

AIMS (Academic Institutions Management Services):

a Higher Education management support service, based at the University of Liverpool

created more than thirty years ago specifically to serve the higher education sector

until recently, use of the service was restricted to its member universities. Those services are now available to non-member institutions, who can take advantage of the specialist skills and knowledge of the AIMS consultants

non-member institutions can apply for membership or associate membership of AIMS, or commission individual assignments

for more information about the services of AIMS or for details about membership or the commissioning of assignments, please contact:

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Cut Price Trial Membership Offer - Without Commitment

AIMS is offering cut price trial membership to UK Higher Education Institutions - with no commitment beyond one year. The offer will be limited to the first three institutions to apply. It is expected that interested institutions will be located in the northern half of England or Wales or in Scotland or Northern Ireland. The offer comprises 45 days of management consultancy in return for a one-year trial membership fee that will be just over half the fee currently paid by existing members.

As a trial member you will receive all the services and privileges of full members of AIMS, including the ability to commission reviews of administrative arrangements in:

- central administration
- academic departments and services
- estates and operational services
- staff and student services.

AIMS has a vast range and depth of experience in HEIs. Our assignments have included:

- organisational and procedural reviews
- business process re-engineering
- priority-based budgeting
- activity value analysis
- system specification and evaluation
- value for money assessments
- electronic document management applications
- and work measurement.

We also provide facilitation for internal reviews conducted by institutions, adding objective, professional expertise to in-house knowledge.

Trial Membership Offer (continued)

The expertise of the AIMS consultants will be fully at the disposal of trial members.

Trial membership will also provide:

- free access to good practice guides published by AIMS

- free access to reports commissioned by member institutions, subject to their approval

- invitations to attend meetings of the AIMS Management Committee.

The Management Committee meets twice a year to determine policy and to monitor the quality of the services provided.

It also acts as a valuable forum and network for the discussion of administrative and financial matters affecting HEIs.

If you would like to take advantage of this special offer or discuss it in greater detail, please contact Lionel Ross, the Director of AIMS.

The various means of contacting AIMS (e-mail, telephone, post, fax or through the enquiry page on our website) are all shown on the front page of this newsletter.

Computerised Timetabling Seminar a Great Success

The AIMS seminar on Computerised Timetabling, held in Manchester on 23 May, proved to be a great success.

The seminar was attended by 46 delegates, representing 27 HEIs from England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

Speakers with direct experience of the issues, advised delegates on the rationale of introducing computerised timetabling, the leading systems currently available and the *do's and do'n'ts* of choosing and implementing an appropriate system.

The seminar ended with an open forum with a panel of the speakers, who were suppliers and staff from HEIs that had implemented computerised timetabling.

There was great emphasis on how to deal with problems relating to acceptability and communication with staff.

Each delegate received a copy of the new AIMS booklet **Computerised Timetabling - A Good Practice Guide** (published in May 2000).

Please contact us if you would like to purchase copies of the

good practice guide (priced at £4.99 each); or if you would be interested in attending a repeat of the seminar either in Scotland or the South of England; or if you are seeking advice or guidance on computerised timetabling.

The Maintenance of Personal Computers

AIMS has recently completed a review of arrangements at a member institution for the maintenance of personal computers, printers and other related equipment.

The review included a customer satisfaction survey and comparison with arrangements at other universities.

A comparative evaluation was made of three major options:

- retaining the existing in-house service
- using a specialist company
- establishing a framework agreement with a supplier.

The involvement of AIMS provided an independent evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of current arrangements and alternative options.

Please contact us for more information or to discuss a possible review.