

# Engaging with the student experience through institutional research

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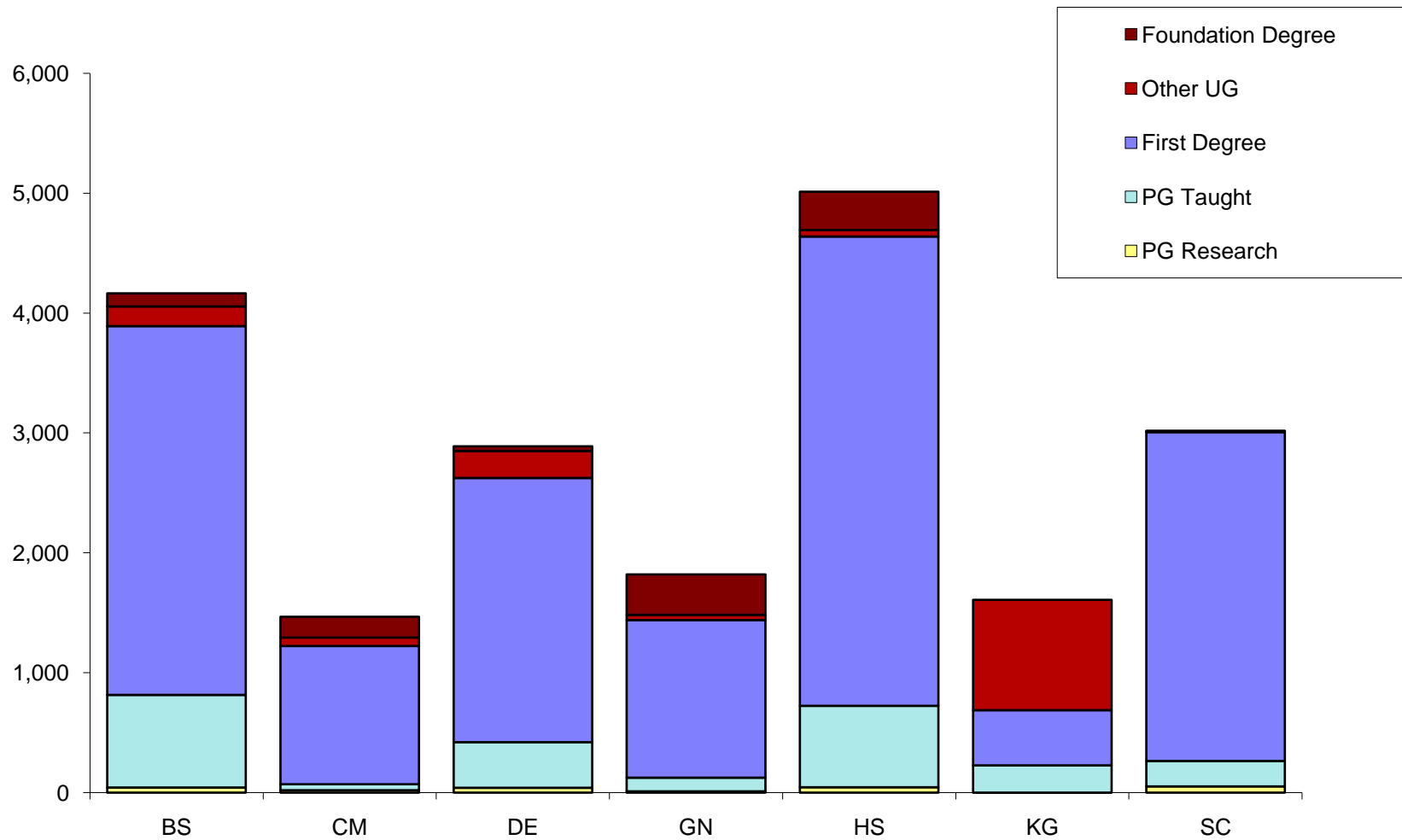
# Background

## Desirable features of institutional self study

- “...Should be a habitual part of institutional management with ownership through both the academic and the executive functions of the institution”
- “...needs to have as its primary goal understanding and enhancing student learning and the quality of the student experience”

(Watson, D. and Madison, E. 2005)

# Level by Faculty



# Kingston University: A Diverse Student Population

- Over 20,000 students
- Multi Site Campus
- Range of collaborative courses
- Diverse Student Population
- Growing International students numbers

“Information is a key resource which underpins all the University’s activities.” *(KU Information Strategy Oct 08)*

But current approach to MI production has:

- Numerous authors of MI reports
- Lack of agreed ‘base definitions’
- Inconsistent calculation / presentation
- No clear routes for reporting / action
- Inadequate lines of communication

# Understanding students and their needs (work in progress):

- Comprehensive, holistic approach, linked to student lifecycle
- Feedback from students
- Consistent route for the flow and consideration of information
- Establish a 'body of knowledge'
- Agree and follow through with actions
- Feedback to students

# Understanding students and their needs (work in progress):

- NSS: Coordinated, Institutional approach
- Kingston Student Satisfaction Surveys
- Kingston Observers
- Establishment of Student Experience Group
- Improved SMI portfolio

# Collecting evidence: Survey Design

- Outcome of SEG discussions: Three surveys
  - First year experience survey (Transition to HE)
  - Second year experience (Prepare for NSS)
  - PG survey (data on student priorities)
- First year survey designed and piloted with KUSU Freshers' angels and distributed using Survey Monkey
  - Profile and course information
  - Application and admission to University
  - Transition to University/University life
  - Course expectations
  - Personal support
  - Accommodation and travel
  - Organisation and management
  - Overall experience



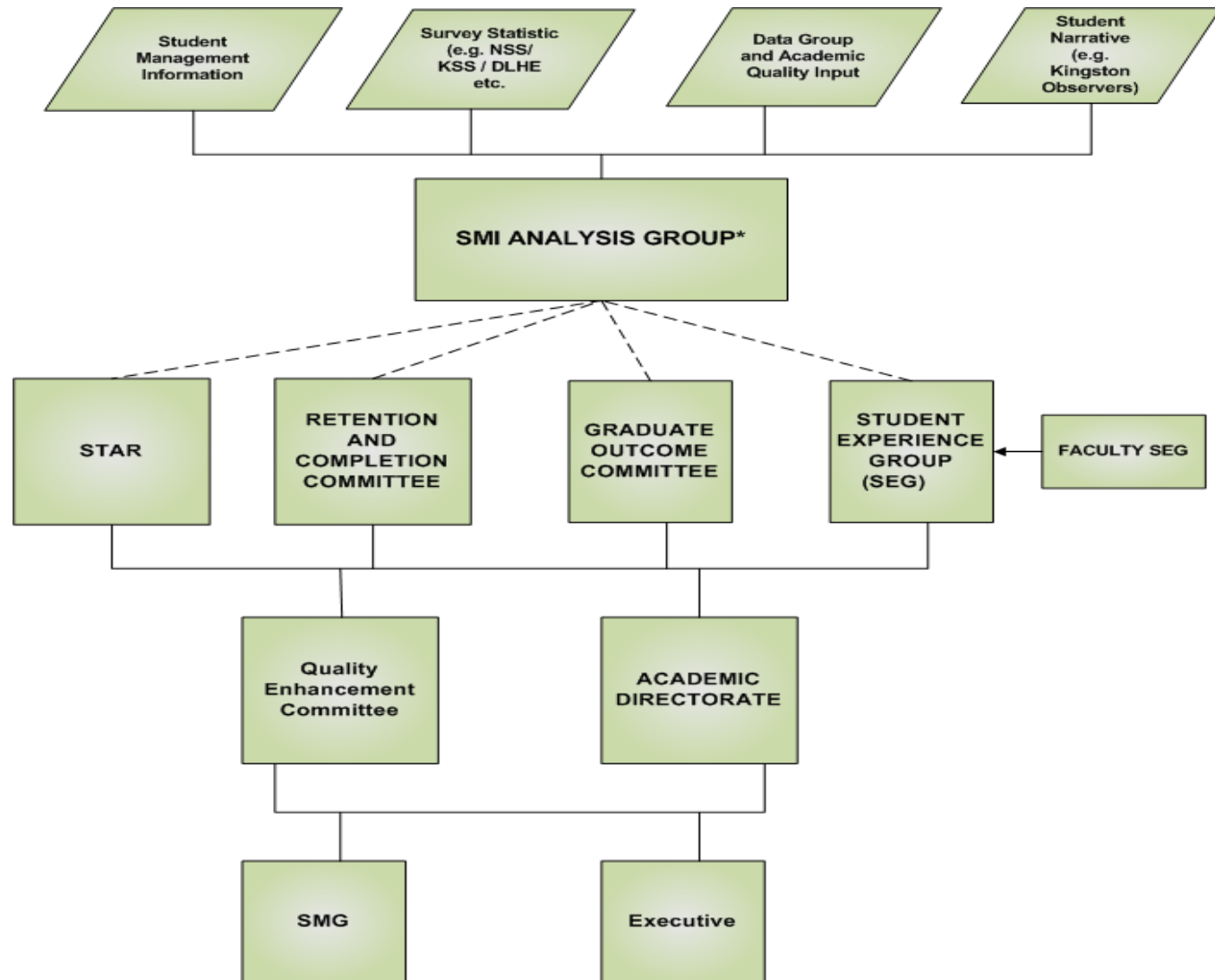
# Selected First Year Survey Preliminary findings

- Response rate: 1240 (20%) completed survey
- Overall
  - Most satisfied with the application and admission process, and least with accommodation and activities at halls
  - The Students Union was thought to be helpful by well under half of the respondents
- Campus
  - “I feel that everything seems to happen at the Penrhyn Road Campus. .... the student atmosphere is greater at Penrhyn Road especially if you are not in halls of residence”
- Ethnic group
  - Black group was consistently less satisfied
  - Less than half of Black respondents found university life to be as expected

# Selected First Year Survey Preliminary findings 2

- Gender and Age
  - The 22-25 group -best experience and most realistic expectations of university life
- Accommodation
  - “As I am not in halls it makes it more difficult to meet people and make friends”
  - “Can I have a place at the halls please? I really REALLY want one!”
  - Comment revealed that students valued the friendship and networking opportunities afforded by halls but that they would appreciate more laid on activities.
- Clearing
  - Little difference between clearing and other students in terms of expectations being met.
- Domicile
  - EU students to be more satisfied than either British or other overseas students

# Moving towards institutional changes



# Next steps

Kingston Observers

Continues restructure of top level committees.

Second year and post grad surveys

**Discussion – Engaging the student experience through IR?...**

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