Development of a Strategy for Higher Education into the 1990s

DISCUSSION PAPER

INTRODUCTION

1. The University Grants Committee has opened a national debate on the future of higher education, by inviting answers to 26 questions. Its letter of 1st November 1983 containing the questions was reprinted in a Bulletin Extra dated 15th November.

2. The Senate and the Council agreed at their December meetings that the University, as a corporate body, should reply to the two questions, numbers 1 and 2, to which the UGC asks for an institutional response. But they encouraged committees, units, groups and individuals within the University to consider, and, as they saw fit, to make submissions to the UGC, on the remaining 26 questions. Such submissions will stand in the name of the originating body, and no attempt will be made to co-ordinate them across the University nor to pass them through the committee system. They should be addressed to the UGC, but their authors are asked to pass them to the Vice-Chancellor's Office for despatch, or to inform the Office of their despatch, so that the University can know their number and timing. They may be made up to the end of March, but the UGC has asked for them as soon as possible. Requests for further information should be addressed to the Registrar and Secretary or to Mr. J.H. Farrant, Senior Assistant Secretary.

3. This paper has been prepared as a discussion document on questions 1 and 2, in accordance with the procedure approved by Senate and Council. Units and Committees in the University are invited to consider this paper during the Spring Term 1984 committee cycle, before arrangements for the University's reply are finalised by the Planning Committee, the Senate and the Council on 29th February, 14th and 16th March. Main spending units should send any comments to the Registrar & Secretary, by 19th February, except Arts & Social Studies, Science and Community Services whose committees meet on 22nd February.

4. The two questions are:

Q.1 On the assumption of (a) constant numbers of home and EC students and (b) constant resources per student in real terms from 1983/84 to 1989/90 inclusive, what changes will your institution want to make and how do you plan to achieve them?

Q.2 How would the answer to the previous question be affected if student numbers in this period were to remain constant but the resource per student in real terms were to drop at a steady rate of:
   (a) 12% per annum?
   (b) 22% per annum?

5. The structure of this discussion paper is as follows:

(1) Context: points arising from the national and local context which need to be considered before the questions are addressed directly.

(2) Sussex Student Numbers at Sussex: the distribution of students between Arts-based and Science-based at Sussex.

(3) Issues Raised by a Reduced Unit of Resources, namely the spread of the curriculum and of discipline; selectivity in research; the deployment of academic staff time; and local collaboration.

(4) Indications towards a Response.

CONTEXT

6. What happens after 1989/90. First, the two questions refer to the years until 1989/90, but are firmly set in the context of what the UGC expects to happen to student numbers from 1990/91 (UGC letter paras.9 and 10, and Annex C). We are asked to answer these questions in respect of our own University, and that means attempting to do so on the stated assumptions which are actually or effectively part of the questions. It is unlikely to be to the University's benefit to refuse to reply or to base a reply on the assertion that the assumptions should not apply to Sussex. We should answer the questions within the assumptions set, in a way calculated to maximise Sussex's share of resources, advancing arguments which may assist the UGC in reducing the likelihood of the assumptions about the years up to 1989/90 being realised, and call in question assumptions about student numbers from 1990/91. Furthermore, inviting the University to consider its academic and resource patterns for 1989/90 in the given context of the 1990s, the UGC is not asking the University simply to say how it will 'cope' with minor adjustments to the existing size and shape. It is inviting the University to think about its future for 15 years ahead and then apply that thinking to practical problems for five years ahead. The UGC cannot expect the University to complete that exercise and produce, within five months from issuing its questions to the closing date for replies, a statement of what the University wants to be doing in 1989/90, and by what means it intends to get there. We should seek to identify some 'strategic aims', as to both ends and means.
7. Level of resources. Secondly, the questions offer three different assumptions about the level of resources (from fees and recurrent grant) for each Home and European Community (HEC) student. Which, for the universities as a whole and on the basis of available information, is the most realistic assumption? The previous chairman of the UGC, in a retirement speech in late September, said "it would prudent to assume a diminution of the unit of resource of about one and a half per cent per annum. This figure corresponds exactly with the UGC's most recent calculations on the actual wastage rate of academic staff, although this rises to 2% in the early 1990s". The present Chairman, at the Visitations to Sussex, suggested a gentle decline, but did not quantify it. The UGC's assessment of the final allocation to the UGC for 1984/85 is that, with provision for pay awards of 3% and non-pay inflation of 5%, it is 0.4% below the provisional grant, which was meant to represent level funding. The Government has announced the block grants for the universities which it has in mind for the public expenditure plans for 1985/86 and 1986/87 (fiscal years); but the inflation assumptions are not stated. The UGC estimates that, on an academic year basis, the figures imply 2.2% more cash for 1985/86 than for 1984/85. Inflation is unlikely to be that low, while the working assumption is constant home students plus the extra admissions, (the latter alone would reduce the unit of resource by about 1.25% in 1984/85 and 2.5% in 1985/86). Hence the prospect of level funding is receding.

8. The University Plan. Thirdly, what will be the status of a revised University Plan when agreed at the end of the Spring Term, relative to the University's response on the UGC's questions? The discussion paper on the Revised Plan, R/191/2 (rev.), assumes that, on the basis of the provisional grant, Sussex in 1984/85 would have all but £170,000 beyond the budgeted expenditure in the original Plan after some technical adjustments (though commitments are expected to be greater than that budgeted expenditure because of staff in post exceeding the manpower budgets). The paper contains a proposed allocation of all that extra money, by way of additions to spending units' budgets in the Plan, without suggesting priorities amongst those additions. It acknowledges that the opening assumption may be too optimistic and that the proposed allocation would be approached with caution. But if the prospect is (in particular) a much smaller number of new academic posts spread over several years, followed by reductions, a significantly different distribution between subjects may be called for. Furthermore, the discussion paper accepts that the University is aiming to meet the UGC's indicated targets for home and EC students in Arts and in Science subjects in 1984/85, and implicitly assumes that those targets will apply to later years. The UGC asks us to assume only a constant total, not a constant division between Arts and Science. It is suggested that the discussion on a revised Plan should not be a constraint on the discussion of the UGC's questions, as the answers to them are on different assumptions from those suggested for revisions to the University Plan.

9. Range of courses. Fourthly, we have had advanced warning of an issue which the UGC regards as of great significance for Sussex. At the Visitations in November, the Chairman questioned the University's decision to preserve the range and coverage of its courses. He suggested that these seemed more appropriate to the early 1970s expectation of 8,000 students and 900 to 1,000 academic staff. As the undergraduate numbers were unlikely to exceed 4,000 by the end of the century with a staff of about 400, was it realistic to retain the present coverage? Over the remission decade of the 1980s, the University should consider what range of subjects was realistic. The UGC will undoubtedly be looking for signs in our reply to questions 1 and 2, that we are taking this question seriously.

10. Demand for Higher Education From Home Students. Fifthly, it is clear that a significant part of the national debate will concentrate upon the projections of the demand for higher education from HEC students. A commentary on the projections is available on request from J.H. Farrant. The question for Sussex is how far should our response challenge those projections. Bearing in mind that it is an institutional response, should we concentrate upon those areas of demand which appear to be neglected in the projections but in which Sussex has existing or realisable strength? In particular:

11. The UGC invites us to assume constant numbers of home and EC students from 1983/84 to 1989/90. Relevant figures, on UGC definitions, are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Full-time</th>
<th>Part-time</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Arts-based</td>
<td>Science-based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983/84, indicated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by UGC, including</td>
<td>2340</td>
<td>1400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>agreed switch of 100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>from Arts, and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 added for IT</td>
<td>120</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.10.83, actual</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2473</td>
<td>1454</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.12.84, planned (plus additional UGCs to be admitted in 1984 and 1985 only)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2360</td>
<td>1403</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.12.85, projected</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2346</td>
<td>1395</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>107</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The UGC intends the extra undergraduates to be admitted in 1984 and 1985 (who will nearly all have left by 1988/89) to be ignored for the purpose of this exercise. Sussex could argue, withstanding the assumption, that it should have a larger share of the national total of places. Such an argument would be persuasive either if that enabled the University to meet some pressing national need or if our unit costs were low. Neither argument seems to apply, except in relation to part-time FTE's on the grounds of regional need.

12. An important point on which the University should express a view to the UGC is whether Sussex wants to see a shift in the balance between Arts and Science within a constant total. The best time to adjust the balance is when the total is growing; but doing it within a constant total may be less painful than when the total is shrinking. The proposition which is put forward for discussion is that the University should seek to move as far as practicable by 1990 to an equal balance of Arts-based and Science-based students. The arguments in favour are that this is already, in general terms, declared University policy which no more than reiterates the intentions of the founding
fathers and the plans put to the UGC prior to the loss of the quinquennial system; that a community numerically balanced in this respect may benefit our students' general education; and that it is consistent with the Government's wishes.

13. It gives rise to several questions. First, should the equality apply to the home student body or the total? This point may be of little significance because the preponderance of scientists among overseas students is a thing of the past. The ratio of overseas students, Arts:Science, in 1979/80, of 39:61, has swung to a projection of 53:47 for 1984/85. It is probably best to work in terms of home students while maintaining the expectation that overseas numbers will be in balance also. A shift of 470 FT home places from Arts-based to Science-based would be called for. That does not necessarily mean 470 places being moved from the Arts and Education Areas to the Science Area, as we can anticipate more places in the Arts Area being Science-based — say 70. Allowing for that, for overseas and part-time students at 1984/85 levels (W/191/6, page 8), and for year-abroad students, we can assume 2170 FTP in the Arts and Education Areas, and 2000 in the Science Area. These figures compare with 2626 and 1722 as at 31.10.83, and would entail, say, reducing Arts and Education numbers by 90 a year for five years and increasing Science by 55 a year.

14. Secondly, is there physical capacity without major alterations? The capacity of the Science Schools has been assessed at about 2000 for previous UGC planning exercises, even after excluding very much more space for research than the UGC's rules allow. But the distribution of specialist facilities among the Schools may be at variance with the possible distribution of students. Hence capital funds may be needed for re-distributing space amongst uses rather than for additions to the stock of space.

15. Thirdly, can the extra (home) students be recruited in Science? The UGC has given us positive encouragement to increase the number of research students, as the desirable complement to our high level of research grants. But, our base of SERC studentships having been depleted when the national total has halving or constant, our chances of getting more when the national total is falling are remote. If graduate numbers were held constant, the home undergraduate intake would need to be about 530, compared with an actual of 420 in 1983 and the peak of 640 in 1981. The national pool of applicants may remain fairly constant in size, and Sussex has increased its applicants by 20% this year, but in roughly half the Science subjects, the threshold 'A' level scores are around only 6 or 7. On the other hand, average 'A' level grades have risen in the last few years and presumably the thresholds as well, and Schools successfully taught their intakes of earlier years. A differential between entry grades to most Arts subjects and to most Science subjects would be of novelty (in 1975, the average scores were 10.1 and 7.9, in 1983 10.15 and 10.0). Similarly there are entry grade differences amongst Arts subjects and amongst Science subjects, but there is no more justification for allowing entry grades to dictate the Arts/Science balance than for using them to plan the subject distributions within Arts and Science.

16. Fourthly, what are the resource implications? The UGC expresses the hope that it would secure funds from Government for a shift from Arts to Science (its role of thumb being that a Science place costs twice as much as an Arts place). The University will want to press for such extra funds. The UGC, however, would probably consider the only extra costs to be for support staff and consumables (c.£1500 per student in laboratory subjects), the premises already standing and being serviced and other resources (academic staff, library, etc.) being found by redeployment.

17. What, then, are the implications for academic staffing? Taking the 1983/84 planned staff numbers (including SPRU with Science as the latter gets most of SPRU's teaching):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students (para.13)</th>
<th>Staff Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arts, Education and Language Centre</td>
<td>2170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science &amp; SPRU</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>4170</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An equal staff/student ratio for Arts and Science would require 20 more staff to be transferred from Arts to Science. Natural wastage is likely to be very low as only three Arts staff remain who will reach normal retirement before 1990. Only two or three places have fallen vacant annually in Arts for other reasons in recent years, and the Area already has more staff in post than the Plan's target. Therefore a redistribution of staffs on this scale would only be possible with voluntary or compulsory severance, and with substantial redeployment of staff in post (e.g. English to Physics) may be limited, but shunting teaching may be possible if there is wider acceptance that staff can and should teach outside the field of their research specialisation. Although the movement of teaching inputs might seem large we should be careful before holding a 5% shift of such inputs across the Arts/Science divide as unattainable over a five year period.

18. Such a shift in student numbers can therefore only be achieved if significant problems in admissions and staffing can be overcome, and the UGC's questions in effect ask us to state how we would overcome them. Other permutations of student and staff numbers can and should be considered. By way of illustration, the following table repeats the figuring in para. 17 as (A), in (B) postulates halving the gap in the Science students between (A) and (A), and in (C) postulates that the staff/student ratio would be equalised on the Plan's staffing targets.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actual student load,</th>
<th>Arts</th>
<th>Science</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31.12.83</td>
<td>2626</td>
<td>1722</td>
<td>4348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83/84 Plan staffing</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(A) Equal load in 89/90</td>
<td>2170</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>4170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSR on Plan staffing</td>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(B) Move halfway to (A)</td>
<td>2320</td>
<td>1850</td>
<td>4170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staffing on equal SSR</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>397</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(C) Equal SSR on Plan</td>
<td>2384</td>
<td>1786</td>
<td>4170</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19. Not only are many permutations possible, but many other criteria may be involved by which to judge whether a shift in balance is desirable and practicable. Nevertheless, Schools and Areas are invited to address the following questions:

1. Should redressing the balance between 'Arts' and 'Science' in numbers of students be confirmed as a 'strategic aim' of the University? If so, in pursuit of that aim:
2. Can the Science Area achieve an undergraduate intake of 530 by 1989?
3. Are Schools and subjects willing to change curricula and teaching methods (even with diminished resources) to cater for a wider range of ability, particularly at the lower end?
4. Should the strategic aim of the University be to achieve a 'balance' across its main groupings of subjects or should it be for the SSR in each of the main groupings of subjects to be as close as possible to the national average for that grouping?
5. What extent of disparity between the SSRs for main groupings is tolerable in the short-term? 20% (e.g. (9.5:11.5:1) or 25% (e.g. 9.2:11.8:1))
The original expectation for Sussex, in 1959, was 1,600 students in the Arts and Sciences. Lord Fulton, our first Vice-Chancellor, deployed similar arguments to the UGC, in favour of 3,000 students and 300 staff. To quote from his speech to the Home Universities Conference in 1960: "I doubt whether a community of scholars of less than 300 or so (and that is assuming a quite limited number of faculties) is a satisfactory or even adequate basis for discharging the University's duties of promoting scholarship and teaching the young... I do not believe that the upward pressure (from the rapid growth of knowledge) will stop when this figure has been reached and, as things are, it looks like continuing to drive numbers up. But in my judgement, a university which has 3,000 students is not over-large (provided that appropriate measures are taken to break it up) for the student to find his bearings... A figure of about 3,000 is the point at which there is a not unsatisfactory equilibrium between the forces I have referred to - one pushing upwards and the other downwards." We have remained conscious of the need to try and maintain that equilibrium. Expansion beyond 3,000 students had been at the instigation of the UGC and each quinquennium's growth was not predicated upon substantial growth in the following. The plan for the 1972-77 quinquennium would have taken us from 3,800 to 5,350 students, but with few additions to the range of disciplines; and many of the new curricula planned were not introduced because the resources were not forthcoming. The figure of 8,000 students was one of site capacity calculated at the UGC's behest and explored without commitment by the University. Indeed the UGC in early 1973 suggested a target of 7,000-7,500 for 1981/82, the University's response was unenthusiastic. Some disciplines were inculcated in 1973/74 at a size which we regard as less than optimal. But we have surely already demonstrated to the UGC, in the case of Russian, for example, that our curricular structure and academic organisation particularly, in the humanities and social studies, enabled us to sustain a discipline credibly with smaller staff numbers than would customarily be expected.
through lack of infusion of new ideas generated by research. (3) The Mathematical Sciences Sub-Committee (May 1982) felt that the University was not coming to grips with the consequences of staff reductions: tutorial provision was generous particularly for services courses and too much time was spent on the teaching of computing skills; greater use could be made of graduate students and of self-instruction tapes. Students majoring in Mathematics felt isolated was taken by only a few others. The research base was being impaired and the University should seek to preserve and protect it. (4) The Biological Sciences Sub-Committee (December 1979) expressed concern about small majors.

25. The main thrust of these earlier remarks has thus been the spread of the curriculum, the ways in which (perhaps necessarily) it is taught, and the consequent threat to research — which, as is known from general statements, the UGC is concerned to protect. The extension of the UGC's concern at the Visitation to the spread of disciplines may be a reflection of the main committee's responsibility for all subjects and of the approach of the 1990s.

26. If it is accepted that with fewer resources and constant (and then declining) student numbers there must be selectivity among existing academic activities (both that those remaining are of good quality, and to create space for new activities), then selectivity can operate at several levels, e.g.: (1) reducing the range of options offered within a course in the syllabus for a degree, so that the average number of students per option rises; and setting quotas so that teaching groups below the optimal size are avoided; (2) reducing the number of syllabuses leading to a degree, e.g. fewer Schools offer a given major, and fewer major/minor combinations, allowing courses to be dropped; (3) deleting a major subject without intending to eliminate the teaching of the discipline; (4) concentrating in fewer areas of a discipline, possibly associated with merging subject groups which sub-divide a discipline or are in cognate fields; (5) ceasing to teach and to research in a discipline.

27. If we wish to defend small staff complements in (potentially) a growing number of subjects, we must demonstrate that, even with small numbers, our organisation and teaching patterns enable the minimum competence in a discipline to be maintained and the staff to be effectively deployed (e.g., even if the students majoring are very few), and require the wide range of disciplines to be sustained. The question whether staff should teach outside the areas of their research interests is again raised.

28. The UGC cannot expect the University, at a few months' notice, to present a plan of what would be its staffing distribution and its course offerings, at hypothetical levels of resources six years ahead. Rather, we should aim to state plausible criteria whereby we could judge which activities were viable, and to demonstrate the willingness and capacity to apply those criteria.

29. Selectivity in Research

The University must decide, necessarily in general terms, whether the relative proportions of staff time (and other resources) devoted to teaching and to research should remain constant or whether research should be reduced in order to maintain the quality and/or spread of teaching. Even in the former case, the University must either defend not being selective in the allocation of resources (including staff time) for research, or show it has (or can introduce) appropriate mechanisms. The UGC at the Visitation has been told that the majority of opinion at Sussex is against a Research Committee, which, if it feared, could lead to decisions by people without the requisite knowledge on individual subjects and which, as funds available diminish, could be divisive. However, this opposition is in large measure based on satisfaction with the arrangements for resource allocation already established at Sussex which are significantly different from those typically found in British universities. Different categories of resource are not each separately allocated by central committees to each subject: rather, our practice for 15 years has been to make 'block grants' to main spending units which have a wide discretion to spend them. In the last two years it has been necessary to restrict that discretion so as to effect an orderly reduction in staffing levels, but that should be only a temporary departure. This practice means that the Arts & Social Studies, Education and Science Committees have the competence to act as Research Committees within their respective spheres which are arguably more manageable than the whole institution, and they have moved over the years to building up some areas of research selectivity. An apparent unwillingness otherwise to exercise discrimination between subjects stems from an awareness that UGC funds are extremely well used throughout the experimental subjects because our proportion of academic departmental expenditure met from research grants and contracts is so high.

30. Deployment of Academic Staff Time

The previous paragraph raised the question of the allocation of staff time to teaching and to research. The time of academic staff is the University's prime resource in terms of both economics and objectives. There are two separate broad questions. First, can a higher proportion of that time be concentrated upon the primary purposes of the institution, teaching and research? Should we accept governance and administrative structures and procedures which would reduce the expenditure of academic staff time in those areas; for example, fewer and smaller committee meetings, more individual managerial responsibility, concentration of academic staff time on academic administrative matters?

31. Secondly, should the balance of the usage of that time (amongst teaching, scholarship, research and 'administrative' duties) be planned more carefully, bearing in mind the experience and interests of individuals (e.g., higher teaching loads for members who are not highly productive at the forefront of research, the concentration of 'administrative' duties on those members possessing the necessary skills and interests in that direction), and the research (as opposed to scholarly) standing or needs of their subject? Whatever the answers to these specific questions, the University, in its response, should demonstrate that it is making full use of each individual member of the academic staff.

32. Local Collaboration

Collaboration with Brighton Polytechnic, and possibly with institutions in other parts of Sussex and even in central London, may be a way in which subject coverage can be maintained. Is there genuine willingness to explore the possibilities? What, in concrete terms, are likely to be the possibilities? The underlying
theme of many of the UGC's other questions indicate a
 growing pressure for inter-institutional collaboration
 and rationalisation. In response to Question 1 and 2 we
 can either ignore that pressure or indicate a
 willingness to consider such collaboration within our
 region.

 INDICATIONS TOWARDS A RESPONSE

 3). The broad basis of the response could be founded on
 three statements:-

 (1) The University has produced a Plan which
 approximates to the assumptions on resources in
 Question 2(a). It produced that Plan on the basis
 of 'academic shape', not expediency and after
 considerable assessment and discussion (i.e. the
 existing University Plan).

 (2) The University is in the process of adjusting that
 Plan towards the assumptions contained in Question
 1 (i.e. the proposed revisions to the University
 Plan).

 (3) The assumptions contained in Question 2(b) are of
 a different order and would require the
 institution to go through a further planning
 process similar in timescale to that which
 produced the Plan referred to in (1).

 (4) The University fully recognises that the 1990's,
 whether on its own or the UGC's assumptions, will
 require it to adjust its aims and expectations to
 the economic, social and political realities of
 that decade, but:-

 (a) those realities cannot be predicted
 accurately now, and planning can no longer be
 tied to the extrapolation of current trends;

 (b) the essence of the University's planning
 must, therefore, be the laying down of
 certain strategic aims, a guiding framework
 of institutional philosophy, and ensuring
 internal flexibility in the adjustment of the
 movement towards those aims in the light of
 the realities referred to above.

 (5) In terms of those strategic aims the main ones are
 little changed from those set out in the early
 years of the University, e.g.:

 (a) a balance between the human scale of the
 institution and requirements of the
 developments in knowledge and its
 transmission, e.g. a University of 3000-5000
 students or 350-400 academic faculty,
 omitting certain large areas (e.g., Medicine,
 Dentistry, Agriculture).

 (b) a standard of excellence in teaching and
 research in the subject areas within the
 University which implies the maintenance of
 small group teaching, a higher than national
 proportion of postgraduate students, a
 rigorous approach to research needs and
 assessment (including considerable attention
 to 'problem-oriented' research in
 inter-disciplinary centres), etc.

 (c) an approximately 50:50 balance between 'Arts'
 and 'Science' within the inter-disciplinary
 context of the founding concepts.

 (d) servicing the region which called it into
 being and for which it remains the only
 University institution.

 (e) a major international role; in teaching,
 research and public service, Sussex is in the
 small 'first division' of British
 universities in terms of international
 perceptions and recognition.