

SIM-UNI PILOT CCSG EVENT SUMMARY REPORT

Details of event:

Sim-Uni is a computer based collaborative learning simulation.

https://www.pixelfountain.co.uk/portfolio_category/sim-uni/

The purpose / objective of the workshop session:

- In response to the University pulse survey
 - enabling CCSG staff to understand their contribution to the wider University
 - to increase their understanding of the University especially academic departments and the complexity of the University
- To provide a networking opportunity for the CCSG staff
- A mixed audience with research active staff / academics to learn from each other and share practice

The workshop event took place on Thursday 16 March 2017, Cryfield Sports Pavilion from 9.30 am – 3.30pm. This was a session funded by CCSG. The workshop was also an opportunity to pilot Sim-Uni and evaluate if this would be useful to offer as a learning and development opportunity for Warwick staff. The session was co-facilitated by Paul Ladley (developer) from Pixel Foundation and Sandy Sparks, University of Warwick.

The events was marketed and promoted to CCSG staff and details including the application process can be found on

http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/ldc/researchers/events_news/ras_events/sim_uni_ccsg/eval_sim_uni.

Who attended?

Attendees: 27 delegates attended the workshop (with a further 2 unable to attend on the day). 21 were from CCSG and 8 staff from academic or support departments were invited. (*See appendix 2 for the delegate list.*)

Job roles: a range of job roles (*see appendix 1*)

Department / section represented

CCSG members of staff = 21 CCSG delegates

- Conferences – 5 staff
- IT Services – 4 staff
- Other - 5 staff
- Shared Services and Directorate – 4 staff
- Sport – 1 staff (unable to attend)
- Retail – 2 staff

Non-CCSG members of staff = 8 delegates

- Centre for Professional Education
- CEDAR
- Engineering
- Physics (unable to attend)
- WMG
- WMS
- Library
- OD / LDC

Costs: £1853.90/ 29 = **£63.93** per attendee

External

£1250 + £250 Vat = £1500 – Pixel fountain external cost

Internal resources

Catering / refreshment costs - £353.90

Venue – Cryfield sports pavilion – no cost

LDC co-facilitator – no cost

Feedback and review

As this was a pilot, feedback was requested from attendees and a report has been collated (*See appendix 1 for the collated feedback*)

Feedback was received from 14 attendees = 52 % response rate

9 responses from CCSG

5 responses from the non-CCSG

Feedback was requested on the following:

- What did you learn and /or how did you benefit from attending the Sim-Uni session?
- How will you use what you have learnt / gained from the experience?
- Quote of comment for the website, publicity and marketing information (we will use your quote anonymously unless you state that you are happy for your quote and your name to be used).
- How do you think Sim-Uni could be used in future at Warwick – for which target audience or for what purpose / benefit?
- What are your suggestions for improvements and adaptations?

The feedback has been collated and attached (*see appendix 1*) Feedback was both in response to the formal feedback sent electronically to staff 3 weeks after the events (allowing staff time for reflection), from emails received (two attendees) and linked-in.

The workshop was highly interactive. It met and exceeded the expected outcomes.

Future / Next steps

Recommendations:

- Reduce contract times (see note below ie development costs)
- Provide upfront / pre-work eg video / fact sheets
- Inclusion of tasks related to thematic / areas of focus eg Improve NSS/ link to strategy for leadership programme / Unconscious bias / Diversity & Inclusion - relevant to target group and linking to the strategy of the University
- Can be used as action plan deliverables in the Charter Marks eg Athena Swan, HR Excellence in Research and Race Equality Charter Mark (RECM).
- Maintain and improve on the great interactive learning simulation workshop
- Recommend a 'one-off' hit for 2017/8 and then run three years later.
- Sim-Uni workshop to be offered across the University, and used in a number of development programmes * (as optional) or blended offerings eg WAMP / HoD's Induction / WLP / How
- Warwick Works / T&L / and bespoke L&D sessions for specific target groups, but having delegates from a mix of professional services and academic departments.
- Sim-Uni could be rolled out to CCSG staff for 2017/8. Two courses cost £2K per course.

- Sim-Uni to be rolled out to Research Active staff in the 2017/8 L&D provision. One course £2K for the course.

- Development costs £3,5K - £4K

I think it would be beneficial to put some funding into development for a more bespoke course. Some of the benefits of a more bespoke Sim-Uni being: reduced contact time ie away from work, development of some pre-work (possibly moodle), some factsheets or information sheets on terminology used eg NSS /REF /TEF & also add in key focus / strategic priorities eg income generation for CCSG, increase publication & income / D&I & UB for RAS etc. A guestimate being £3,5 - £5K dependant on the scope of improvements and making some aspects bespoke

- Resourcing and funding* (One possible sources of funding is Impact Funding) for the development, rollout and evaluation of the provision.

Sandy Sparks

May 2017

Appendix 1

Feedback, Review & Recommendations – SIM-UNI

Thursday 16 March 2017, Cryfield Sports Pavilion

9.30am – 3.30pm

Response:

Feedback from 14 attendees = 52 % response rate

9 responses from CCSG

5 responses from the non-CCSG

Job Roles

- General Manager
- Senior production Manager
- Operations Manager
- Project Manager
- Marketing Manager
- Senior Academic Technologist
- Senior Project Manager
- Service Owner IT Security
- Head of Campus & Commercial Services Marketing
- Senior Research Fellow x2
- Senior Teaching Fellow
- Postdoctoral Research Fellow
- Principle Research Fellow

Departments

CCSG members of staff

- Conferences – 3 staff
- Shared Services and Directorate – 3 staff
- IT Services – 3 staff

Non-CCSG members of staff

- WMS
- Centre for Professional Education
- CEDAR
- Engineering
- WMG

WHAT DID YOU LEARN AND/OR HOW DID YOU BENEFIT FROM ATTENDING THE SIM-UNI SESSION?

- **Attendee**
Naturally more improved networking, seeing and understanding more how the University works and the many aspects of how Academic departments have to balance the books versus recruiting, developing their departments and the balance of all this in line with developing long term strategy also how academic areas. Also see how the commercial aspects work and the variance in developing the campus generally.

- **Attendee**
A reinforcement of belief in investing up front to reap greater rewards further down the line. Good to work with people I don't normally have time with outside of meetings.
- **Attendee**
The session was useful to understand some of the complexities when balancing the longer term strategy of the University. From both the capital/ teaching and reputational investment both directly and indirectly. A side of the operation of the running of the University that I am not familiar with.
- **Attendee**
Working collaboratively with colleagues is always a great networking opportunity, but this made me think about how I work with colleagues more widely. Being creative and open and looking to make deals and help each other in the interests of the University. Very interesting thought helping to break through the silo culture we often encounter. Also sparked some interesting debates about the future and direction of the University and how well our strategy was being put into practice.
- **Attendee**
The Sim-Uni workshop was a great opportunity to network with colleagues from across the university and helped to demonstrate that the university is made up of lots of complex moving parts which can impact one another positively or negatively depending on how successfully we can negotiate.
- **Attendee**
I think the biggest area of learning was to appreciate what a governance structure performs for the University. That, in my view was the biggest thing that was missing when we started... and that the structure this provides enables the right conversations to take place.

It was effective at communicating the sheer scale of the University 'system'.

It was powerful in showing how interconnected decisions are, and that we can't always 'have our cake AND eat it' due to restraints.

Having worked close to academic departments, as well as central administration, I had a generally good coverage of the different aspects of the institution - but this certainly filled in some gaps and made my mental map more three dimensional!
- **Attendee**
What other University staff do; importance of collaboration; asking the right questions; challenges to negotiating good outcomes; working well with new people who you might not know at all; everyone was very keen to work together which was a huge bonus
- **Attendee**
Excellent day which provided a beneficial insight into the key strategic thinking, processes and interactions necessary for a successful university.
- **Attendee**
Helped me to understand the complexities involved in running an organisation of this size and scale and the importance of collaboration.

- **Attendee**
About the complexity of the university and how it is interconnected - with change in one area having an impact on another sector. Also, the notion that different units and departments need to pull together to make the university succeed.
- **Attendee**
The value of talking through and confirming in writing anything you verbally agree on. The role of central resources, being cheaper to spend 100k on a central resource rather than 4 departments each spending 30k each on their own. The interdependence on each department for success.
- **Attendee**
It was interesting to get a feel for how a university operates as a unit and the interplay between them, as this is something that we typically don't see past the faculty level, and I liked the idea of getting research active staff to be in the non-faculty departments for the exercise. Watching the impact that proper communication and strategy had on the outcome was also interesting from a leadership point of view, especially having been on the Preparing for Leadership and Leadership in Action programmes.
- **Attendee**
Seeing a big picture view of all operations and the dependencies of each. Interacting and networking with CCSG /other academic staff. How negotiation and influencing skills can impact upon major decisions.

HOW WILL YOU USE WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNT/GAINED FROM THIS EXPERIENCE?

- **Attendee**
Provides a balanced picture and understanding that can be used with decision making as well as thinking about what we offer, how we work and supporting generally something that would be useful is almost to have an ABC of how the academic areas have to review their budgets and what goes into would be great to have to share with immediate management teams, if only to share the understanding and what we are all really here to do.
- **Attendee**
That people at Warwick are surprising resistant to change. That strong departmental structure is wasteful in terms of sharing resource.
- **Attendee**
Whilst the appreciation of the challenges is not something that will affect the day to day ways in which I work. I will be able to share the knowledge I have gained with others and I may have a better insight into why decisions are made.
- **Attendee**
Being more creative in problem solving and having a greater understanding of the conflicting demands of other areas of the University.
- **Attendee**
The workshop demonstrated that 'communication' and 'collaboration' with colleagues/departments was a key facet to success and that I should speak to peers in other

departments across the university regularly to understand their challenges and requirements and how we can support each other to achieve the university goals.

- **Attendee**

I think seeing the complexity of a HEI in such a compressed time and space really gives you an appreciation and regard for other parts... especially the ones you don't want to do! I think it will genuinely impact the respect and time I have for these functions in the future.

I am someone who has a lot of ideas. I've got a better appreciation of the breadth of stakeholders now, and I expect this will improve my consideration of factors around new concepts and 'internal filtering' of what I should propose - this should mean that they come better refined and more viable.

- **Attendee**

Horizon scanning is vital; understanding of the entire ecosystem is challenging and important, but can be very difficult in this environment.

- **Attendee**

I was purposely put into a faculty group which gave me an appreciation of what's important to a typical school or group within a University – my role is very much customer facing and this experience will really help me build those important bridges

- **Attendee**

More networking, more patience and time to understand other's needs and articulate my own

- **Attendee**

It has given me a better appreciation of how all elements of the University work together and how my department and I fit into this.

- **Attendee**

Next financial meeting, being aware of supporting other departments where possible, the emphasis of "your success is my success" across departments/at departmental level.

- **Attendee**

It was interesting to get a feel for how a university operates as a unit and the interplay between them, as this is something that we typically don't see past the faculty level, and I liked the idea of getting research active staff to be in the non-faculty departments for the exercise. Watching the impact that proper communication and strategy had on the outcome was also interesting from a leadership point of view, especially having been on the preparing for leadership and leadership in action programmes.

- **Attendee**

The knowledge of the workings of the university is very useful for a big picture research perspective. Networking : I have made new links with CCSG staff I would not normally come into contact with and have already followed up with a meeting of one of the research staff from another department there. The impact of being able to better negotiate and influence decision making is an area I would look to develop in myself.

QUOTE OR COMMENT FOR THE WEBSITE, PUBLICITY AND MARKETING INFORMATION (WE WILL USE YOUR QUOTE ANONYMOUSLY UNLESS YOU STATE THAT YOU ARE HAPPY FOR YOUR QUOTE AND NAME TO BE USED).

- **Clive Singleton**
A highly useful session on working together, whilst understanding how when working together, we are all looking at what can be done to improve the future across the university.
- **Oliver Cooper**
This is an excellent opportunity for all staff to gain a greater understanding of the University as a whole. It is a diverse and complex organisation and we don't often get an opportunity to have this holistic view. A powerful learning experience.
- **Carl Freelove**
Fantastic and insightful workshop which cleverly packaged up a fun learning experience in leadership, negotiation and networking as a business simulation. Great day networking with colleagues from other parts of the university and to demonstrate we should all be working towards the same common (university) goal regardless of job title or department.
- **Steve Ranford**
A fun, challenging and illuminating time - wearing a different hat for a while and seeing the impact of decisions and actions in a compressed time is a very valuable exercise towards working smarter, more collaboratively and with more awareness of the big picture.
- **Attendee**
I would recommend you attend this event - it was a great opportunity to network with other University staff outside my normal job role; build new relationships which have already been valuable since the course; definitely worth spending a day in this course as part of your development"
- **Charlotte Ridley** – see Linked-In quote
- **Jonty Leese**
I was unsure how this day would benefit me, but in switching roles (academic and professional) helped me understand the different needs and pressures from an infrastructure viewpoint. It was beneficial to get a perspective on how often departments have complementary as opposed to contrasting aims and by working together it can be a truly reciprocal relationship
- **James Amor**
It was interesting to get a feel for how a university operates as a unit and the interplay between them, as this is something that we typically don't see past the faculty level, and I liked the idea of getting research active staff to be in the non-faculty departments for the exercise.
- **Attendee**
A fun and interactive insight into the world of university leadership through negotiation and decision making; and the consequences (good and bad) of these decisions.

HOW DO YOU THINK IT COULD BE USED IN FUTURE AT WARWICK – FOR WHICH TARGET AUDIENCES OR FOR WHAT PURPOSE / BENEFIT?

- **Attendee**
More of the same, more academic areas, just so we can all understand as I am sure there are many more aspects to this. Maybe a follow on session that actually takes some of the ideas and improved understanding to be worked on/developed.
- **Attendee**
Could be widened significantly to include a larger number of staff and departments in one of our larger venues (Slate, Butterworth). As a team building exercise I think it could really work at scale. It would shine light/increase connection to the wider institution for staff that operate with limited connection outside of their dept. Happy to elaborate/work with people if asked (big fan of strategy games of this type).
- **Attendee**
I think it would be best used as part of a WAMP or similar type of course. Particularly in familiarising Managers into the workings of a University. It is useful from a team building perspective so could be incorporated in this aspect.
- **Attendee**
Best suited for commercial and academic staff, as they see less of the University and are professionalised into their areas. Central administration would also benefit from this. Departmental administrators would gain less from this experience, already acting as the bridge between the centre and the departments, unless we add more of a commercial element into it for those staff. I would recommend buying a years' licence and rolling out to as many (high potential) staff as possible in that time.
- **Attendee**
I think the Sim-Uni workshop could form part of an existing management or leadership programme e.g. WAMP but equally it could be adapted to benefit all colleagues in non-management positions to help them to understand the complexities of the university and network with peers.
- **Attendee**
I think it would be great to invite some new members of staff - treat it as part of an induction/onboarding session for people who are new to the sector. I think in this context, it needs more briefing - i.e. NSS needs to be described. And at the end, it needs to be debriefed - i.e. what is different about Warwick from how the game panned out... and relate our current vision to the game.
- **Attendee**
Part of the Warwick leadership programmes; I strongly recommend you have similar sessions with mixed audiences of senior staff and more junior to ensure everyone has the opportunity to find out what value add/contribute to the organisation
- **Attendee**
Should be a regular event for those demonstrating enthusiasm and also similarly minded people who are new into higher education.

- **Attendee**
I think it is of value for everyone to be honest but particularly for mid grade managers working in silos. I think as a follow up to training, they should identify a department they have never engaged with and be targeted with understanding their purpose, challenges and opportunities
- **Attendee**
I think researchers could learn about the complexity and sensitivity of the University system.
- **Attendee**
Middle Management Training, people who struggle to see the 'big picture' of the University.
- **Attendee**
I think the learning outcomes for research staff would mostly be around the way that a university operates and the experience in balancing budgets and in breaking down some of the communication barriers. I think the learning would probably be enhanced for those that had had some leadership training prior to Sim-Uni.
- **Attendee**
This course is probably of most benefit from a very mixed audience pulled from across the university or bigger departments, and would certainly be very useful for any junior academics who may be university leaders of the future.

WHAT ARE YOUR SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS AND ADAPTATIONS

- **Attendee**
Significant opportunity to develop the system if run at a greater scale. Less decisions per group but more negotiation between tables. It then becomes more about cooperation. A few strong characters could persuade the exec, but to the detriment to the Uni as a whole perhaps.
- **Attendee**
For use in Warwick it may be useful to have a direct commercial faculty.
- **Attendee**
While it should remain a generic university (not Warwick, but Uni X), it should be made more Warwick like (e.g. a Russell Group uni), as the arguments around raising and lowering grade boundaries are very different for Universities underperforming. I also think it should have more of a commercial element, as Warwick is unusual in this way and it should be reflected, to add greater value to the experience for non-commercial staff.
- **Attendee**
The rules of the game were quite daunting and seemed complex at first and it took one round to get fully familiar with the way the game works so perhaps a clearer introduction/explanation (e.g. short video?) of the game rules
- **Attendee**
The simulation was set through a very complex set of algorithms which had a cause and effect relationship. I wasn't clear at the end as to what the evidence basis was for these. i.e. was it based on one HEI experience? cherry picking certain scenarios from across the HEI

sector or based on the analysis of a many HEI performance over a period of time? It would be helpful to know, and enable me to make a judgement on how likely this would map onto a real world Warwick experience.

I think that a good debrief would be to have a session of the Warwick vision - this will re-orientate participants from looking to win a game to looking to bring valued contribution to the success of Warwick's aims and ambitions. I think this will open reflections for people to think differently and act differently with regard to Warwick.

- **Attendee**
First of all Sim-Uni isn't a programme! My take was it was a one-off event so not yet part of a programme. It could be improved by enabling the calculator at team level (rather than only by facilitator) - I was impressed with the calculator approach, although felt it could have been used to prove hypotheses i.e. if I spend that, it will develop this. However achieving this in a day session would be challenging.....
- **Attendee**
Felt a bit daunting at first so might need to convince people they can do it
- **Attendee**
Great facilitators, planning.
- **Attendee**
I feel that a full day was a bit too long. I had gained what I needed from the session following 2 rounds. Also, it would have been good to have a time limit at the outset of each round so we knew when we had to get the decision making completed by.
- **Attendee**
Really enjoyed the day Personally I would have preferred it if it started on time, or was advertised as 'drinks and networking' for the first half hour.
- **Attendee**
In terms of improvements I think could be made – the rules of the game were not entirely clear at the start, particularly around not being able to build and increase teaching in the same round, and the way that different things influenced the score was a bit unclear. It would be good if these were a bit better explained at the start, or with some pre-reading. The other area that I thought could use some improvement was the items that each department could buy. The information on what these were didn't provide enough information (certainly true of the Corporate role, I have no real idea about the others) on what the items would influence, or the pros/cons or cost/benefit of buying a particular item. We were left to bring our own assumptions and experience into it to make up for what wasn't written on the cards and I thought in some cases this didn't necessarily tally with how the simulation was running. Two examples of this are the halls of residence, where it wasn't clear if there was a cap on the number of students we could have and that adding a halls would increase this, or if the halls item was only adding to the student experience scores. Likewise with the office of the VC item, it wasn't clear from the text that this would influence governance and incidents to the extent that it seemed to. Some more information and a short list or pros/cons on these items would make some of these issues go away I think.

One other thought I had was that it might be interesting played over several afternoon sessions (to allow for some more time, as things got rushed toward the end) and to have a dedicated team leader for each team for the session. This would slow the game down but

might provide a really good opportunity for some experiential learning around leadership, strategy, communication and so on. Some more directed structure around this, such as suggesting a strategy meeting at the start of each session, might also enhance the leadership type learning.

- **Attendee**

It would be interesting to have just one table representing 'a university' and pitch them against other tables. There would be more learning per session on the impacts of decisions and allow/force each individual to negotiate with each department. (The downside being you would of course require more than one simulation running at a time).

Attendee email feedback #1

Thanks for inviting me to the Sim-Uni workshop – it was a very enjoyable and thought provoking day. You asked me to think about it with a view to its applicability to research active staff and having had time to reflect on it, I think it would be useful but also that it could be improved.

It was interesting to get a feel for how a university operates as a unit and the interplay between them, as this is something that we typically don't see past the faculty level, and I liked the idea of getting research active staff to be in the non-faculty departments for the exercise. Watching the impact that proper communication and strategy had on the outcome was also interesting from a leadership point of view, especially having been on the Preparing for Leadership and Leadership in Action programmes. I think the learning outcomes for research staff would mostly be around the way that a university operates and the experience in balancing budgets and in breaking down some of the communication barriers. I think the learning would probably be enhanced for those that had had some leadership training prior to Sim-Uni.

In terms of improvements I think could be made – the rules of the game were not entirely clear at the start, particularly around not being able to build and increase teaching in the same round, and the way that different things influenced the score was a bit unclear. It would be good if these were a bit better explained at the start, or with some pre-reading. The other area that I thought could use some improvement was the items that each department could buy. The information on what these were didn't provide enough information (certainly true of the Corporate role, I have no real idea about the others) on what the items would influence, or the pros/cons or cost/benefit of buying a particular item. We were left to bring our own assumptions and experience into it to make up for what wasn't written on the cards and I thought in some cases this didn't necessarily tally with how the simulation was running. Two examples of this are the halls of residence, where it wasn't clear if there was a cap on the number of students we could have and that adding a halls would increase this, or if the halls item was only adding to the student experience scores. Likewise with the office of the VC item, it wasn't clear from the text that this would influence governance and incidents to the extent that it seemed to. Some more information and a short list of pros/cons on these items would make some of these issues go away I think.

One other thought I had was that it might be interesting played over several afternoon sessions (to allow for some more time, as things got rushed toward the end) and to have a dedicated team leader for each team for the session. This would slow the game down but might provide a really good opportunity for some experiential learning around leadership, strategy, communication and so on. Some more directed structure around this, such as suggesting a strategy meeting at the start of each session, might also enhance the leadership type learning.

Overall though, I thought it was a good experience and well worth doing.

Attendee email feedback #2

Thank you so much for inviting me to take part in Sim-Uni yesterday. It was such a valuable professional development opportunity! I am very grateful to you.

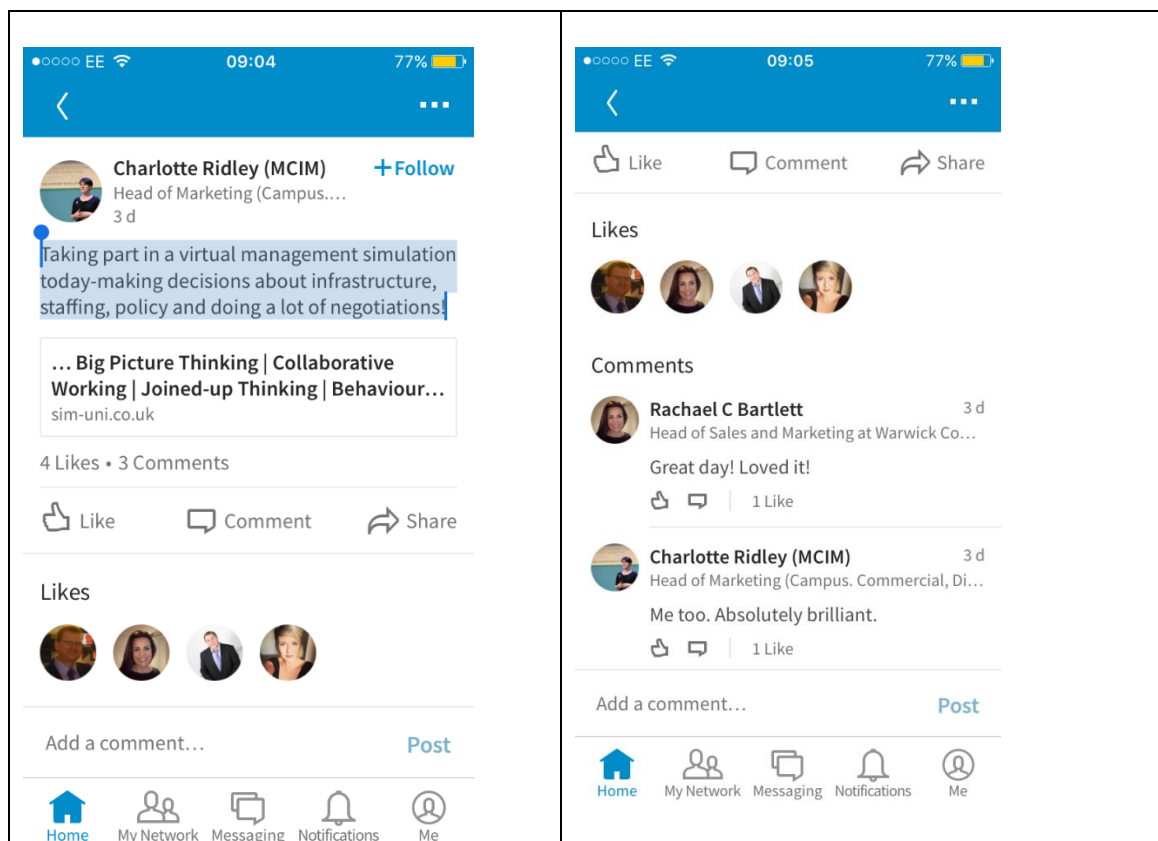
The Sim-Uni event was a wholly positive experience for me. It was engaging, enjoyable and a valuable learning experience. The networking opportunity was valuable in itself – it's created personal connections for me in areas of the university where I previously knew no-one and strengthened links that I already had with inspiring researchers in other departments. It provided a very salutary insight into the complexities of running an organisation as large and complex as a university, modelling the impact of decisions in one area on outcomes in other, often unexpected, areas. It created a learning environment where it very quickly became obvious that we were all having to demonstrate **and develop** our skills in strategic decision-making, communication, negotiation, prioritisation, planning ahead, collegiality, collaboration, working in a team and leadership.

I really hope that the University of Warwick will go ahead and allow this programme to be offered across a range of leadership and personal development courses: it is evident that it would be of benefit to academic, research, teaching and CCSG staff.

Thank you again for inviting me to benefit from this opportunity. I loved it and it has given me much food for thought!

It definitely 'filled my bucket'! Thank you, Sandy!

Linked-in



Appendix 2

Attendee / Delegate list – Sim-Uni

Thursday 16 March 2017, Cryfield Sports Pavilion

9.30am – 3.30pm

| NAME | DEPT |
|------------------|--------------------|
| CCSG | |
| Anthony Avery | CCSG – Conferences |
| Paul Bartlett | CCSG - Conferences |
| Rachel Bartlett | CCSG - Conferences |
| Suzanne Brown | CCSG- Retail |
| Oliver Cooper | CCSG - Shared |
| Susan Davies | Politics |
| Carl Freelove | CCSG - Shared |
| Amy Howes | CCSG - Other |
| Sue Jones | CCSG - Other |
| Jim Judges | CCSG - IT Services |
| Daryl Kittendorf | Politics |
| Gillian Lane | CCSG - IT Services |
| David Mason | CCSG - Shared |
| Gemma Morris* | CCSG - Sport |
| Mark Potter | CCSG - Retail |
| Steve Ranford | CCSG - IT Services |
| Charlotte Ridley | CCSG - Shared |
| Stephen Shaw | CCSG - IT Services |
| Clive Singleton | CCSG - Conferences |
| Andrew Taylor | CCSG - Conferences |
| Mark Udall | CCSG Other |

| | |
|-------------------|-------------|
| Non-CCSG | |
| James Amor | Engineering |
| Yvonne Budden | Library |
| Sue Burrows* | Physics |
| Mairi-Ann Cullen | CEDAR |
| Trudie Donnelly | LDC |
| Vannessa Goodship | WMG |
| Jonty Leese | CPE |
| Stephanie Tierney | WMS |

* = Apologies on the day