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Strategic Commissioning (Part-Time)

MBA Module (Public Service)

Lecturer: Jon Glasby

Introduction

The module examines the socio-economic and policy context of commissioning and procurement - specifically how these issues have become priorities in public sector reform and modernisation. The practice of commissioning, while traditionally based on different models by sector (i.e. health, social care, education, housing, criminal justice etc.) is becoming increasingly more broadly based on ideas and themes garnered from all sectors. Individuals working at senior levels and middle management in health organisations, social care, and all sectors of local government are being challenged to think laterally about how to most effectively commission and procure.The module will ground students in a solid knowledge of the history of commissioning and procurement in the UK, both in healthcare, local government and other areas of public service. It will examine models of commissioning and procurement and engage students in strategic assessment of how these models are the same/different across levels of government as well as in specific service sectors.

The module will examine key theoretical and conceptual models underpinning commissioning and procurement that have developed in the UK with comparison to other countries and contexts.In the current context of the New Joint Commissioning framework and the evolution of the White Paper priorities (October 2006) it will be critical for decision-makers to understand joint commissioning, to understand how commissioner-provider relations have changed/blurred, to anticipate how local authorities will take joint commissioning forward, and to be able to strategically assess the environment as ongoing change puts pressure and risk on choices made around service delivery. The growing use of technology also makes new demands on decision makers - this module will explore the contexts of using e-government in procurement and commissioning to ensure all elements of the changing landscape are integrated into the students' mindsets.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the module students should be able to:

- Critically understand the context for strategic commissioning in public services;
- Critically analyse how commissioning and procurement have developed within the environment of public sector reform and modernisation, and how they are likely to develop in the future;
- Demonstrate in-depth understanding of key theoretical and conceptual models underpinning commissioning and procurement;
- Demonstrate a sophisticated level of understanding of the differences and links between the activities of `commissioning' and `procurement', and of how they are understood and executed in different sectors and organisations;
- Critically review policy and practise using criteria related to effective commissioning and procurement;
- Critically evaluate joint commissioning based on a detailed understanding of the imperatives, constraints and resource dependencies in multi-stakeholder environments;
- Critically evaluate a range of commissioning strategies and their contingent use depending on critical factors including: the nature and purpose of services being commissioned; the characteristics of service users and usage patterns; commissioner roles, strengths and expertise; market conditions; and the regulatory framework;
- Demonstrate in-depth understanding of a range of approaches to assessing need and demand for public services within different sectors and service-user groups.

Method of Assessment

Written assignment: 2 x 2,000 word (50% each) or 1 x 4,000 word (100%)

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