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**Abstract**

Complexity and demands within higher education are seen to be rising and one response to this has been a movement towards the adoption of more formal approaches to workload management. The objectives of these systems revolve around improving equity in allocations and achieving a more efficient and transparent use of resources. This article draws from the work of a partnership of 12 diverse universities to illustrate, through case studies, a school-driven and a centrally led development for managing workloads. This activity is then explored through the concept of convergent and divergent activity occurring progressively at different organisational levels, and around ideas about the dynamic relationship between continuity and change that this will involve. We suggest that although the initial focus of activity may seem important, ultimately viable systems involve a negotiated balance between central and local requirements. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)