • We want to harness the possibilities offered by learning technologies • We want to improve staff satisfaction rates to 85% • We need to have efficient, effective services to help as many students as possible with limited resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COWL will offer personalised, flexible support for student learning • COWL could offer a more flexible working pattern for staff and possibly 'location independent working' for writing tutors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance and Business—offers a leaner service and evens out the provision (tutors can provide asynchronous tutorials during non-peak periods)

<p>The Higher Education Community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want students to develop graduate-level writing, argumentation, and communication skills • We want effective and value-for-money writing development provision for students, including distance-learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COWL can serve as a model for providing writing development for students including distance-learners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Development– COWL materials and <i>COWL Good Practice Guide for Online Writing Tutoring</i> can scaffold colleagues at other universities in setting up student writing support
<p>The Funding Body: JISC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want to share good practice across the higher education community • We want to encourage the sector to use new technologies innovatively and creatively so staff utilise e-learning and students' learning experiences are flexible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COWL will inform writing pedagogy scholarship • COWL will use technologies innovatively and creatively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Development– COWL model and <i>COWL Good Practice Guide for Online Writing Tutoring</i> can provide scaffolding and inform scholarly debate
<p>Other Writing Centres/Professionals in the Field of Academic Writing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We want to benefit from COWL research • We want to collaborate on further research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAW staff and project colleagues will disseminate COWL research and data via publications, conference presentations, and events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance and Business– Inter-institutional and international research collaborations may generate project funding and impact