



## Bath Spa University Extends Student Income Forecasts with Quantrix Modeler

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### The Challenges

Managing student planning is a challenge for any university, particularly when relying on two-dimensional spreadsheets to model a multidimensional environment that includes numerous courses, enrollment estimates, and tuition levels. For universities in the United Kingdom, the challenge has taken on a new dimension with the changes to tuition fee income, prompting Bath Spa University to move from spreadsheets to Quantrix Modeler so that it could develop a multi-year, multidimensional forecast. Quantrix Modeler was supplied by BME Solutions and Planning Models Ltd provided product training and support.

Bath Spa University, located about two hours west of London, has five academic schools of study and offers undergraduate and postgraduate degrees. More than 6,500 students are enrolled in this 160-year-old institution. In 2012, the government made a number of changes impacting universities, including raising the amount of tuition fees that students can be charged from £3,000 to up to £9,000 a year. "Over the past few years, the way that student fees are generated and the ways that universities are funded has changed, and we wanted to be able to model that," says Jonathan Sebright, Head of Information Services.

The University relied on spreadsheets for planning, and needed a more sophisticated toolset for extended forecasting. "Five-year forecasts are important for us to understand the impact of bringing on new courses and changing course structures," says Sebright. "Any change we make now will take three years to have full effect. We need to know how it will affect fee income in future years." relevant skills to pull apart the static reports or handle the raw data required to produce in depth analysis.



### The Solution – Quantrix

Bath Spa worked with Quantrix partners BME Solutions, a Quantrix reseller, and Planning Models Ltd, a Quantrix consulting and training partner, to select and configure Quantrix Modeler. They easily imported existing data from Bath Spa's student records system, including prior years' history, to create a multidimensional model for student population and fee income. "With initial product training and advice from BME and Planning Models, we were able to create a five-year model of what different subject mixes would provide in income," says Chris Stedham, Deputy Head of Planning Support, Bath Spa University. "That would have required a lot of copying and pasting in spreadsheets."

It has expanded models as needed to display forecasts for numerous dimensions, including full-time versus part-time students. "Quantrix makes modeling so easy," says Stedham. "Quantrix is also very powerful. You can expand, almost indefinitely, the number of elements that you need to model – you don't need to duplicate a whole set of data, or create an additional worksheet."

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In addition to ease of modeling, Bath Spa appreciates the ability to create an interface that displays information simply and cleanly. "Quantrix is powerful enough for a developer to create formulas that run in the background, but also makes it easy to create presentation views," says Stedham. "We can show people a simple screen of information that they can understand."

Another benefit of Quantrix is the ease with which the University can create new scenarios. "Scenario planning is very difficult to do in Excel, but with Quantrix, it's easy to see the effect a change would have," says Stedham. "You can tweak a number and see how it will work."

"If there is a change in a course, or in government allocation, we can start putting it into the model, and see how it will affect us in a few years' time," says Sebright. "Before Quantrix, we could only easily think about next year. Now we can quickly look ahead three, four, or more years."

### The Future

The outcome for the University is the ability to forecast further into the future, enabling a more proactive operation. "Quantrix has given us further confidence in our numbers," says Stedham. "It has broadened our ability to think strategically, and for the long term."

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