

UAS scheme & final year projects

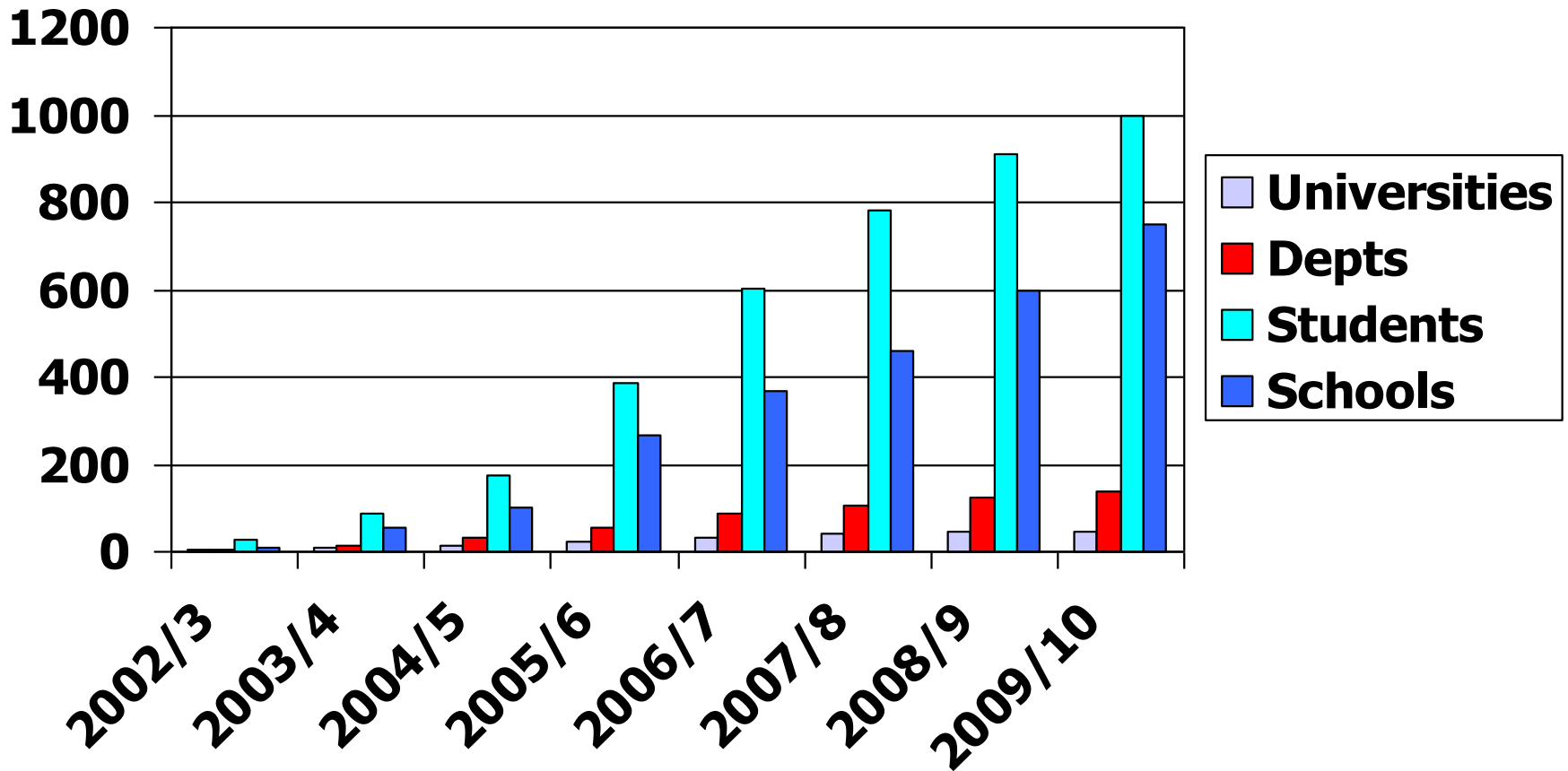


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- Running from 2004_5



GROWTH OF UAS





AIMS OF UAS

- Attract more graduates into subject specific teaching
- Giving support to teachers
- Supplying young, enthusiastic role models for pupils
- Providing under graduates with an intellectual challenge which helps them to develop key transferable skills
- Encouraging a new generation of scientists, technologists, engineers and mathematicians

The UAS is flexible

UAS Project in Physiology

- University of Bristol
- Physiological Science B.Sc. (Hons)
- ~60 students in third (final) year
 - About 15 from Medicine
- Final year = single 120 credit point unit
- Dept of ~30 academic staff

[our] Final year projects

- 26% of final year mark attributed to project (120/~4 = 30 credit point unit/module)
 - 2 days per week x 16 weeks

- Need alternatives to lab-based projects ...
 - Increased student numbers
 - Changing career aspirations of B.Sc students
 - Research techniques more involved (support & cost issue)
 - Staff more pressured

Issues [for us] going into UAS

- Academic parity and rigor
 - UAS projects must involve high level physiology
 - Students must generate & analyse data
- Assessment methods constrained
 - i.e. same assessments as lab-based projects
 - ↳ Review essay, dissertation (& supervisors report)
- Joint supervision worries
 - Tough balance - academic support without increasing the burden on teachers?

UAS - Outline approach

- Hypothesis
 - UAS-based projects ARE suitable for final year projects
- Methods
 - 3 schools each with a pair of students
 - Each pair of students has dept and school supervisor
- Results
 - All schools very happy with outcome
 - Students very positive about benefits of UAS-based project
 - Very creditable research work undertaken
- Conclusions
 - UAS scheme IS suitable, but success is not automatic!

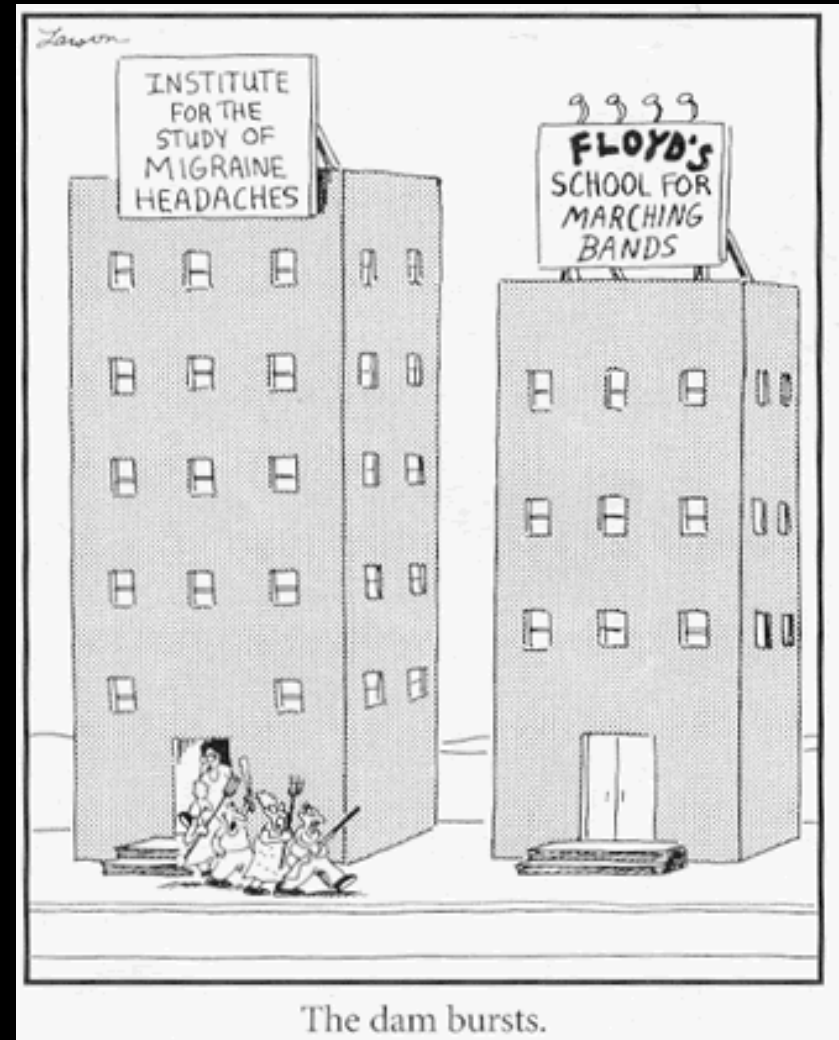
Things we got right

- ❑ Pre-scheme info (selling)
 - Canvassed interest
 - Full info in project handbook
- ❑ Selection process
 - Included teacher
 - Video taped interviews
- ❑ Teacher's training*
 - 0.5 day - led to shared understanding
- ❑ Student's training
 - Crucial & could be better
- ❑ Estimate of staff effort required



Room for improvement

- ❑ Current emphasis on high level physiology
 - Led to focus on A-level work
- ❑ General anxiety
 - Students - data!!!
 - Staff - equivalence
- ❑ Student's training
 - Balance - research issues & safety



Reflection & Conclusions

- Dept [staff] gains:
 - Number and variety of projects
 - Popular with intercalators
 - Better links with schools
- Student gains:
 - UAS can match better student's aspirations/needs
- Caveats:
 - Tough to monitor progress
 - No control over teachers



The End!

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outline

- ❑ Degree structure & limitations
 - Numbers (& intercallators), 120 credit point unit
- ❑ Final year projects overview
 - 26% of final year attributed to project (5% on review essay, 3% of supervisor's report & 18% on dissertation and poster)
 - Need for lab-based projects
 - Pressure of numbers and changes in common lab techniques
- ❑ UAS scheme in context
 - Decision to run UAS projects as full option to lab-based projects - same requirements for data and same assessment methods etc.
- ❑ Implementation issues
 - Selection and training
- ❑ Supervision issues
 - Communication with schools; commonality of advice
 - Need for regular meetings
- ❑ Assessment issues
 - Projects should expose students to experimental design, data acquisition & analysis
 - Departmental supervisor responsible for grading dissertation - need for documentation of project I.e. a project diary.
- ❑ Reflection & conclusions
 - A worthwhile exercise for the Uni and for all three schools - all wish to continue.