



RAM recognised as the best system to manage capital grants

Leading university selects RAM for its unique facility to apportion costs across funded and purchased assets

The University of Sussex, the Brighton based campus with over 9,500 students, has selected RAM's Fixed Asset Management system to manage its requirement for fixed assets.

Sussex is one of the country's best universities in teaching and research and has consistently achieved excellent marks in its assessments. The quality of the research attracts a high level of funding which comes from industry, research organisations and government agencies. These subsidies made up nearly one fifth of the university's income in 2000/2001, so the finance department has an obligation to monitor how the grants are spent and report back to the appropriate bodies.

This was one of the factors that prompted the university finance team to review the way it managed fixed assets. "Each individual asset can be purchased using funds from a number of different sources," explained Michael Jennings, accountant at University of Sussex. "For example, one of our recent capital projects, the Genome Damage and Stability Centre, has been

largely funded by the Joint Infrastructure Fund but has also received monies from other sources. Therefore, we have had to apportion the grants to the relevant assets and produce detailed analyses to report how the money is spent."

"Managing this process on spreadsheets had become a very laborious task," recalled Jennings. "The records were not only hard to maintain but the validity of the data had to be checked repeatedly to avoid errors. Furthermore, they were unable to hold the amount of detail we required against individual assets."

"It was at this point that we called RAM in to demonstrate its

specialist solution," said Jennings. "We chose RAM because of its excellent reputation in the education sector and its prominence in the fixed asset software market. We were immediately impressed with its ability to manage capital grants and its comprehensive range of user definable reports. It was selected over other systems that we viewed because its functionality was superior and it offered us greater flexibility."

"The main benefit for us is the amount of time we are saving," said Jennings. "A report that previously took hours to produce is now available in seconds. We can also track the value of assets both individually and in defined categories. For example, when

new buildings are acquired, such as the Brighton and Sussex Medical School, a joint venture between ourselves and Brighton University, it is easy to establish the exact value of assets within that school and how they were funded."



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