

The forgotten Student records officers In challenging times

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A quick scan of the workshop titles for this years' SROC show that we are in very changing, and for some, challenging times, but where does the Student Records Officer fit into the future.

When resources tighten year on year, this seminar will look at whether the role can survive, how it is adapting already, what the skill set might be for Student Records Officers be in the future, and where the promotional next-steps are for Student Records Officers.

What we'll consider

- History, a look back over last 30 years
- The current period
- The future - opportunities for Student Records teams?

History

- 1970s. With few exceptions everything manual.
- SRO's powerful role, custodian of the records, authority, understood the rules, manual processes,
- SRO had to know how everything worked and who did what in process chain,
- 1980's early computerisation ,still mainly manual Income experience.
- Timing of invoices, manual process, part time invoicing a problem, and still is 30 years later

- 1990's computerisation
- Devolution of records functions as Institutions grew larger, queues everywhere
- Computerised record, not process flow, nor management information
- 1993 HESA light touch introduction
- SRO is this the point control was lost?

- The last decade
- Change, change, change, more complexity,
- HESA, UKBA, league tables, SLC, fees, devolution, TNE, budget cuts, management information, online student records, KPI's, benchmark targets, college partnerships
- Is your student record system really a SR system playing at being a management Information system? Tensions between records management and other requirements

- What's all this to do with whether SRO will survive?
- To be here at SROC today shows SRO's are surviving and willing to adapt
- Actually Institutions need SRO's more now than at any time since the 70's / 80's
- But put a 70's SRO in this room today, would they think they were in the wrong place, or has nothing really changed (yet), just done differently?
- And of course far more of it - pace has changed

- System improvements changed the skill base needed, but many institutions slow to keep up with changing staff needs
- Self-serve not only changes data entry, but expectations of both students and management.
Need for real time data
- Expectations of students often greater than those of HEI's. Some pushing their records systems others trying to catch-up
- HESA data now vital, not checking it is at your peril

- When did your institution really take HESA data seriously?
- At Wolverhampton we have a member of staff that uses audit standard data sampling processes,
- Complexity not understood by many in an HEI, you need to have a VC or PVC who does understand the complexity, and the risks of incorrect data

- **Wolverhampton evolution:**
- Centralised it's Registry in the mid 90's. In 90's although computerised, data entry was the key role. Still paper based, queues, etc, staff always playing catch-up
- Staff skills, lots of low paid "data entry" staff, services run through Campus Registries and large centralised team, records, timetabling, programmes, admissions, graduation

- **2005 external review of Registry.**
- 41 recommendations - most drastic:
 - complete restructure, all staff to re-apply for posts and to loose the lowest grade of staff.
 - Up-skilling of staff.
- Little data entry work, more interpretation of data, proactive with students in Here2help offices.
- Each Here2Help serves 2 schools each (stop them going native)

- Central Registry smaller - providing expertise, overseeing process, central co-ordination
- Student Records team, oversees graduation, HESA, invoicing, SLC liaison, bursary authorisation, award verification, courses set up,
- Most of the data verification, processing etc is done in Here2help offices. Consistency driven through central SR team.

- Most staff on generic JD. Eg. All student office assistants across 5 offices. All functional officers (graduation, timetabling, fees, HESA)
- All heads of unit (admissions, SR, quality, planning, programmes, Here2help managers)
- Provides staff development opportunities.
- The heads are the process owners for system development. Skills very different from the SR officer of the 80's
- Investment in system support. Each team has a system developer rather than a central team.

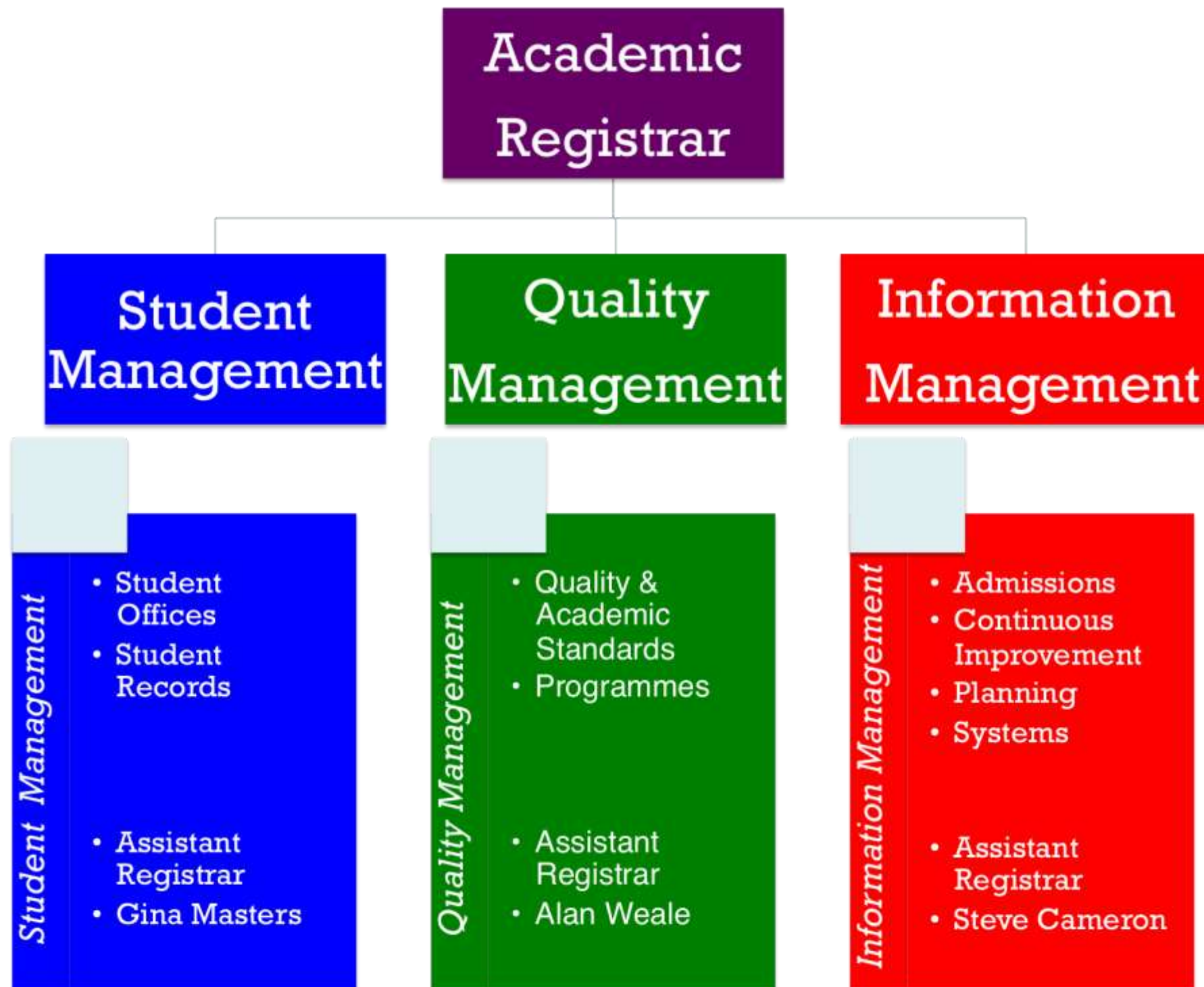
- **Generic Roles for Staff**

- Most staff on generic Job Descriptions. All student office assistants across 5 offices.
- All functional officers (graduation, timetabling, fees, HESA) JD describes the core duties, the specific post is then defined by the job outcomes
- All heads of unit (admissions, SR, quality, planning, programmes, Here2help managers
- Provides staff development opportunities.

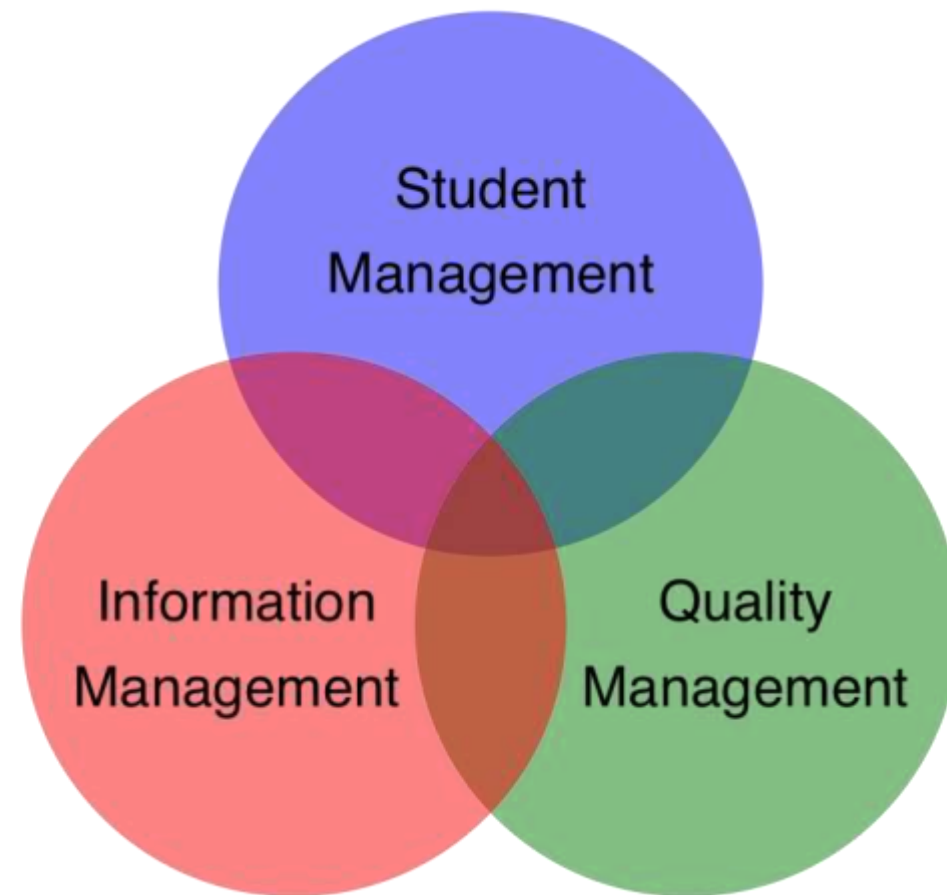
- So what for the future
- My guess central rather than de-central. Central can generally deliver better cost savings and easier to maintain quality
- At senior SRO level – staff need to be systems experts that can manage process
- Staff looking for promotion will need all round experience, SR cannot be seen in isolation from other academic admin.

- Fewer staff, with more responsibility
- Huge responsibility for accuracy of data and processes.
- Requirements to do things sooner,
- Next generation of SRO - risk takers,

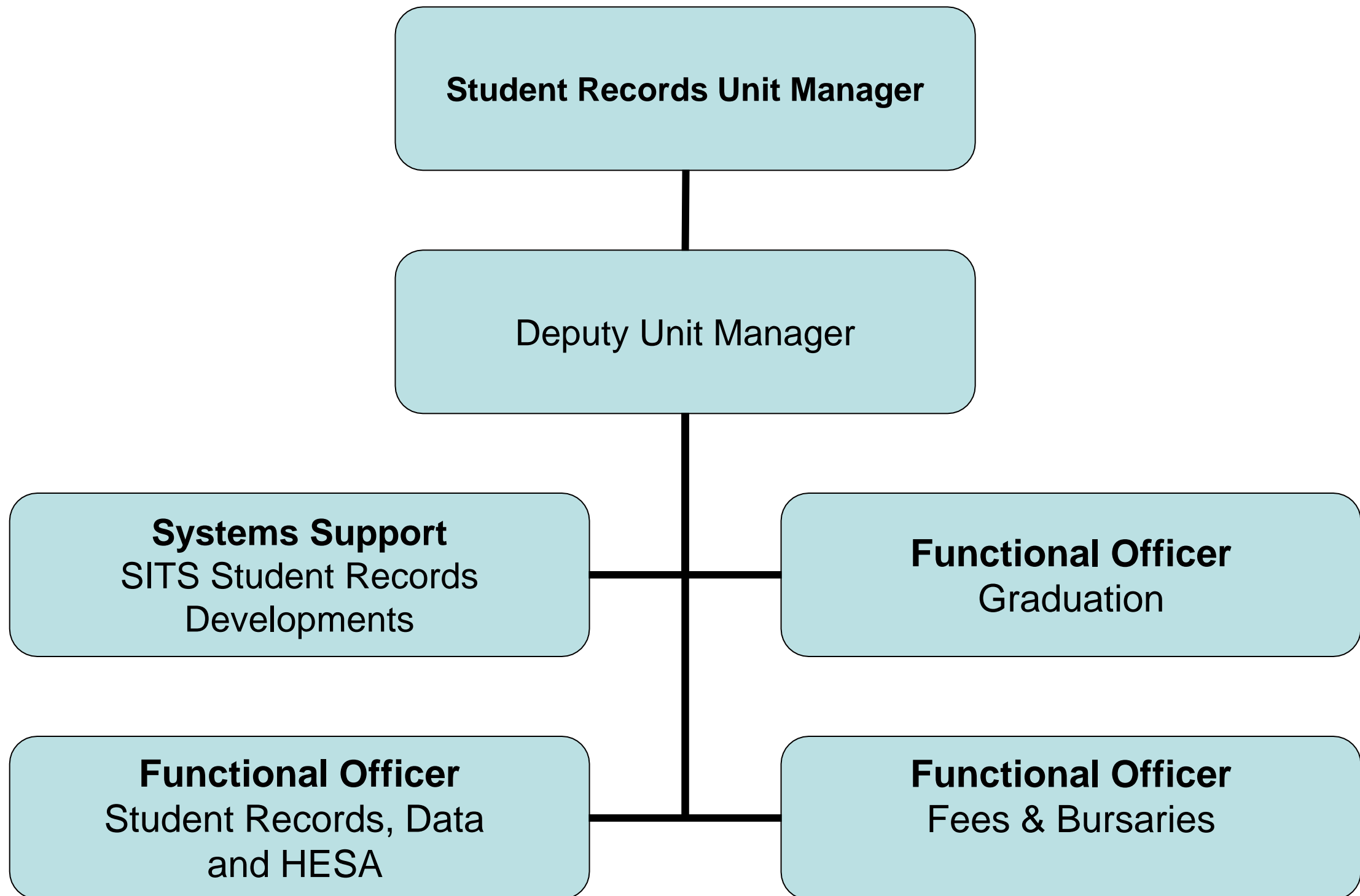
Current Registry Structure



Integration



Student Records Team



Programmes Team

