

CASE STUDY: FINAL VERSION

Version of Françoise de Viron (University of Louvain, BE)

Visited by Kari Seppälä (University of Turku, FI)

Updated Final Version: December 2010

University Short Description - Spring 2010

University Title	Université catholique de Louvain (UCL)
Location/country	Louvain-la-Neuve and Brussels BELGIUM
Public or private	Public
Year when the institution was founded	1425
Number of overall students of the institution	21 500 (degree programs) Not available for non-degree programs
Number of academic/research and non-academic/administrative staff	~5 000 members: 1334 academics / 4666 non academics
Number of faculties	3 sectors and 15 faculties - Humanities and Social Sciences Sector with seven faculties : Theology, Law, Social, Economic & Political Sciences and Communication, Management, Philosophy Arts & Letters, Psychology - Medical Sector with four faculties (Medicine, Pharmacy & Biomedical Sciences, Public Health, sciences de la motricité) Science and Technology Sector with 4 faculties (Faculty of Science, the Louvain Polytechnical School, the Faculty of Biology, Agronomy and Bioengineering, Faculty of Architecture, Architectural Engineering and Urbanism)
Kind of degrees offered (if possible including EQF)	Bachelor (6) Master (7) Advanced Master (7) PhD (8)
Date of the Case Study	December. 2010

University-specific best practices in relation to the 10 Commitments

EUA Commitments	Université catholique de Louvain Case Study (chapters or paragraphs)
1 Embedding concepts of widening access and lifelong learning in their institutional strategies	2 5 (Recommendation 1) 10 (conclusion)
2 Providing education and learning to a diversified student population	4 (achievements)
3 Adapting study programmes to ensure that they are designed to widen participation and attract returning adult learners	3.2 (mission), 3.3. (goals 1) and 2)) 5 (Recommendation 4)
4 Providing appropriate guidance and counselling services	3.4 (top priorities 3 and 4) 5 (Recommendation 6)
5 Recognising prior learning	4 (external factor 1)b) 5 (Recommendation 6)
6 Embracing lifelong learning in quality culture	4 (achievements 3)) 5 (Recommendation 5 – quality assurance)
7 Strengthening the relationship between research, teaching and innovation in a perspective of lifelong learning	5 (Recommendation 2)
8 Consolidating reforms to promote a flexible and creative learning environment for all students	4 (Achievements 1) and 2) 5 (Recommendation 3)
9 Developing partnerships at local, regional, national and international level to provide attractive and relevant programmes	5 (Recommendation 7)

10 Acting as role models of lifelong learning institution	10 (conclusion)
<p>Other characteristics of the case:</p> <p>Example of application of an existing framework to strategize and establish action plans</p> <p>Example of a long LLL path and LLL culture development</p>	<p>2(process), 5 (facts and action plans), 9 (SWOT) and 10 (Conclusion)</p> <p>4 (LLL path)</p>

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1. Basic information

Institution: Université catholique de Louvain (UCL)

Country: Belgium

Staff involved in the case study of the institution:

	First and last name	Job title/role	Email
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2. Brief analysis of the case study process (key questions):

- To what extent was the report discussed within the institution?

The Allume project was first presented at the Continuing Education Council (COFC) of the University. A first draft of the case study was written by Françoise de Viron followed by the Members of the Executive Board of the Continuing Education Council (COFC), including the Director of Continuing Education unit (IUFC). A second draft version was discussed with the Pro-Rector for Teaching and Learning, the President of the Continuing Education Council (COFC), the Directors of Administration for Teaching and Learning (ADEF) and the Continuing Education unit (IUFC) and the Members of the Executive Board of the Continuing Education council (COFC).

The case was discussed during the visit of the expert, Kari Seppala.

The final version has been presented to the LLL council (November 5, 2010) and discussed. It has been approved by the LLL council (December 17, 2010).

- How would you describe the case study process (what were the positive aspects and difficulties you encountered)?

Positive aspects:

- This project has provided an opportunity to think about and share opinions on LLL. During the draft period, the case study brought about a process of discussion and development which was both dynamic and enriching with regard to the vision and strategy of the University relating to LLL.

- At the end of the project, and after pooling what the different institutions analysed have produced, the main interest of this case study process is to enable all the players to undertake a benchmarking process and to become familiar with a case study process (methodological dimension).

One difficulty is that the context is undergoing radical transformation, both at the level of the French Community in Belgium (new decree in preparation) and at UCL (on-going fusion of 4 universities into new, as yet unknown, structures).

3. University's LLL vision, mission and goals

3.1. Please briefly describe the overall University vision¹ concerning ULLL

3.2. What is the mission² of the institution towards ULLL?

3.3. What are the goals³ of the institution towards ULLL? What is the schedule for these goals?

3.4. Amongst these goals, please choose the 3 LLL priorities for future years up to 2015

3.1 Vision

In 1999, the framework project for the development of lifelong learning - more specifically Continuing Education at that time - stated ⁴ 'The increase in social and professional mobility as well as the rapid growth of knowledge and technology have highlighted the need for the constant updating and development of knowledge and skills.' The vision of UCL is for 'lifelong learning, considered necessary both for personal growth as well as the development of society'. Currently, this

¹ **Vision:** defines in a few words the desired or intended future state of the institution in terms of its fundamental objective and/or strategic direction in a long term view.

² **Mission:** defines the fundamental purpose of the institution, basically describing why it exists and what it does to achieve its vision.

³ **Goals:** what do we really want? There are a lot of 'similar' words in a strategic planning activity: desired outcomes, plans, policies, goals, objectives, strategies, tactics and actions.

⁴ [Projet Cadre, Prof. Robert Peeters, 1st President of the LLL unit \(IUFC\), 1999](#)

vision is embodied in the slogan 'Lifelong learning at UCL - Knowledge and cutting-edge research for training throughout life'. See the UCL website (also the Continuing Education brochure 2008-2009).

3.2. Mission

Three main principles defined in 1999 are the basis of ULLL at UCL, i.e.

- 1) Continuing education is part of the teaching role of the university and adults are a target group for the university in areas such as degree and certificate courses and short programmes.
- 2) The faculties (departments and schools) are responsible for the content, delivery and assessment of courses.
- 3) Two bodies support the development of ULLL: the University Continuing Education Centre (IUFC) and the Continuing Education Council (COFC) responsible for policy and strategy. The President of the Council is currently the Pro-Rector for Training and Teaching.

'By continuing university education UCL means all university-level education which, by its teaching methods and organisation, is principally orientated towards adults involved in professional life, social responsibilities, and active citizenship. In (re)starting their studies at university these adults will acquire new skills, specialise and/or obtain their first university diploma'⁵ (1999)

UCL therefore aims to respond both to the training needs of those who have not attended university before and for whom gaining a first university degree reflects their desire for professional development, as well as university graduates or equivalent who wish to specialise, update and broaden their skills or change direction.

The mission today has been described as follows: 'Now more than ever, education is considered as a global lifelong endeavour. This is why UCL has created the Continuing Education unit (IUFC). Its role is be attentive to the needs of society (diplomas, companies, etc.) and, where possible, to anticipate them, whilst at the same time providing faculties and schools with a way of making what they offer in the field of continuing education known to the public". (<http://www.uclouvain.be/5224.html>, April 8, 2010)

In short, the mission today is seen as the development/deployment of continuing education, in pursuit of objectives relating both to quality (quality of programme content, quality of the reception given to mature students and the account taken of their expectations, quality of regional cooperation and the account taken of regional needs) and also to quantity (number of certificates or Master's programmes available to mature students as evening or flexible courses).

3.3. Goals/schedule

⁵ Prof. M. Molitor, first President of the Continuing Education Council, (COFC), 1999.

To fulfil this mission, UCL has set priority LLL objectives relating to the development of a system of quality continuing education called “procedure d’agrément” managed by the Continuing Education council and faculties), the reception of adults attending or returning to university and the involvement of the academic staff.

1) Increasing the number of LLL programmes (without additional resources) and maintaining/improving the existing ones.

Against a background of no increase in resources, the growth in LLL courses available at UCL results from the creation of new certificate programmes and other short courses (non-degree) designed for mature students and also from the French Community degree courses that already exist and which accept mature students as a priority or sometimes even exclusively. However, it would not be realistic, at least in the short term, to develop new degree programmes if government funding does not allow it.

The new certificate and other short programmes are made up on the basis of specially designed activities or on the basis of courses taken from those already available at UCL. In these circumstances, the target group is mixed as it comprises both students undergoing initial training and LLL participants (**mixed audience**⁶).

For both scenarios, the key factors for success of this “product range” is as much at the strategic level as the operational one. The strategic dimension involves the relevance of the programmes for a clearly defined and targeted group and innovative positioning (added value) in relation to what is already available. From the operational perspective, setting a price adapted for the target group for each programme as well as the spread of its reputation and image are the main factors for success. Finally, academic and educational quality (e.g. professional relevance, active learning methods) and the guarantee of close monitoring of financial stability are guarantees of durability.

These certificate and other short programmes are constructed so as to respond to the different objectives mature students may have: 1) to specialise, update knowledge, respond to the need to adapt, structure practical experience by acquiring the theoretical background and undergo professional development; 2) to develop new skills, prepare directly for changing fields, take stock or achieve a personal aim; 3) gain a first university qualification for promotion or professional development. (UCL website <http://www.uclouvain.be/formation-continue.html> - extract 30-03-2010)

Furthermore, in degree programmes which are particularly demanding for students who are active in their professions, educational innovations which can be adapted for them such as e-learning and individual learning are encouraged as they too are an important part of the programmes’ continuing appeal.

2) The second priority objective relates to strengthening the policy of receiving mature student and promoting them. There are various strands involved:

⁶ For more information see for instance, [BeflexPlus project’s report – UCL case study, September 2009](#)

- to ensure that the practical aspects of the programmes are adapted to fit in with the professional, family and social responsibilities of mature students working as professionals e.g. part-time schedules, grouping of courses into continuous slots, a more personal reception and geographic decentralisation of courses.

- to gain approval, in as many areas as possible on the regional, community and national level, for support for training which enables workers to have a reduction in costs or in working time, or the possibility of developing university education to fulfil the requirements for continuing education in certain professions.

- to develop ways designed to guide candidates wishing to study at university through the procedure for recognising prior learning and experience (VAE) and to introduce procedures which help them to return to university.

- the pedagogical and learning aspects related to the reception of mature students are mentioned above as a condition for the continuing education field to grow.

The quality procedure – Procedure d’agrément – for the certificate and other short programmes is an important tool in pursuit of the objective of quality in continuing education. This process of gaining approval for the academic, educational and organisational aspects is jointly managed by Faculties and Continuing Education council (COFC). (UCL website <http://www.uclouvain.be/formation-continue-cofc-agrement.html> - extract 30-03-2010)

3) The third objective is, for full-time UCL lecturers, the recognition of their work in certificate and other short programmes in continuing education following the example of their work in continuing education at degree level. The development of financial incentives, such as additional pay or advantages in kind, is an alternative.

This task is undertaken by the different bodies involved in LLL at UCL according to their different areas of responsibility: faculties (schools), the COFC and the IUFC.

3.4. Top 4 LLL priorities

1. recognition and promotion of lifelong education as a priority element in the teaching mission at UCL;
2. development of new certificates in response to strategic objectives of UCL, needs of civil society, companies, departments or regions and continuation of existing certificate courses; certificate being a flagship product at UCL since 1999;
3. wider intake of mature students in existing degree and non-degree programmes including use of the procedure for recognising prior learning and experience (RPL or in French Procedure VAE – Valorisation des Acquis de l'Expérience) in every Master's programme and improvement of the guidance and support for mature students on their learning progression, helped by the FSE-VAE 2008-2013 project;
4. improvement in methods of reception, teaching and learning on degree programme (e.g. programme modularity, flexible learning path, ...).

4. LLL-path of your institution

- **How can the process and progress on the LLL-path of your institution over the last 10 years be described? What would a time graph look like with the main decisions and a short description of them?**

- From the very beginning, in 1976, there was a movement within UCL which favoured 'permanent education' (e.g. discussion, research and cooperation with public authorities)
- For more than 30 years, since 1981, UCL has developed degree programmes specifically designed for mature students and professionals in three main fields: Social and Economic Policy and Development, Adult Education and Public Health. More recently, other subjects have been added such as Management, Law, Anthropology and Performing Arts. UCL has also been active in the continuing education of professionals such as engineers, teachers and lawyers (CPD – Continuing Professional Development).
- In 1999, UCL decided to go one step further by developing a new policy of continuing education, essentially aimed at CPD (Continuous Professional Development) through the 10 faculties, but also aimed at increasing the number of adults within the degree programmes. A Continuing Education Council was delegated by the Academic Council to develop a LLL strategy and policy.
- In 2000 a Continuing Education unit (IUFC) was established under a Vice-Rector, the President of the Continuing Education Council. IUFC was originally as a 5-year pilot scheme, to develop the lifelong learning process by creating links with the wider world (e.g. business, former students, public services, etc). It supports units and

departments in developing LLL programmes, adapts existing programmes for mature students and provides professional development relevant to the needs of society.

- In 2004, the COFC introduced an executive board to improve the way in which it worked. It is currently made up of six people: four faculty representatives for continuing education (two for human sciences, one for science and one for medicine), the director of the IUFC and one person representing EUCEN and the ETALV Commission of the CIUF.
- In 2005, on the basis of a detailed assessment report⁷, the global LLL objectives and the pilot project were confirmed. The Continuing Education unit (IUFC) was established as a permanent unit and financed by the regular budget of the University. Some specific objectives were refined and prioritised as following: (1) increase the number of 'adult' or mature students on degree courses (2) increase the number of non-degree (mainly certificate) programmes for adult students and the number of participants on these programmes and (3) improve the quality of continuing education programmes and create a strong and attractive image for continuing education at UCL.
- In 2006 and 2007, to implement the reforms of the 'Bologna' Decree, a collaborative and innovative approach was adopted in the design of courses at Master's level, involving 10 faculties, the Department for Education and Teaching (ADEF) and two institutes, the IPM and the IUFC. The strategy of incorporating ULLL perspectives into the design of Master level programmes has made university staff much more aware of the reality of mature students. During this process, a limited number of courses such as Anthropology even decided to develop a pioneering 'mixed group' approach.
- In March 2007, a procedure for recognising prior learning and experience known as VAE ('Valorisation des acquis de l'expérience - VAE) was introduced in UCL. Since the 2004 Decree, universities have adopted Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) which can lead to entry for a second degree (including all Master's programmes) and to partial exemptions for both first and second degrees. The examination board is in charge of assessing how far RPL should apply. UCL launched a project to develop a harmonised RPL process within the university and to develop support tools for candidates and the board of examiners in this area based on pioneering RPL programmes. This project was followed up by a more global one: "Plateforme Interuniversitaire pour la VAE" (2008-2013) to coordinate the RPL process within the French Community in Belgium, involving a special RPL team who provide support to candidates (global project) and to examination boards (UCL-FUNDP sub-project). The LLL Council is responsible for the monitoring the RPL process and its results.

⁷ Michel Molitor et Françoise de Viron, 'Le développement de la Formation Continue à l'UCL, Bilan 2000-2004', UCL Internal Paper, January 2005 and 'Le développement de la Formation Continue à l'UCL, Perspectives', UCL Internal Paper, March 2005

- In 2007, according to official UCL education and training policy, the development of continuing education development was one of the 9 areas for priority action, (see <http://www.uclouvain.be/politique-formation.html>). Greater emphasis on ‘student-centred learning’, shifting from teaching to learning and increasing student autonomy in the learning process, is a major advantage for LL Learners.
- In 2007, a 4 year research programme was set up to study the motivation of mature students in continuing education at university, with particular reference to the qualifications (degree and non-degree) awarded by the four institutions of the Louvain Academy (UCL, FUSL, FUNDP and FUcAM).
- In October 2007, the LLL unit (IUFC) was awarded the Q*For label on behalf of the University.
- 2008 saw the first attempt at the internationalisation, or at least Europeanisation, of a Master’s degree designed for mature and working students. The Master’s degree in Education has existed for 25 years (<http://www.uclouvain.be/prog-2007-fopa2m.html> - June 25, 2009), but one section of the programme (Adult Training and Education) has been restructured in cooperation with the Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers (CNAM), the University of Paris 13 and the University of Geneva.
- In 2009, the IUFC became part of the Department for Education and Teaching, reporting to the Director of the Department; this change involved closer cooperation between those in charge of degree and non-degree programmes. The advantages can be clearly witnessed at different levels: organisation, registration, assessment and quality processes.

• **What were the key incidents/highlights/achievements during these 10 years?**

- **Main Achievements:** programmes and RPL system
 - 1) All regular programmes (diploma or degree programmes) are, in principle, open to mature students. **Some degree programmes are specially designed for them:** the teaching methods and organisation have been completely changed. Other programmes are targeted at a mixed group and the teaching methods and organisation have been adapted to some extent. The fees for mature students are identical to those for other students on degree programmes. In 2008-09, the numbers of designed for mature students are as follows: 8 ‘120 credit Masters’, 2 ‘60 credit Masters’ and 13 ‘Advanced Masters’, in all 23 programmes compared to 17 in 2000-01.
 - 2) **The certificate and other short programmes** (non degree programmes) are designed for mature students (in terms of teaching and organisation) and have to be financially self-supporting. The fees vary from one programme to another depending on factors such as length, type of training and sponsorship. The certificate programmes include assessment and carry ECTS credits (level 6 or 7), which may be

transferable to degree programmes, subject to approval by the programme board. In 2008-09, 122 certificate courses and 49 qualification courses were held, compared with 14 and 60 respectively in 2000-2001.

3) The quality procedure for LLL programmes (Procédure d’Agrément) is now relatively well known and used by the Faculties/schools and the LLL council (COFC). All the programmes mentioned here above have been monitored and ‘agreed’ by the Faculties/schools and the LLL Council (COFC), i.e. they satisfy the quality criteria and therefore are recognised as UCL programmes.

4) Implementation of the RPL system (VAE) in March 2007. [Results to be added]

• **External factors** influencing the development of continuing education:

1) At the level of the French Community in Belgium, the most striking elements are the following:

a) In 2004, the Decree which currently governs universities in the French Community in Belgium (Decree of 31 March 2004, and later decrees, relating to the implementation of the Bologna reform) was not designed with lifelong learning in mind. The Decree did however contain some limited progress in continuing education, in particular in the development of non-degree courses. It also defined the conditions for the procedure for the recognition of non-formal and informal learning (RPL) and outlined the possibility of funding for certain certificate courses (Art. 20).

b) In 2008, with the support of the Government of the French Community in Belgium, the Brussels and Walloon regions and the European Social Fund, the Interuniversity Platform for recognition of prior learning was launched by the CIUF. This enables the procedure to be coordinated between the nine Francophone universities with a dedicated staff to provide support. The aim is to inform the public of this procedure; to guarantee access to it for all candidates and equality of treatment; to create a network of partnerships between universities, Forum, advisers etc.; to facilitate the exchange of good practice between universities; and to monitor and analyse the use of this procedure in the French Community.

c) In October 2009, the CIUF came out in favour of harmonising the field of continuing university education and adopted definitions and positions common to all French Community universities. In particular, they set out the different types and special characteristics of the certificate programmes and other short courses and the definition of a mature student as well as the framework for data collection on lifelong learners, for objective study.

d) Then, at the beginning of 2010, the Minister for Education brought about broader discussion of the development of higher education by organising a series of round table consultations. University LLL was the subject of several discussions. This should

lead to a new framework established by decree which will coherently include university LLL.

- 2) At the regional level, a global economic development plan called the Marshall plan, was launched in 2004, introducing the policy of “poles of competition” in sectors where the region already has significant potential for technological innovation and reinforcing synergies at the research level between industry and university. There is also some limited scope in this plan for the development of joint training activities. However the administrative formalities required to monitor and set up training in this field are fairly cumbersome.
- **Internal factors:** apart from the Bologna reform, two major changes have affected UCL as a whole and continue to have an impact on LLL: first, the creation of the Louvain Academy in 2005 and the construction of UCLouvain since 2008 (on-going fusion of 4 universities); second, the internal reform relating to the separate management of Research and Teaching, discussed since January 2006 and in force since September 2009.

- **What are the obstacles and challenges met (solved/unsolved problems/failures) during these 10 years?**

The provisions that have been implemented for the development of ULLL are based on an “internal and collaborative” model, also called **decentralised internal**⁸, **internal** because the two central internal bodies are created within the university, on the authority of the Academic Council: the Continuing Education Council deals with policy and the University Institute for Continuing Education supports faculties and liaises between the different socio-professional networks; **decentralised** because it is the faculties who have academic responsibility for programmes and teaching, supported by the Continuing Education Council and the University Institute for Continuing Education. Structures to promote dialogue have been created by the central bodies to enable a well-coordinated position to be presented at university level⁹.

The advantages of the decentralised model which has been chosen are as follows:

- responsibility given to faculties and academic staff: integration into the role of teaching in faculties
- a reference service: the IUFC, support for faculties
- a policy body as a point of reference: the COFC and, in particular, the president who is a member of the Rector’s team and responsible for Teaching and Education

⁸ The adopted structure is similar to Model C described in “EUCEN – Managers’ Handbook”, Editor V. Mitchell 2000.

⁹ Framework project for the development of continuing education at UCL, Professor Robert Peeters, 1999

Disadvantages:

- difficulty in moving from an 'individual entrepreneurial' way of thinking to a 'faculty entrepreneurial' one: how best to persuade faculties to integrate real LLL strategies into their own strategies;
- difficulty in preserving the mobilisation or dynamism of those actively involved in continuing education and for faculty members of the COFC. How can interest and investment in continuing education and, more widely, lifelong learning, be encouraged and maintained with academic staff who are already engaged in different reform programmes (Bologna, Louvain Academy, differentiated management of research and teaching)?
- difficulty in gaining an overall picture of the advances in university continuing education (onerous nature of the data gathering exercise in 2004-2005 to take stock of continuing education after 5 years and failure to set up COFC monitoring in 2008). For instance, in 2008, in addition to research projects on adult motivation, the executive board of the LLL Council proposed closer monitoring and follow up of issues relating to mature students within degree programmes at UCL, to gain a better assessment of the impact of these innovative approaches. However, the project did not go ahead. However, as a result of the harmonisation adopted by the CIUF and the current project to develop a tool to collect statistical data on 'adults returning to study' (Observatory), there could be a new opportunity to closely monitor the LLL phenomenon within the university.

- **What kind of organisation has been built in structural/personnel terms?**

As explained above, the selected model is “internal and collaborative” (also termed “decentralised internal”) where there are *three players*:

Role of faculties

The faculties (schools) have the academic responsibility for programmes. In most cases, it is the academic staff, either individually or as a group, who are behind the creation of a programme. It is the academic, research and teaching staff who deliver the teaching, very often with the participation of experts or practitioners from other universities or other professional fields. Faculties ensure that programmes are integrated overall and fit in with their strategy. They are responsible for academic quality and quality of teaching. Where there is a second version, faculties are responsible for the organisation of the programme.

Role of the COFC [extract from website]: (1) It draws up policy on continuing education relating to strategic and organisational choices and submits its opinions and proposals to the UCL Academic Council; (2) It has the right to put forward an opinion on any proposal or decision affecting the policy of quality in continuing education, whether degree programmes or non-degree programmes.

Role of the IUFC [extract from website]: The IUFC enjoys a special position as a liaison between the socio-professional world (companies, organisations, individuals) and the University (faculties and administrative departments), in order to create or adapt continuing education programmes, reflecting the development of learning progressions and the expectations of the socio-professional world. The IUFC has formed several partnerships with other European universities and professional associations.

The role of the IUFC is to support academic staff in the design, promotion and implementation of new continuing education programmes and to help them become permanent through the transfer of experience towards faculties to enable them to repeat programmes, to professionalise the administration and management of continuing education at UCL, to promote the whole area of continuing education at UCL to different target groups and to take on the role of monitoring continuing education. The support role to faculties in the programmes design is unique in the French Community in Belgium.

See diagram on Annex III.

5. Future of LLL at your institution

- **How do you see the future perspective of your institution?**
- **How do you plan to reach your goals (described under 3.3.)?**
- **What are the next steps?**
- **What are the conditions to meet?**
- **Which trends have an influence on your institution?**

This response is centred on 11 areas: the 10 recommendations from the BeflexPlus project as well as finance, a vital element underlying the development of LLL. It includes both action or stages in taking action as well as questions about the actions or stages to be taken as part of the overall action.

Recommendation 1: “each university is invited to recognise and integrate LLL as an aspect of its institutional mission and culture; to elaborate its own dynamic **definition of a LLLU (LifeLong Learning University)**, to develop a comprehensive and coherent **strategy** offering opportunities to ensure continuity in a more and more fragmented individual and professional life and an increasingly fragmented knowledge society and social environment; to implement its strategy in a participative, collective and cooperative way.”

- **Facts:** UCL has drawn up its own definition of continuing university education in a collective and cooperative way through the COFC, the IUFC and the faculties, during the last ten years. UCL has developed a culture of university continuing education, but it is still fragile.
- **Actions:** In relation to this recommendation and in view of the development objectives listed in 3.3 and 3.4, the stages of development are, on one hand, the preservation and consolidation of the structures and the processes already set up and which have proved their efficiency, namely the policy body of the COFC and the reference service of the IUFC and, on the other hand, the continuing efforts to inculcate greater awareness on the part of sectors, faculties, schools, and academic staff (with greater involvement of faculties/schools in the consultations and work of the COFC) and the integration of all the processes related to continuing education actually within the institution’s procedures (for example links between COFC-CSES, COFC-CEFO and COFC-CA), in addition to widening the discussion, namely changing the paradigm of continuing university education to lifelong university education, and the impacts of change, by involving all the relevant players.
- Another key action it to preserve the interest and investment of academic staff, for example by taking account in the PAI/DPA. This point is developed in the paragraph on funding.

Recommendation 2: “Universities should develop intensive and comprehensive scientific **research** in the field of LLL and use its results to support, feed and guide the implementation of a Lifelong Learning University”

The actions under way are

- the circulation, discussion and promotion of the research results on Adult Education and LLL (in particular the longitudinal research carried out since 2006) in the COFC ;

- the continuing development of the informal interdisciplinary research group on adult education (RIFA), created in 2009 and probably the formalisation and the embedding of this group in a UCL research centre (GIRSEF) and the continuation of doctoral research in this area (FNRS);
- the involvement of certain academic staff from the RIFA group in the European research institute for adult education (IERFA).

Recommendation 3: *“Universities should exploit the **opportunities offered by the Bologna process** (credit system, learning outcomes, recognition of prior learning and non formal and informal learning,...) to provide flexible learning progressions and continuous guidance, to avoid fragmentation, to allow and encourage interdisciplinarity, to ensure continuity and progression without dead ends, and to promote widening participation, while sustaining a wide range of responses to local needs”*

- Facts: Learning outcomes provide a major opportunity for LLL. However, outside various pilot projects (e.g. at the Louvain Polytechnic School, the Louvain School of Management or the Public Health Faculty), and in spite of the expertise gained by the IPM in this field, there is certainly little awareness of this on the part of academic staff and it is difficult to implement. Actions: Special attention from the authorities and specific action from LLL players are necessary.
- Facts: The credit system (ECTS) is used at UCL for all degree programmes as well as non-degree programmes. However it seems difficult at the present time to increase the flexibility of programmes and ensure better continuity in the learning progression of mature students without amending the current legal framework. Improvements in modularisation, for example, are necessary. Action: Recommendations on this have been made during the consultations organised by the Minister of Education.

Recommendation 4: *Universities should build a **learner centred educational model of management** for LLL integrating pedagogical, organisational and financial dimensions, and should keep it under review.*

- Facts: The overall basis for the organisation of teaching at UCL is globally centred on students. There are numerous opportunities for individualised learning progressions, in line with the decree. In the current budgetary situation, it is impossible to further develop individualisation of learning progressions.
- Facts: The application forms for certain certificates and degrees (e.g. Education) notably take account of prior learning and experience and enable these elements to be integrated into the teaching provisions.

Recommendation 5: *Universities should ensure that curriculum partnerships are part of the **quality assurance** arrangements of the university and that the diversity of learners, of the pedagogical objectives, of the modes of participation are all taken into account along with the needs of the partners*

- **Facts:** The quality procedure for programme development (approval procedure) has proved to be efficient and flexible; it must be continued. **Action:** It should continue to be adapted according to internal and external developments (e.g. adaptation to new structures and adoption of CIUF recommendations).
- **Facts:** It should however be noted that faculties/schools make use of this procedure in different ways (diverse appropriation).
- **Facts:** The procedure for accrediting prior learning and experience (VAE) is being introduced into Master level programmes. However, apart from certain faculties where the procedure is widely used or has been used for a considerable time, there is little or no discussion on the quality of the procedure or monitoring for quality. At the present time, the COFC is unable to carry out its role as guarantor of quality in the VAE procedure. **Action:** The VAE-FSE team should be asked to take this on.

Recommendation 6: *Universities should develop RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning) where it is not yet in place and further develop established practice, drawing on the tools, models, expertise and experience that exists; and increase the investment in services to learners: **guidance and counselling, support programs, e-learning***

- **Facts:** The FSE-VAE platform and particularly the creation of a team of VAE advisers for UCL and FUNDP have contributed to the implementation of good practice in the admission of students on the basis of their prior experience.
- **Actions:** Nevertheless, the issues related to their presence, integration and success in university courses are challenges for the whole university community. In particular there are questions about how best to support them through their increasingly individualised learning progressions. Need to collect and analyse data and information (follow-up of the students after admission; impacts on programmes; guidance of VNFL-IL students during their university learning path ; ...)
- **Facts:** The long-term funding of VAE (beyond 2013) is also a major issue. **Action:** Recommendation on this has been made during the consultations organised by the Minister of Education

Recommendation 7: *Universities should improve their understanding of the various partnerships and collaborations that exist in their institutions in order to ensure synergies and maximum benefit for the learners, the stakeholders and the universities themselves*

- **Facts:** It should be noted that a large number of certificates are organised and sometimes awarded in partnership, either with experts, practitioners or colleagues from other Higher Education Institutions. Finding partnerships and associations is a clear strategy.
- See recommendation 9.

Recommendation 8: *Universities should **communicate** more effectively – internally and externally – their new structures, reforms, services, policies and strategies to staff and students and to potential learners and external stakeholders*

- Facts: The work of promotion, communication and information carried out by the IUFC both internally and externally must be continued, increased and supported by the authorities. Action: It would be attractive to integrate it further into the global university communication plan.

Recommendation 9: *Universities should develop a concept of a ‘**networked university**’ involving a range of external stakeholders – enterprises, other educational providers, professional associations and social partners, trade unions, local authorities and other regional (and national) partners*

The stages/issues under way or to be developed are:

- In 2010, through the IUFC, an official consultation was held with the CSES, a committee responsible to the Academic Board whose role is to provide structure for the role of the university to serve society as a whole. This should enable external contacts and regional cooperation to be strengthened.
- The external COFC has, in the past, played an active liaison role between different professional areas. However it has proved extremely difficult to maintain, on a long-term basis, the impetus for exchange on a voluntary footing. Questions: What incentives would help? The question of the level of the liaison is also relevant: should these partnerships be at the level of faculties and schools? If so, should there be coordination to ensure a global view? The limits of the decentralised internal model are clearly affected.

Recommendation 10: *Universities should develop **platforms**, joint staff development and funding streams to support the networking*

- No action in prospect

Major issue: funding

Facts:

The development of continuing education programmes and the attendance of an increasing number of mature students at university raise questions about the funding of lifelong learning, in a context where, on one hand, public funding for degree programmes is strictly limited yet, on the other hand, there is an entrepreneurial approach towards certificate and other short programmes, which are subject to self-financing requirements.

First and foremost, it should be remembered that continuing education provides real added value for individuals and/or the organisations that employ them. Some of the certificate and other short programmes are designed for target groups who are able to pay programme fees so that their budgets are balanced. Organisations and individuals may also benefit from grants depending on their size, sector of activity and location.

Actions under way or to be developed:

In the broad context of knowledge and cutting edge research being used for lifelong learning, continuing education projects are, in part, the kind of projects involving technological innovation often including an element from wider society. Since technological innovation is publicly funded for reasons of competitiveness (e.g. the Marshall Plan), there are grounds for improving the way both the subject areas and the related sources of funding are monitored. The University is therefore well positioned in relation to these sources of funding which are nevertheless limited and more often reserved for research than education.

Other sources of funding (e.g. Art. 20 of the Bologna Decree), also limited, are designed for projects with a wider dimension for society and non-technological.

As for the development of projects in sectors where there is little money and without public subsidy so that balancing the budget is difficult, this implies a faculty or institutional policy decision to support this kind of activity through other more profitable projects or perhaps even the creation of chairs of continuing education.

Another possibility is to create bridges between degree programmes and other programmes in order to rationalise what is available.

Certain training programmes such as Masters and Advanced Masters offer courses which are likely to interest a continuing education target group wishing to retrain or widen their skills. This formula will only be attractive if the Master level courses selected to build a certificate course form a logical grouping which fulfils an identified need of a target group. Moreover, conditions relating to the educational approach (drawing synergies from the coexistence of groups undergoing initial training and those in continuing education) and practical organisation (timetable and reception) must be fulfilled to enable the formula to be successful.

Conversely, the introduction of specialisation certificates rather than Advanced Masters offers advantages in terms of flexibility (e.g. number of credits, teaching staff etc.) The success of this formula, in which students undergoing initial training would join those in continuing education, would also depend on the conditions listed above.

Moreover, cooperation with other universities in terms of partnerships is a formula to be encouraged as it allows the development of richer programmes and decreases competition which is very often costly and of no relevance to our students.

In a wider context, a note is being drafted by the CIUF to identify financial support for LLL. Funding for lifelong learning should be taken account of in the new decree and the Minister of Education is now aware of it.

6. Funding systems of the institution and the LLL activities

- **Please explain what your University's definition of LLL is. Do you follow a more holistic perspective for the whole institution or, in financial terms, do you have different budgets allocated? If you do not have a separate LLL funding stream, then please give the information on the total University budget and give an indication on how you define and measure in your University (also including services & provisions).**

Degree programmes are supported by public funding.

As far as non-degree programmes are concerned, all programmes are required to be self-financing (costs met by enrolment fees or other sponsorship). The financial risk of creating new programmes is borne locally by faculties (schools) or lecturers. However, some certificates receive direct funding (Art. 20 of the French Community financing) for a maximum of 3 years, designed to support new, innovative projects developed in cooperation with other French Community universities.

The investments the University makes are as follows:

- the University's ordinary budget contains provisions for the staff and the operating budget of the LLL unit
- the University is financially responsible for 50% of the VAE support project in the form of the working time of staff employed by the university and involved in the VAE process.

Table 1:

	Please specify the year	Total University budget	LLL total budget (IUFC only)	Research budget
Approximately 10 years ago (2000)	2000		350,000	
Approximately 5 years ago (2005)	2005		295,000 ¹⁰	
Current				
Future				

Table 2: Data not available for LLL because of the decentralised model

Sources of income	Current total University budget	LLL total budget
Public	... %	... %
Student fees	... %	... %
Industry	... %	... %
Research	... %	... %
Other (please specify)	... %	... %
Total	100%	100%

- **What are the allocation procedures within the institution? Who decides what and how? In general? Who controls the income?**

The income allocation and monitoring procedures are decentralised at the level of faculties/schools. The COFCI verifies via the quality procedure (Procédure d'Agrément) that each self-financed programme has a balanced initial budget and balanced final accounts.

- **Approximately what percentage of the budget could be used by the institutional leadership to implement new initiatives?**
- **What does the institution perceive as strengths and weaknesses in terms of its funding, and how could weaknesses be remedied and strengths be further enhanced?**
- **Which trends/future perspectives you see for the funding streaming?**

The trends for streaming of funding will depend mainly on the new legal framework: a new decree is now in preparation for 2011. No precise information is yet available.

7. Institution's LLL Staff

1. **Do you have staff who are described as LLL staff? If so, please describe their functions and positions.**
 - **How many are internals/externals?**

¹⁰ In 2005, the global volume of LLL was estimated at 1,000,000 Euros. See Michel Molitor et Françoise de Viron, 'Le développement de la Formation Continue à l'UCL, Bilan 2000-2004', UCL Internal Paper, January 2005

- **How many full and part time staff?**
- **How many people are involved in total in LLL provisions in your institution?**

The model showing how continuing education at UCL is organised and regulated was outlined in point 4. Those involved are as follows:

The faculties and/or the academic staff deliver continuing education. They have academic responsibility for the programmes which must undergo an approval procedure within the faculty (200 programmes mentioned in point 4). The business risk of launching programmes and their administration are also the responsibility of faculties. The selection of candidates, including mature students with prior learning and experience, is also carried out by faculties.

Faculties have put in place specific approval procedures to these ends. Moreover, certain faculties or schools have created special LLL administrative units e.g. the Faculty of Public Health and the School of Management.

Two bodies specifically dealing with continuing education were created at university level in 2009, with a third, on a temporary basis, in 2008.

- The Council for Continuing Education (COFC) is the policy body for continuing education at UCL, headed by the Pro-Rector for education and training. The Council comprises representatives for continuing education from 14 faculties and representatives from departments linked to continuing education: the IUFC is represented by the director, but advisers are also invited to meetings; ADEF; CIO; IPM; the employment unit and the EUCEN/ETALV-CIUF representative. The COFC has an executive board with 6 persons including the director of the IUFC) who plans and prepares the work and deliberations and manages the quality procedure.

The director of the IUFC is responsible for liaison between the COFC and the CEFO.

- The University Institute for Continuing Education (IUFC) is the operational support body for continuing education at UCL, whose role is to stimulate and support the development of continuing education at UCL. The IUFC team comprises a director whose role is to ensure that activities are in line with the objectives and priorities defined by the University and to oversee the division of work; an assistant; three continuing education advisers responsible for programme design; and administrative and logistical staff responsible for the promotion and organisation of programmes according to strictly defined quality criteria (about 6 FTP)

- The VAE unit is funded from 2008 to 2013 by the FSE and the university (UCL and FUNDP) (about 2,5 FTP). It aims to increase the number of students enrolled at university through the VAE procedure and to ensure that all those involved (VAE networks, examination boards, lecturers, administrative staff and information centres) are aware of the procedure and have the necessary tools to make it work smoothly.

- Other internal resource bodies are also available for continuing education: ADEF, CIO, ETU, IPM and the Employment Unit.

8. Institutions/ LLL target groups and services

- **At which target groups are your provisions aiming?**
- **Which are the most interesting target groups for your institution and why?**
- **Which kind of support services are established for the target groups and how effective are they in enhancing their achievements?**

The main target groups of LLL policy are individual learners, including alumni. Amongst them, a specific target group is defined for each programme during the design and promotion phase.

Depending on the programme, other target groups might include organisations (e.g. private companies, public authorities, public companies and NGOs) or specific groups such as the unemployed, immigrants/ refugees etc.

Continuing education is a response to different objectives:

“ - Specialise: to update your knowledge; to fulfil a need to adapt; to structure practical experience through theory; to continue your professional development by building on the foundations of your basic education.

- Change direction: to develop new skills; to directly prepare for active life in another field; to take stock of what you are doing at present or to aim for a personal achievement

- Gain a first university degree: for a promotion or professional development; with the aim of being confirmed in the job you are currently doing; to seek new responsibilities.”

(UCL website <http://www.uclouvain.be/formation-continue.html> - extract 30-03-2010)

(Please expand the text box as necessary to include all relevant information)

9. In-depth SWOT analysis¹¹

- **On the basis of the 3 priority goals, please complete a SWOT Analysis to assess your institution's capacity to further develop into a LLLU (please provide your institution's definition of a LLLU or give a explanation to which concept you refer (BeFlex+/LLL Charter, etc)**

On the basis of the three priority objectives from 3.4 and based on the analysis in point 5, we can summarise the SWOT analysis as follows:

UCL's **strengths** to achieve its priority objectives are:

- awareness of the importance of continuing education (vision) and of the need to open up the university to a wider range of students, which dates back more than thirty years – the issue of 'permanent education' has existed since 1976 - and was formalised in 1999;

¹¹ A SWOT analysis must start with defining a desired end state or objective. The aim of any SWOT analysis is to identify the key internal and external factors that are important to achieving the objective. These come from within the company's unique value chain. SWOT analysis groups key pieces of information into two main categories: internal factors (S W) and external factors (O T):

- support of the academic authorities for the principle of LLL;
- research on adult education;
- experience of strategic and voluntarist development of continuing education for more than ten years, leading to positive results (main achievements point 4);
- existence of outstanding continuing education structures (the IUFC, the COFC, few faculties' structures), at both strategic and operational levels, in particular the existence of specific skills in designing programmes for mature students;
- a model of organisation - decentralised internal with the support of two central bodies – globally accepted and understood by the all the university community.

UCL's **weaknesses** to achieve its priority development objectives are:

- competition with other missions of the university (e.g. research or internationalisation) for those involved in faculties and academic staff;
- difficulty for faculties in developing a specific LLL strategy when the culture of faculty strategy is globally weak;
- monitoring and management of development difficult because of the decentralised model;
- lack of awareness of the wider phenomenon of lifelong learning, the impacts it causes and the changes it brings about (change of perspective);
- lack of awareness of the specific questions related to teaching that continuing education raises; continuing education is currently not considered as a sufficiently strategic issue to benefit from funding for improvement, as other projects do (internal teaching development fund - FDP);
- the strategy's 'lack of permanence': the strategy is linked to the policy priorities of the rectoral team which may change every five years whereas, like any major cultural shift, lifelong learning requires time to be understood, discussed, accepted and implemented. The timescales are not the same which can cause problems.

The **opportunities** currently available to UCL are

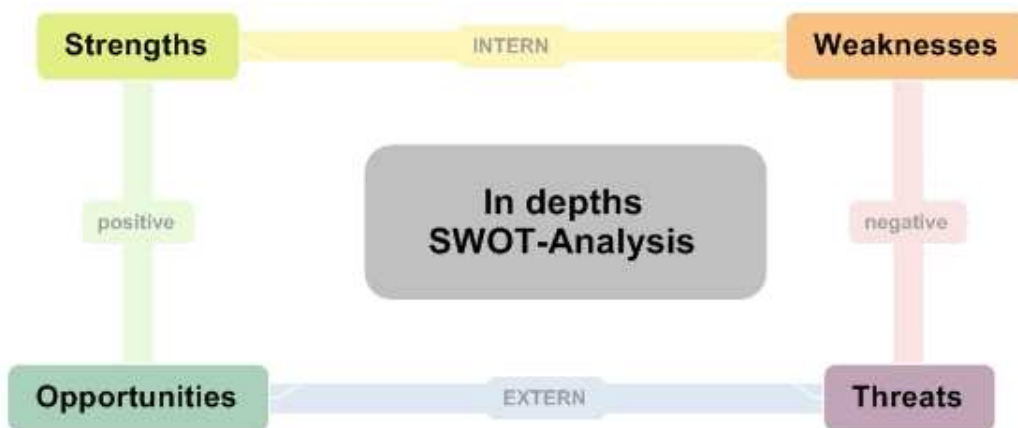
- the so-called "Marshall" regional development plan for research and technological innovation, particularly the link between research-education;
- new legal framework which would take into account the phenomenon of lifelong learning and particularly its funding;
- work on harmonising and gaining an objective picture of the LLL phenomenon being done by the CIUF;

- demands society makes on UCL (by way of example, the quantitative explosion in the number of mature students on certain degree or certificate programmes).

Apart from the failure of the opportunities listed above, the main **threats** are:

- absence of specific funding for LLL;

- at this point, it seems difficult to assess the impact of the creation of UCLouvain on the development of lifelong learning within UCL: at present there is no common vision within UCLouvain. There is also a risk that continuing education could be drowned in the global movement towards fusion.



10. Conclusion

To generalise and sum up the SWOT analysis results of this case study, we draft an overall sketch of top 5 "Do's and Don'ts" in the construction of a LLLU.

DO's

- **Define on a cooperative way a LLLU strategy adapted at Your University and discuss it at all levels of the University;**
- **Make sure of the Authorities' support on a long-term perspective;**
- **Work collaboratively taking care of involvement of all internal and external stakeholders;**
- **Design and implement the internal and external changes in parallel (e.g. work on the political and legal framework via inter-university cooperation)**
- **Articulate the strategic and operational levels, including resources plan (finances, human resources ...) and indicators.**

The logo for ALLUME, featuring the word in a bold, orange, sans-serif font with a yellow glow effect.

DON'Ts

- *Underestimate the cultural and organisational changes: it's a learning process;*
- *Underestimate the funding issue and the legal framework;*
- *Forget to monitor and follow-up the strategy implementation: need of data, information, results, facts, ...;*
- *Think that it's finished and forget to evolve even if you are a first mover;*
- *Forget the congratulations and incentives.*

Annex I Glossary

ADEF	l'administration de l'enseignement et de la formation	Teaching and Training Department
ARE	l'adulte en reprise d'études	mature student <i>[CIUF definition to be added]</i>
BeFlex	-	Benchmarking Flexibility in the Bologna Reforms
CfB	la Communauté française de Belgique	the French Community in Belgium
CIO	le centre d'information et d'orientation	student support office
CIUF	le Conseil Interuniversitaire Francophone	the Interuniversity Council of the French Community in Belgium
COFC	le Conseil de la formation continue	the Continuing Education Council
CEFO	le Conseil à l'enseignement et la formation	the Council for Education and Teaching
CPD	-	Continuous Professional Development
CSES	le Conseil du Service à la Société	Council for service to society
EPL	l'Ecole Polytechnique de Louvain	the Louvain Polytechnic School
ETALV	l'éducation tout au long de la vie	lifelong learning
ETU	le Secrétariat des Etudiants	Student Office
EUCEN	-	European Association for University Lifelong Learning
FCU	la formation continue universitaire	university continuing education
FNRS	Le Fonds de la Recherche Scientifique	Academic Research Fund

FSE	Le Fond Social Etudiant	student social fund
FTE	-	full-time equivalent
FUNDP	Facultés Universitaires Notre-Dame de la Paix (Namur)	University of Namur
GIRSEF	le Groupe Interfacultaire de Recherche sur la Socialisation, l'Education et la Formation	Interfaculty Group for Research on Socialisation, Education and Training
IERFA	l'Institut Européen de Recherche sur la Formation des Adultes.	the European Research Institute for Adult Education
IPM	l'Institut de Pédagogie et des Multimédia	the Institute for Education and Multimedia
IUFC	l'Institut Universitaire de Formation Continue	the University Institute for Continuing Education
LLL	-	lifelong learning
LSM	-	the Louvain School of Management
PAI/DPA		
RIFA	Recherche Interdisciplinaire en Formation d'Adulte	interdisciplinary research on adult education
RPL	-	Recognition of Prior Learning
ULLL	-	University LifeLong Learning
VAE	Valorisation des Acquis de l'Expérience	procedure for accrediting prior learning and experience

Annex II Organisational structure of Continuing Education

See enclosed diagram