

## **JOS Scenario Planning Project - Final Report**

### ***Executive Summary***

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This project has demonstrated that Scenario Planning is a valuable tool for strategic planning and has developed knowledge, facilitation skills and workshop structures for practical application of the Scenario Planning process, either in its entirety or component parts. Scenario Planning is a creative process that encourages imaginative and innovative thinking.

Four new scenarios were created for future Higher Education institutions, based of current day trends regarding changing roles, responsibilities and working practices. Named Boutique University, My-U, Mega-U and Scholarly Towers, introductory narrative was created and these new scenarios were tested and interrogated during by participants on three workshops.

The project concluded that Scenario Planning is a methodology worthy of continued attention within the education sector and has outlined a number of recommendations for future work, including the refinement of the developed scenarios and regarding further focussed application of the full Scenario Planning process.

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## Background

This report provides an overview of the JOS Scenario Planning project and continues recent work by JISC about this method of strategic planning/thinking.

In 2007, the JISC Users and Innovation programme contracted CiBIT to develop a Scenario Planning toolkit set of Scenarios based on their existing (2004) work across European business. Their brief was to add a Higher Education and IT perspective to their generic scenarios by running a series of pilot workshops. Also in 2007, JISC infoNet held an event<sup>1</sup> to add further narrative to these generic scenarios, encompassing the wider role of learning providers and the nature of lifelong learning.

In 2007/08 JISC Netskills and JISC infoNet collaborated to deliver a short Scenario Planning project for the JISC Users and Innovation programme. Outputs from the initial CiBIT project were taken and formed into a Scenario Planning infoKit [1] and two successful events were held to test the scenarios with projects from the JISC Users and Innovation programme.

Netskills were invited in April 2008 to plan for Scenario Planning activity to contribute to the JOS programme regarding *Changing staff roles, relationships and skills*. This report concluded that project of work.

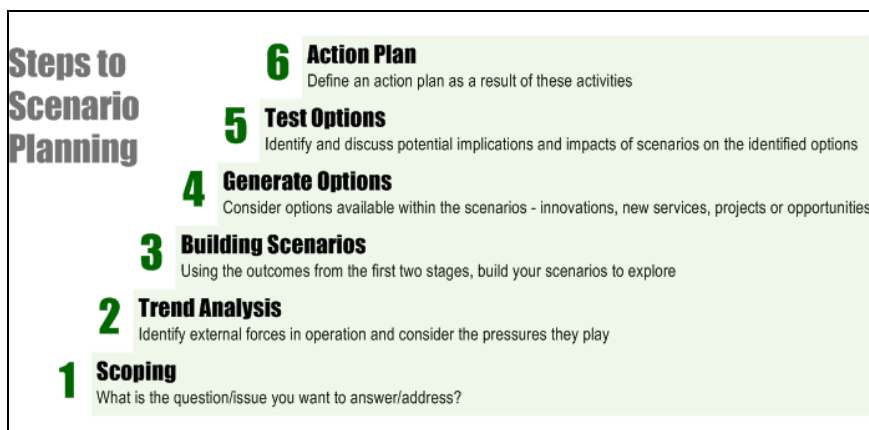
## Aims and Objectives

This project had two objectives:

- i. to apply and test the full Scenario Planning process as documented in the Scenario Planning toolkit; and
- ii. to contribute to the JOS work programme regarding changing roles and responsibilities.

## Methodology

The methodological approach of the project was to follow the 6 steps to Scenario Planning outlined in the JISC infoNet infoKit:



These six steps were condensed into four stages for the delivery of this project.

<sup>1</sup> Held on the world's oldest railway at Tanfield in County Durham.

### **Stage 1 - Scoping and Trend Analysis (steps 1 and 2)**

This stage consisted of a literature review and consultation with related JISC projects Work-with-IT [2] and the Roles and Competencies project that followed on from the HiLDA project [3]. The aim was to identify the core issues and questions to address during the scenario planning process and to gain an understanding of the current situation within the sector. Additionally, recommendations were sought for participants to invite to the events and workshops for the project.

### **Stage 2 - Scenario Building (step 3 into step 4)**

This is perhaps the most important activity within the Scenario Planning process. 8-12 invited participants with expert knowledge in the field were invited to attend a lunchtime event to identify the main driving forces behind trends ascertained during stage one. The aim was to select the two most important drivers, map the driving forces into a scenario quadrant diagram and to begin to generate options for the scenarios by developing plots and adding further details and narrative.

### **Stage 3 - Scenario testing: Living the scenarios (steps 4 and 5)**

This stage involves the testing and refinement of the skeleton scenarios generated during stage 2. Two workshops were held to 'wind-tunnel' the robustness of the scenarios, participants 'living' the scenarios and testing/adding to the options generated during stage 2. A wide range of participants were invited to work through a range of exercises and activities designed to encourage them to immerse themselves in the scenarios and to explore the implications of the four visions of the future.

### **Stage 4 – Plan, Report and Review (step 6)**

Once current trends have been scoped (stage 1), scenarios built (stage 2) and tested/lived (stage 3) the full process can be reviewed to provide the implications of future visions of roles and responsibilities in HE. Additionally the implementation of the full scenario planning process was reviewed and reported.

Particular focus was applied to stage 2, Scenario Building, as suggested in much of the scenario planning literature and guidance material. The project team believed that the quality and robustness of the output scenarios was dependent upon the range and knowledge of attendees for the Scenario Building event.

## ***Implementation***

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**Stage 1** involved desk research and a productive meeting held in York with the two related projects, Work-with-IT and Roles and Competencies, and the programme manager.

**Stage 2**, Scenario Building, proved to be the most testing of the project to schedule and implement. There were two attempts to schedule the Scenario Building Event before it took place. This was due to unavailability of invited participants<sup>2</sup> and clashes with conferences (Alt-C and UCISA). Agreement was sought to delay the event, granted by programme manager Andy Dyson on the belief that successful scenario building requires attendees “*as diverse as possible, encompassing a wide range of levels of management, perspectives and roles. Ideally, the people on the scenario team will be acquainted with a variety of intellectual disciplines... Diversity is critical to the success of the project. The key to failure, on the other hand, is the exclusion of people who are unorthodox, challenging thinkers from inside and outside the organisation.*” [4]

The Scenario Building event was held in Newcastle in early December 2008, facilitated by Will Allen and Helen Blanchett of JISC Netskills. The aim was to end the day with new **skeleton** scenarios that can be used for the

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<sup>2</sup> Twenty suitably expert, experienced and knowledgeable people were invited to attend the event from a range of disciplines, roles and areas of expertise within Higher Education (including: academia, library, computing service, staff development, research, teaching, administration, records management, marketing).

following steps to consider future thinking around the key question: *What roles and organisational structures are needed to support future working practices resulting from technological change and technology supported practices?* Central to the Scenario Planning process, the crux of the Scenario Building step was to create skeleton scenarios based on the selection of two key drivers of **high impact** and **high uncertainty**.

After a general welcome and introduction, the event consisted of four parts: exploring trends, analysing and grouping trends, ranking, and developing scenarios. The event was a success and we achieved our aim, ending the day with new skeleton scenarios. All attendees were actively engaged in the process, openly providing input into the day and challenging any assumptions presented to them (either from the facilitators or from other attendees). Rapport was strong within the group, enhanced by the majority staying overnight and enjoying an evening meal together the night before the event.

**Stage 3** consisted of two parts. First, the project team worked on the skeleton scenarios developed during stage 2, synthesising detail captured during the event into the scenario quadrant diagram and developing additional narrative for each of the four scenarios. Second, two further events/workshops were held, taking the new scenarios and asking two new groups of participants to 'live' the scenarios, exploring the four uncertain, yet possible worlds by generating and testing options.

The first workshop was held in Birmingham<sup>3</sup> in early May 2009. It was facilitated by Will Allen and James Cornford, with additional support provided by Diane McDonald and Donna Cullen from the Work-with-IT project who attended the event and presented a short overview of their project. An open call for attendees was advertised using Netskills' established comms channels. There were 11 attendees from a range of roles and institutions. They immersed themselves thoroughly into the worlds and reported, when asked, that being involved in a Scenario Planning workshop "*liberating*" yet "*challenging*". One attendee provided the following feedback after the event: "*The workshop content was excellent and it was a thought provoking day. It was also interesting to be feeding in to someone else's project.*"

The second workshop was held in Newcastle in late May 2009. It was agreed that this event should be altered from the original plan, and be led by the Work-with-IT project team with attendees consisting of people who originally contributed to the case studies within their project. Essentially these case studies consist of examples of institutions working at the vanguard of changing roles, responsibilities and working practices, and it was felt that their experiences would contribute further to the development of new scenarios. Will Allen delivered a short overview of the Scenario Planning project, highlighting the clear relationship between the two projects.

**Stage 4** consisted of a full review of outputs from the project and the writing of this final report.

## ***Outputs and Results - New Scenarios***

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The skeleton scenarios were build during the Scenario Building stage with further narrative added by the project team. An interim report was submitted after the Scenario Building event, detailing the process applied<sup>4</sup>. The scenario quadrant diagram is shown below.

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<sup>3</sup> At the excellent venue - The Studio: <http://www.orangestudio.co.uk/>

<sup>4</sup> Only summary content from the 'Scenario Building Report' is provided here. For detailed consideration of this step in the Scenario Planning process, reference should be made to the interim report.

## Customer-led

### **Boutique University**

(Customer led / inflexible)

- Celebrity status for some, insecurity for most (footballer style deals)
- Very brand conscious
- Narrower range of subjects, probably specialist schools
- Limited info management – concentration on key markets
- Research in specialist areas (attracts status)
- Well-defined
- Standards focus (IT)

### **My-U**

(Customer led / flexible)

- University of the individual
- Freelancers
- Outsourced course creation & delivery
- Centralised administration (e.g. credit management)
- Standardisation e.g. of libraries
- Lots of information exchange
- Service-driven, quality led
- High risk
- Research difficult
- Google generation
- Innovation

**Inflexible / (Structured)**

**(Unstructured) / Flexible**

### **Scholarly Towers**

(Institution-driven / inflexible)

- Less mobility
- "my way or the highway"
- Clearly defined roles
- Clear hierarchies
- Decentralised
- Known risk
- High self-confidence, strong brand
- Blue skies research easier
- Highly structured
- Dependability
- Long term lock in to IT solutions

### **Mega-U**

(Institution driven / flexible)

- High volume, high investment (high risk)
- Some permanent staff but lots of consultants too - project-based working
- No need for geographical unity of staff or students
- Strong business cases need making for new courses – do market research
- Commercial drivers for research, product driven
- Responsive to management
- Core platform (modular)

## Institution-driven

It is important to note that the scenarios are not mutually exclusive. Further distinctions and similarities between the scenarios are provided in the table below.

	<b>Boutique University</b> <i>(Customer-led / Inflexible)</i>	<b>My-U</b> <i>(Customer-Led / Flexible)</i>	<b>Mega-Uni</b> <i>(Inst-Driven / Flexible)</i>	<b>Scholarly Towers</b> <i>(Inst-Driven / Inflexible)</i>
Brand	Strong managed	Weak managed	Strong managed	Very strong Unmanaged
Campus	Single	Many rented	Few large	Single
Students	Limited Diversity	Very Socially and Geographically Diverse	Very Socially and Geographically Diverse	Geographical Diversity but social homogeneity
Economic Logic	Focus on Strengths	Responsive to Customer	Value for Money	Elite, scarcity value
Pitch	Education Tailored to you in our broad areas of strength	What do you want?	What you'll need for the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Labour market	Simply the best (quality plus snob appeal)
Research & Teaching	Integrated	If customers want it?	Separate	Integrated
Internationalisation	Focused	Yes	Focused	Yes
IT Outsourcing?	Yes	Yes, mostly – Google/ Microsoft	Perhaps, Shared Services (Capita/EDS)	No

In the following sections, each scenario is considered in detail. The introductory narrative is included, developed after the Scenario Building workshop with further narrative added by attendees at the first ‘Scenario Living’ workshop (stage 3). For each scenario, roles, responsibilities and working practices are considered. This is developed from reactions and outputs from the attendees, working in groups, who immersed themselves in the specific scenario and by returning to consider the initial and additional trends identified during the Scenario Building stage.

### **Boutique University (Customer-led / Inflexible, Structured)**

#### **Narrative**

Motto: Student focused learning in a secure environment

*Another day of clearing up the mess left by our “star” professor – the one who is always on the telly and has half a million twitter followers. The star professors are supposed to have name recognition with potential students and so help with recruitment. Of course, the students rarely actually see them for teaching. However, as part of the constant research on what students want (and in particular the things that they don’t even know they want) we found that the students didn’t actually want to be taught by the stars – they just wanted to say hello to them in the corridors and perhaps have a single celebrity lecture so that they could say that they were taught by the stars. The real teaching is done by the likes of me. Not quite the bottom rung of the ladder but still on a short term contract. My teaching is micro-managed by the institution: for example every lecture has to start with a joke and I’m emailed a topical joke just before my lecture every day. This is something to do with maintaining the “brand identity” of Boutique University. The notion of brand dominates life in this university – it’s gone way beyond putting the logo on everything (although they do). It’s supposed to be embodied by the campus and by the staff. We don’t quite have a uniform but there are suggestions as to what to wear and even where to shop.*

*We focus on an eclectic range of subjects, mainly driven by student demand and our ability to recruit suitable star professors – mostly professional subjects and the more popular academic subjects. The IT is important, but mainly to “communicate brand” rather than to really teach the students.*

## **Further description and reaction**

This scenario describes an institution that is specialised and overtly reputation and brand-conscious. The group that considered this scenario focussed on the role of the Chief Executive (CE) within Boutique University, who would be responsible for strategic leadership, challenging received opinion and the global promotion of the University brand. The group’s examination of a ‘day in the life’ of the CE reinforced his role as a high profile figurehead, conducting various meetings (both face-to-face and virtual) with sponsors and the press. The group decided that the organisational structure of Boutique University under the CE would be: Head of Finance, Head of Marketing and Head of Academic Provision.

Returning to the initial trends identified during Scenario Building, Boutique University certainly sees the student as a customer, the institution adjusting its practices and roles to the needs of the customer. They are focussed and specialised in terms of the subjects offered and provide a supportive environment for their students.

The Boutique University workforce is highly specialised and skilled, with mostly traditional roles and clear responsibilities. However the desire to meet customer needs is motivation enough for enterprise activity and innovate use of technology for delivery of learning and teaching.

Initial reactions to this scenario included: “Stepford Wives!”, “Finishing School HE”, “depressing”, “real” and “will the National Student Survey lead to this?”.

### **My-U (Customer-led / Flexible, Unstructured)**

## **Narrative**

Motto: A different university for a different you - every day!

*I’m contracted to My-U to do some course delivery (what we used to call teaching). We are very student focused here and my remuneration is linked to the student feedback and to their grades – therefore they have to like me and I have to make them understand some difficult material, two requirements that don’t always go well together. Of course, the assessment is done by someone else so I can’t just given them all good grades. It’s important to understand the group I have. Everyone is doing a different course, so I can’t assume much common knowledge. In fact, almost every single student does an individual course here as we offer a pick’n’mix approach to personalised learning. As a result all the learning and assessment has to be very well ‘encapsulated’ and it can be difficult to move on to more difficult topics. “Pathways” are supposed to help students to choose but students can ignore them and they don’t always work. And the students that we recruit all seem to rely on Google/Wikipedia to do their work. It is amazing just how similar their essays can be when they all use the same resources!*

*The other thing about working here is that everything is constantly changing to reflect the changing demands of our customers. Last year they wanted everything delivered via Facebook2012, this year all my slides must be readable on an iPhone7GV. I wonder what they will want next year. Oh, and I don’t get to do research anymore.*

## **Further description and reaction**

This scenario describes an institution that is highly flexible with a personalised customer focus. Indeed, this is personalisation on a huge scale, the institution offering the range and flexibility being demanded by the customer. In fact, the institution acts as a marketplace, brokering demands from customers with skills and knowledge from freelance teachers. The teachers are full-time employed, but not for a single institution, fulfilling multiple part-time contract for a different institutions. They have overlapping working a social lives, use multiple

communication channels and collaborate frequently. Technology is heavily relied upon due to the sheer scale of provision. Administration is mostly e-administration and self-service is the norm.

Initial reactions to this scenario included: “Prototype teaching University”, “customer focussed but impersonal”, and “heavy reliance on technology and interoperability standards (yet to deliver!)”.

## **Mega U (Institution-driven / Flexible, Unstructured)**

### **Narrative**

Motto: Helping you to fit the career pathways of the 21<sup>st</sup> century

*I lectured to three thousand third year students today. Of course, most of them were at the 20 satellite campuses around the world. At first it seemed strange to have to lecture at 5 am UK time, but the majority of the students are not in my time zone. Of course, they can download a recording of the lecture, but many of them like to watch ‘live.’ I now have about ten of these lectures, carefully prepared with a range of audiovisual support material, tests, quizzes, and further reading, viewing and interacting for students. Altogether the lecture package costs some £100,000 to produce with the HD filming in four countries and the elaborate computer simulations being the most expensive elements. Lecturing is now my specialised role in the institution. I don’t often meet the research specialists from the institutes.*

*As a lecturer, it’s my job to put across the information in an engaging way, more like a TV presenter than an old style academic. I work with team of specialist tutors who actually talk to, email, message and text the students – mostly they interact electronically – a team of assessors who manage the assessment of learning. I never interact with the students directly. The tutors, the assessment team and I are all on freelance, partial contracts – I actually do lecturing for a number of universities. The university also uses a number of specialist learning technology firms, spin-offs from Hollywood or the computer games industry mostly as well as the odd academic publisher.*

*This afternoon I have a meeting to discuss the possibility of a new first year course. This course will be accredited with the NHS in the UK and with seven other health systems around the world. The break even number of students for this course is 25,000 per year globally according to the outline business case. The business case is written by the course manager, the only person to be a full time employee of the university. Her job is to match our course offer to the statutory requirements of professions – mainly health, social work, IT, catering and events management, and business – and to put together a high value package of teaching, materials, support, assessment and accreditation that will meet those statutory requirements for as many jurisdictions as possible. That’s the only way that the economies of scale stack up, given the high cost of the core materials. The students then have to take the course if they want to qualify for work in the sectors that we target. And there are only about ten universities that have the scale to offer this kind service.*

### **Further description and reaction**

In this institution-driven world quality is negotiated with commerce and professional standards and agencies. The institution is driven by economies of scale; it has a global reach and is able to cope with huge numbers of students. Accreditation is key, linking into both national and emerging global standards frameworks.

Staff roles are specialised due to the sheer scale of the organisation. The workforce consists of a highly organised core managerial team, supported by a large number of consultants and other staff on short-term rolling contracts. Mega-U relies heavily on technology, both e-administration and technology to facilitate communication and course delivery.

The group that immersed themselves in this world considered two distinct roles. First, the **Multimedia Courseware Presenter** is a specialised role for the person fronting teaching delivery. They are employed on short-term rolling contracts, work flexible hours and are location independent. Mega-U provides them with

comprehensive in-house training regarding standards and the Mega-U house style. They are highly skilled multi-media and multi-channel communicators, able to present complex ideas under direction.

Second, the role of **Cultural Awareness Professions Liaison Manager** is one of the few permanent full-time members of staff at Mega-U. Multilingual communication skills are key, using a range of media and face-to-face for negotiating and maintaining relationships with partners and awarding bodies.

Initial reactions to this scenario included: “Disney sausage machine”, “reduced graduate diversity - bland!”, “development of the Open University model, popular with working adults”, and “face-to-face communication is dead, long live 2<sup>nd</sup> Life!”

### **Scholarly Towers (Institution-driven / Inflexible, Structured)**

#### **Narrative**

Motto: Inducting you into the world academic scholarship and thinking

*I took a tutorial with five students today. We did the tutorial 8.30 to fit with my research timetable. The students each read a section from their essays and then we discussed them. Competition to get into our institution is intense so only the most dedicated – or should that be prepped – students are actually admitted. Then we throw them in at the deep end and see who can swim by constant examinations. The focus of our teaching is to train students in the rigors of scholarship. I split my time between research (I prefer the term study really) and seminars and tutorials. I do a little lecturing as well on my main subject.*

*I see the university’s role as training the next generation of scholars who can nurture, sustain and develop a body of knowledge. We don’t have any claptrap about being “relevant” or “student-focused.” We stick to “real” academic subjects mostly – no catering studies or such like – and we have moved away from the professional schools such as the medicine, law or the business school in favour of the underlying sciences and humanities. However, we do have very good employability data.*

*No one much tells me what to do – mostly we organise ourselves in small teaching and assessment teams or research teams. That’s easy because we are all together on this one campus – if people want us, they know where to come. We do have all the modern technology, but we are quite conservative about it preferring well tried and trusted solutions.*

#### **Further description and reaction**

This scenario is highly structured and confident in its own identity, perhaps developed over a long history. It’s built on the pillars of knowledge and research.

Internal organisation is static and hierarchical. Many staff are employed to do a specific role, although of course, what they actually do day-to-day may differ dramatically to their official job description.

The Scholarly Towers scenario, originally named “Oxbridge” by attendees during the Scenario Building event, appears at first glance to be closest to the classical academic institution, commented as being “anachronistic” by one attendee.

This scenario was not considered to the same extent as the other three scenarios during the ‘Scenario Living’ workshop.

Initial reactions to this scenario included: “Blueprint for all universities? Highly desired at present”, “safe”, “will this world remain attractive to potential students?”, “narrow market”, “decentralisation means it is not actually very inflexible”, “2.5 pillars of wisdom”, “anachronistic”, and “comfortable - especially for traditionalists!”

## Workshop Outlines and Trainer's Notes

JISC Netskills has created workshop outlines and trainer's notes for the facilitation of both Scenario Building and Scenario Living events.

## Outcomes

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This Scenario Planning project has on the whole been successful in achieving its objectives. The full Scenario Planning process has been applied, tested and reviewed and the outputs contribute to the JOS work programme regarding changing roles and responsibilities.

This project has reinforced the belief that Scenario Planning is a valuable tool for strategic planning and has developed knowledge, facilitation skills and workshop structures for practical application of the Scenario Planning process, either in its entirety or component parts. Scenario Planning is a creative process that can be applied by other projects seeking imaginative and innovative thinking.

However, Scenario Planning is complex and clarity is needed regarding the 'flavour' being adopted in future work; either the '*scenario Planning*' approach, with emphasis on planning and on working with trends, or the '*Scenario (planning)*' approach, with emphasis on the exploration of Scenarios of possible futures and less emphasis on 'planning'.

## Conclusions

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The overall feeling from both the project team and event attendees is that Scenario Planning is a valuable tool for innovative and strategic thinking. Attendees are willing to engage in the process and clearly enjoy the experience. However, refinement regarding the desired outputs is required to achieve full benefit; suggested recommendations are described in the following section of this report.

One of the motivations for this project was based on the reaction to previous Scenario Planning work within JISC, as outlined in the Background section. It was felt that the CBiT scenarios for the future of HE across Europe were too generic for practical application and that this project presented an opportunity to trial more focussed application of Scenario Planning. To a large extent this has been successful, especially with regard to speedy participant involvement and immersion into the scenarios; participants did not challenge or question the scenarios as was found when working with the CBiT scenarios. However, we conclude that the desired granularity of this project, regarding roles, responsibilities and working practices, was ambitious and found that attendees sought a thorough understanding of the wider parameters and boundaries of presented scenarios before being able to focus-in on the specific topic of consideration – future roles, responsibilities and working practices.

The consideration of future institutions and the possible roles, responsibilities and working practices within them allows us to plan for a plausible but uncertain future. However, the scenarios developed within this project are not predictions; instead they provide a useful tool for thinking about possible future directions of change and allow structured thinking regarding where organisations fit into an altered world. Additionally, in an increasingly competitive environment, these scenarios allow an institution, perhaps aligned to one scenario, to consider other scenarios identified as possible futures for competitor institutions. In their current state, these scenarios are institution-focussed, but should be used in the knowledge that a future world is likely to be one of co-existence between a diverse range of education institutions.

It is worth noting here that attendees during the 'Scenario Living' workshop were not repelled by any of the scenarios (as has been the case when testing other scenarios). They reacted that the scenarios are indeed plausible, immediately identifying commonalities to their experiences of current-day working.

Many of the trends identified by the Work-with-IT project (phase I), used to build the scenarios, are most obviously associated with the two highly flexible (low structure) words, My-U and Mega-U. For example, it is easy to place 'hybrid roles', 'location independent working' and 'self-service administration' within these flexible

worlds. However, there is need for caution here; even in a highly flexible world, there will be a requirement for what might be considered ‘counter’ skills concerned with organisation, standardisation and management. Likewise in the more structured worlds, where all agreed that innovation would still take place, there is a need for flexible skills for certain individuals or roles.

In order to gain most from these scenarios, our feeling is that they need to be tested with a unified cohort, perhaps from a single institution or organisation.

## **Recommendations**

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This project has contributed to the growing practical knowledge about the use of the Scenario Planning process in within JISC. We recommend that this is a methodology worthy of continued attention within the education sector; however further understanding and refinement of its application is required. Specific recommendations are listed below:

- i. **Persevere with Scenario Planning as a strategic planning tool.** With well facilitated sessions, our experience from this project<sup>5</sup> is that attendees are open to the approach, become engaged quickly and think creatively. Single focussed workshops or events to brainstorm an idea or consider specific scenarios could benefit from such sessions. However, it should be accepted that the full Scenario Planning process is a lengthy and involved process.
- ii. **Further development of the Scenarios from this project.** One of the key successes of this project was the successful development of new scenarios after the Scenario Building event. However, further development would provide more depth and further narrative, enabling anyone working with the scenarios to interrogate them and become immersed in their ‘world’ more quickly.
  - a. If further development of the scenarios is commissioned, one aim should be for the scenarios to represent a whole future ‘world’ or ‘vision’, rather than a future institution or organisation. Their current institution-focus is indicative that further ‘building’ is required.
  - b. Additionally, the majority of narrative for the scenarios is currently focussed on Teaching and Learning. Further context could be added by specific consideration of research, administration or BCE within each scenario.
- iii. **Refinement of the role of Scenario Planning for Higher Education.** The bulk of work with the Scenario Planning process has come from the corporate sector, focussed on one organisation or business (e.g. Shell, Electrolux). Application across the whole education sector, or even Higher Education, is particularly challenging given the diversity between institutions. Thus step 6, Action Planning, is required to capture this breadth and becomes overly generic to be of specific use. For practical application of the full Scenario Planning process, there is a need for coherence, either:
  - a. By working with a single institution (perhaps even working with the same core group of participants throughout – see [5] for an example from Bemidji State University who ran a Scenario Planning project over 18months with a core planning team), or
  - b. Focussing on a specific mission (teaching and learning, research, BCE)
- iv. **Add Scenario Planning to the recommendations for future work suggested by the Work-with-IT project<sup>6</sup>.** The Work-with-IT project recommends “*a pilot support service, channelled through the JISC advisory services, that enables institutions to effectively implement and manage new ways of working.*”

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<sup>5</sup> And also from the previous JISC Netskills / infoNet project funded by the Users and Innovation programme.

<sup>6</sup> Note that this reference is to the final report of Phase I of the Work-with-IT project

We understand that this would include some sort of diagnostic material for institutions to first identify their current ways of working. Application of Scenario Thinking, using the scenarios from this project, ideally updated, would add creativity and focussed future thinking regarding the impact on the institution of new ways of working.

## ***Further details***

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For further details, please contact Will Allen (email: [w.h.a.allen@ncl.ac.uk](mailto:w.h.a.allen@ncl.ac.uk) tel: 0191 2225000 skype: whaallen)

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