Strategic Commissioning

Modular value: 20 credits
Duration: One 2 day and 3 day seminars (Five day module)

Module convenors: Jon Glasby (HSMC) and Ian Briggs assisted by staff within the College of Social Sciences

This module examines the socio-economic, political and policy context of public service commissioning and procurement; specifically how these have become priorities in UK public sector reform and modernisation, and the implications for public service leaders of the future.

In the first part of the course, participants will examine the historical development of commissioning in the UK, particularly in healthcare and local government, and consider how it is emerging as a key function of organisations and departments across the public sector. Students will be introduced to some of the key theories and models of the public policy process (what is 'public policy', how is it made and implemented, how is policy related to politics?) and will then explore the practice of commissioning and procurement in this context. Participants will be encouraged to consider the different definitions of both 'strategic management' and 'commissioning' and some of the key theoretical and conceptual models underpinning these activities.

The module will introduce the different elements of a 'commissioning cycle', and will begin to explore those aspects associated with the strategic levels of public service commissioning: assessing need and demand for services; setting priorities; dealing with the politics of commissioning; and involving the public and service users in commissioning activities.

Teaching and learning approach

Unit 1

- Introduction to module
- What is strategic commissioning and why does it matter?
- The evolution of public service commissioning
- An introduction to strategic management
- Commissioning for public value
- Introduction to the library and preparation for assignments

Unit 2

- Power, politics and public service commissioning
- Assessing need and demand
- Decision-making and priority-setting
- User involvement in strategic commissioning
- Public involvement in practice - The Keighley participatory budgeting pilot
- Strategic commissioning in practice – group work and presentations

Learning outcomes

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

- Understand and critically examine the policy context and political environment in which strategic commissioning has become a core element of public service management.
- Explain in detail how commissioning and procurement have emerged in the context of wider public sector reform and modernisation, and engage in informed discussion of how they are likely to develop in the future.
- Demonstrate in-depth understanding of key theoretical models underpinning strategic management in the public sector, and critically analyse the concept of "public value"
- Demonstrate in-depth understanding of a range of approaches to assessing need and demand for public services within different sectors and for different service-user groups.
- Demonstrate in-depth understanding of different approaches to decision-making and priority-setting in the allocation of public resources, and discuss their strengths and limitations
- Demonstrate in-depth understanding of the different reasons for and approaches to involving the public in strategic commissioning activities, and critically evaluate the evidence regarding the impact of such involvement
- Critically review national and local policy and practice using evidence regarding effective commissioning
- Critically reflect on the nature of public service leadership, and in particular the leadership of commissioning organisations

Assessment

The module will be assessed through the completion of two written assignments.

- Assignment One 3000 words
- Assignment Two 3000 words

You may be interested in these degrees:

- **Public Management MSc/PGDip/PGCert (/postgraduate/courses/taught/govsoc/public-management.aspx)**
- **Public Management (Local Policy and Leadership) MSc/PGDip/PGCert (/postgraduate/courses/taught/govsoc/public-management-local-policy-leadership.aspx)**
- **Public Management (Health and Social Care) MSc/PGDip/PGCert (/postgraduate/courses/taught/govsoc/public-management-health-social-care.aspx)**
- **Public Service Commissioning MSc/PGDip/GDip/PGCert/GCert (/postgraduate/courses/taught/govsoc/public-service-commissioning.aspx)**

- **Masters in Public Administration (MPA) (/postgraduate/courses/taught/govsoc/public-administration.aspx)**
- **Social Research (Local Government and Public Policy) MA/PGDip/PGCert (/postgraduate/courses/taught/govsoc/social-research-local-government-public-policy.aspx)**

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