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park, from which it nets about £4 million a year in rent.

In 2000-01, the university received £29 million of its £116 million income from Hefce grants. The rest came from academic fees and support grants, research grants and contracts, endowments, rental income from its research park, and its ten subsidiary companies.

Other institutions, however, said they would be unable to turn down millions of pounds in funding council support.

Imperial College London received 29 per cent of its income from Hefce last year. But despite raising the prospect of tuition fees of up to £15,000, the college said it could not afford to give up government support.

Rodney Eastwood, Imperial's director of planning and information, said: "We could not be independent from the £60 million Hefce research grant." He said that including grants from the research councils, Imperial was 50 per cent funded by the public.

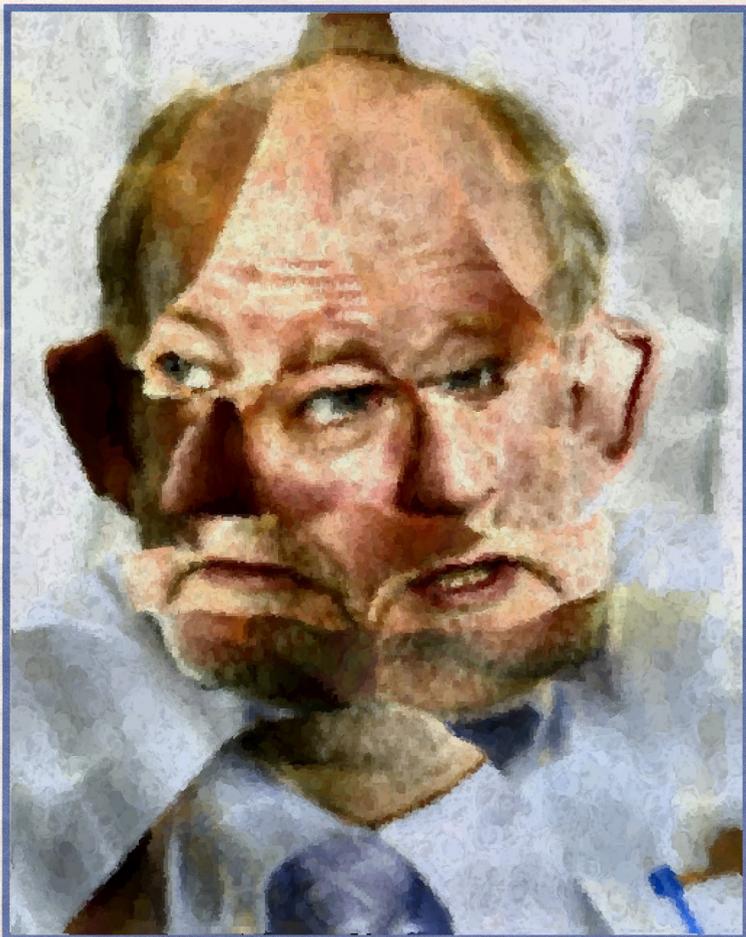
Cambridge University derived 32 per cent of its income — £140 million — from Hefce. Treasurer Joanna Womack said that

the endowment required to generate a similar income was unrealistic.

"At 4 per cent, that represents a capital sum of £3.5 billion," she said. "We could not raise that, and even if we could, such a sum would just leave us where we are at present, whereas, like all universities, we need to grow our income in order to cover increased costs. What we really need is increased Hefce funding for both research and teaching, guaranteed for several years so that we can make sensible plans."

Michael Sterling, vice-chancellor of Birmingham University, suggested that he would like to move towards more independent funding. With one-third of its income from Hefce, he said there was no possibility of the university opting out. "That's still too much on our

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Time to work on the image, Mr Clarke?

Steve Farrar

Culture minister and self-appointed art critic Kim Howells will have to curb his tongue this time. Just weeks before his colleague Charles Clarke makes clear his vision for the future of higher education, the education secretary's features have been distorted in the cubist style (pictured) to demonstrate new computer technology at Bath University.

The technique, developed by post-graduate student John Collomosse

and lecturer Peter Hall, involves minimal human intervention to turn photographic images into the sort of artworks once created by Picasso.

The researchers used a selection of photographs of Mr Clarke, taken from different viewpoints and supplied by *The THES*.

Dr Hall said: "In order to draw, you have to be able to see." The software, he explained, picks out individual elements, which it geometrically distorts before reassembling them into a coherent composition. It

then turns a selection of dots into brush strokes that work around important aspects of the picture, giving a painterly effect.

Professional artists have judged the project's output to be of a high aesthetic quality, and the Bath team has entered work in computer art competitions.

The research was supported by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council and will be published in the journal *Transactions*.

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