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Why Are We Here? The Changing Nature of Administrative Middle Management at an English HEI

Thesis

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Sandra Elaine Mienczakowski

B.A., M.Ed.

Why are we Here? The Changing Nature of Administrative Middle Management at an English HEI

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Abstract

It is recognised that in recent years, radical changes have taken place within Higher Education. In addition to increased national government intervention, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) need to take account of national and international developments. Universities are complex organisations and the roles and experiences of those who work within them have changed over time.

There is general agreement that the nature and scope of both academic and non-academic roles have changed and continue to change to meet the challenges facing universities in the 21st century. The literature reveals an agreement that these changes in university work lend themselves to new working practices; more team-working; and a blurring of the boundaries between academic and non-academic work. However, debate exists as to how far these changes have been achieved at the current time in English universities.

Increased accountability to a number of both external and internal stakeholders, and the need for more effective working practices to deal with increased numbers of students and complexity of roles, have implications for professional identity, organisational culture and work intensification.

The purpose of this small-scale investigation was to gain an understanding of administrators' experiences in relation to change within an English civic university and the implications for the professional practice of middle managers. Taking a Grounded Theory approach, the research was supported by the use of semi-structured interviews with administrative and academic staff employed in the case study Higher Education Institution, together with analysis of documentary evidence and observation.

The findings from this research take us towards a theory of the nature of administrative middle management in an English HEI from the administrators' perspectives. The picture that emerges is of administrative middle managers who are part of a group of staff recognised as growing in professionalism.

Providing an insight into how, by speaking the 'right' language, 'knowing the rules' and understanding the environment within which they operate, administrative middle managers may become facilitators and influencers using

negotiation and persuasion, their ability to effect strategic change within an organisational hierarchy typified by a professional bureaucracy where academics form the professional elite is also considered.

Recommendations for further work are outlined including a call for more research into the daily lives of middle managers and their experiences. In the light of findings from this research, recommendations for middle, junior and senior management are also outlined.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

APM	Administrative, Professional and Managerial staff
AM	Academic Manager
AS	Academic Staff
AUA	Association of University Administrators
CAS	Confirmation of acceptance for studies
CSR	Core Systems Review
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
GT	Grounded Theory
GTM	Grounded Theory Method
HE	Higher Education
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
HEI(s)	Higher Education Institution(s)
HESA	Higher Education Statistical Agency
HoS	Head of School
JM	Junior Professional Manager
LFHE	Leadership Foundation for Higher Education
MB	Management Board (Middletown University)
MM	Middle Professional Manager
MU	Middletown University
NSS	National Student Survey
OED	Oxford English Dictionary
PG	Postgraduate
PS	Professional Services
PVC	Pro-Vice Chancellor
QA	Quality Assurance
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
RAE	Research Assessment Exercise
REF	Research Enhancement Framework
SM	School Manager
SPM	Senior Professional Manager
UQA	University Quality Audit
VC	Vice-Chancellor

Acknowledgements

Chapter One – Introduction

This chapter provides an introduction to the research being undertaken. The chapter initially sets out how the thesis is organised before setting the scene for the research study with a brief look at the current context of the UK Higher Education System, a description of the University within which this research was undertaken, and the challenges it faces. Following on from this I provide definitions of key terms used in this research, a rationale for the research, the research aims, and potential applications of this research study.

Thesis Organisation

This thesis follows a traditional structure and is organised into six chapters:

Chapter one provides an introduction to the research being undertaken. The chapter is structured as outlined above.

Chapter two reviews literature from the fields of educational leadership and management, business management, and sociology, relevant to a study of middle managers (MMs), the changing nature of their work, and implications of those changes. The chapter also identifies the theoretical and conceptual frameworks of the work.

Chapter three details the choice of methodology used in this research study and the philosophical framework for the work, outlines the research design, details the data gathering methods, and describes the method of data analysis.

Chapter four reports findings from the research study undertaken by implementing the research design as outlined in chapter three.

Chapter five provides analysis and discussion of the findings from this research study. Significant themes are drawn together to formulate hypotheses proposed as a result of analysis of the findings from the research study, and from a return to the extant literature.

Chapter six draws the research together and presents conclusions based on the research questions and generation of new hypotheses relating to the

conceptualisation of the role of MMs working within HEIs in the 21st century. Recommendations for further research are outlined together with reflections on the work undertaken.

Contextualisation of the Research

Universities are complex organisations and the roles and experiences of those who work within them have changed over time owing to both internal and external factors. How this change is managed, and the culture which exists within an institution, may say much about the future success of the organisation and those working within it.

This project was concerned with the changing nature of administrative middle management at an English Higher Education Institution (HEI), and the implications for the professional practice of MMs.

In order to consider the implications for the professional practice of MMs in the context of a changing environment within the University, and to evaluate how change is managed, it was also necessary to consider the challenges which have faced English universities in the recent past, and the changing nature of these universities.

The UK Higher Education System – current context

A large body of work exists on the history of the Higher Education System in the UK and I do not intend to reproduce or review this work in full within the context of this research project.

It is recognised that, in recent years, radical changes have taken place with the government increasingly exerting 'a huge influence over the Higher Education system' (Taylor, 2003:93). In addition to increased national government intervention with initiatives like the introduction of a National Qualifications Framework, Research Assessment Exercises (RAEs)[1], Subject Benchmarks and the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Institutional Audits, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) also need to take account of proposed national developments

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[1] RAEs undertaken since 1986 will be replaced from 2014 by the Research Excellence Framework (REF).

e.g. the Burgess Review[2] of degree classification, and international developments e.g. the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the Bologna Agreement[3] (Mienczakowski et al, 2010:138).

The English HEI sector is recognised as being successful i.e. in terms of the numbers of students studying, the reputation of English HEIs internationally, and investment in research. In 2009, 314,960 staff were recognised as being employed in HE in England. Of these 143,000 posts were academic (46%) and 162,000 were in professional or support services (52%). 9,000 posts were considered hybrid academic and administration roles (3%). Administrative and managerial roles have grown up around need and the sector experiences relatively few problems in recruitment and retention. The number of professional services (PS)/support posts is slightly higher in pre-92 institutions (53%) than those in post-92 organisations (50%) (HEFCE, 2010).

HEIs within England are autonomous, with funding coming from a number of sources e.g. central government funding, research councils, private companies, and student fees. The proportion of funding from central government differs for each institution. Although not totally reliant on government funding, government policy may be seen as applying 'sticks' (such as imposed regulations and resources) and 'carrots' (incentive tools and reward mechanisms) to deliver outcomes. A number of the 'sticks' may be optional in character but 'the key is to ensure that institutions have little choice but to comply with the formula and thereby to achieve the desired policy goals' (Taylor, 2003:96). It is recognised that there 'may be tensions between institutional aims and government policy' (Duke, 2003:65) particularly where government funding is the smallest percentage of an institution's income.

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[2] Finally reporting in 2007, the 'Burgess Group' was established to consider the measuring and reporting of student achievement in the United Kingdom (Burgess, 2007).

[3] The agreement made in 1999 in Bologna, Italy, to construct a European higher education area, including the adoption of a system of comparable degrees and a transfer system of academic credits (Mienczakowski, et al, 2010:138).

In addition, there have been major increases in student numbers, a commitment to a mass HE system[4] with a government pursuing policies intended to result in 50% of students remaining in education through to the completion of a university degree[5], the introduction and raising of tuition fees, and moves towards self-service with a growth in electronic communications (Mienczakowski et al, 2010:139).

Newby (2003:14) identifies 'students today [as having] much higher expectations of the quality and professionalism in the provision of university amenities and services ... and of high academic standards and this has implications for the professional practice and identity of academic and non-academic individuals within an institution'.

Such developments have led to greater commercialism of HEIs and a move towards more 'managerialist' approaches to the structure of organisations (Trow, 1994; Scott, 1995; Trowler, 1998; Deem, 2001). Features of successful universities have implications for leadership and management practice within those organisations and in recent years a number of researchers have considered what makes a 'successful' university. 'While some academics may still view universities as autonomous ... communities of scholars, their managers may well view the organization as a business enterprise with a defined mission, a strategic plan and key performance indicators.' (Marginson and Considine, 2000 in Ling, 2005:11)

Clark (1998:4) highlights five elements which are the minimum requirements for transforming a university into an entrepreneurial institution and sustaining change ('success'):

- a strengthened steering core (senior management team);
- expanded developmental periphery;
- diversified funding base;

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[4] The idea of a 'mass' system of higher education builds on Trow's classic formulation of elite, mass and universal systems (Trow 1970). The transition point from the first to the second occurs when the proportion of the 18-21 year olds attending HE surpasses 15%. In Britain this occurred in 1998 when the age participation index reached 15.1 per cent (DES 1991b). Once the figure passes 40% the system evolves into its universal stage (Trow 1970). The 1980s and 1990s saw intense and accelerating change in higher education, leaving a difficult legacy for the twenty-first century. Four main areas of change have been associated with the move to a 'mass' system in the UK: its size; changing patterns of access; a relative decline in resources and a change in the functions that higher education is expected to fulfil.' (Trowler, 2003:79)

[5] The Labour government, in power from 1997 until April 2010. This government was replaced with a coalition Conservative/Liberal Democrat government following the General Election of May 2010.

- stimulated academic heartland; and
- an integrated entrepreneurial culture.

A consensus of opinion emerges that 'successful' universities are those that are able to adapt most easily to the changing circumstances they find themselves in; being 'good at anticipating and adjusting to the external environment'; and then being able, in an era of 'supercomplexity' to be flexible and 'entrepreneurial' (Barnett, 2000); to 'deliver what is required without sacrificing the quality of ... teaching and the standard of ... research' (Holmes, 1998:113); delivering 'education where people can best receive it' (Webb, 1994:48); and 'taking account of local community opinions' (Price, 1994). However, 'strategic approaches, though often framed in three- and five- year plans, are not necessarily associated with stability, for they present in a context of organizational change'. (Ling, 2005:15).

Middletown University (MU)

The institution which is the subject of this research is an English civic university. Civic universities are defined as those 'founded in the nineteenth century in major industrial cities and dominant institutions in the post-war period' (Shattock, 2003). For the purposes of this research, the institution will be referred to as Middletown University (MU).

The structure and culture of the organisation is that of a hierarchical bureaucracy. Academic and Professional senior management are designated as leaders and managers, and leadership and management roles are distributed among heads of section, heads of school, vice-deans, deans, pro-vice chancellors (PVCs) and the Vice-chancellor (VC) together with the University Senate and Council (see Appendix I). A Committee structure exists to oversee the work of the institution (see Appendix II) and this structure has evolved over time as the institution responds to changing external and internal environments.

The Registrar is head of Administration at MU and student services (academic support, childcare, financial support, disability policy, counselling, career development), admissions, physical recreation and sport, the warden system and student discipline, planning and management information, registry, examinations, timetabling, curriculum, quality assurance (QA), complaints and appeals and secretariat to Senate and Council are organised into Divisions which come under

the leadership and management of the Registrar. The Registrar acts as Secretary to the University's Senate, Council, and Court and also provides a focus for co-ordination, communication and leadership within the academic administration.

Recent years have also seen a growth in School-based administration at MU, not managed by, or reporting, to the Registrar, and the devolution of some functions from central administration to Schools, while some functions which were undertaken by Schools in the 1990s have been centralised e.g. marketing, examinations, marks processing, registration, student support and admissions. Some functions were partially retained by Schools; this has lead to competition for resources and has raised issues of where services may best be delivered.

Within central administration services, before 2006, major restructuring was last undertaken in the early 2000s. In 2005, the University undertook a 'Core Systems Review (CSR) exercise'. One of the outcomes of this exercise was a recommendation that there should be regular reviews of 'central service functions' in a similar way to that experienced by Academic Schools during University Quality Audits[6] (UQAs). The first of these, a review of the Registrar's department (RRD) was undertaken in 2006.

Challenges Facing MU

MU considers itself to be a world-leading university delivering world-changing research and world-class education. MU is a research-led university which continues to attract research awards in excess of £120m annually. It is oversubscribed, regularly attracts students from 140 countries, and currently employs in excess of 6,500 research, teaching, administrative, technical and operational staff.

When applying Clark's (1998) elements for success, MU could be deemed successful. MU has a strong senior management team; a diversified funding base with around 30% of funding coming from HEFCE; and an entrepreneurial culture, as evidenced by its expansion internationally and commercially.

Concerns for universities entering the 21st century were mission, cost effectiveness and efficiency, management structures and organizational culture

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[6] UQAs were internal audits of a School or Department's provision. During UQAs an analysis of compliance with the University's Quality Manual which in turn ensured compliance with the QAA Codes of Practice was undertaken.

(Webb, 1994:44). Massification of Higher Education (HE) has led to a need for universities to differentiate themselves in increasing competitive national and international markets and 'grotesque turbulence' has beset HEIs (Webb 1994:43) with '... the leisured environment of the old university gone as universities have become unalterably different places' (Price, 1994:34).

Universities are facing challenges as they adapt in response to the global financial crisis; UK economic recession; cuts in funding as a reduction in Public Sector debt is sought; and new policies of the Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition government (both parties having had different policies relating to the future of HE in their manifestos). In addition, the outcome of Lord Browne's review of student finance (commonly known as 'tuition fees') reported in October 2010 has implications for the future. To be introduced from 2012, these will bring a reduction in state funding and the raising of tuition fees at most English universities to c.£,9000 per annum with the implications of these changes adding to uncertainty within the sector.

Under its previous Vice Chancellor, the values of MU could be considered to be those expounded by Clark (1998:4) as bound up with the elements needed to transform a university into an entrepreneurial institution and sustain change ('success'). The culture was entrepreneurial with expansion into international and commercial spheres, with a focus on internationally renowned research, and the institution exhibited values akin to a business enterprise.

Under a new Vice Chancellor, the focus of the institution while still entrepreneurial, places a greater emphasis on the results from the National Student Survey (NSS), responses to student expectations, and a widening social agenda, as MU faces competing priorities of responding to its constituent communities, in a competitive marketplace.

Definitions

Before proceeding further, definitions of key terms used in this research are described below.

Middle Managers

A central problem relates to the 'lack of precise definitions or terminologies for staff in universities who are not classified as 'academic'' Whitchurch (2006b:5). This has implications for the generalizability of research – if key terms are not defined and it becomes difficult for those involved in university administration/management to identify who or what is being described within the research, policy or practice, then this may be doubly difficult for those outside of the HE sector to understand.

It is important to consider how terminology changes over time and, therefore, what is understood by the term 'university administrator' for one researcher may not be that which is understood by another. This is an important issue as routinely terms are used in research work but are not defined so as to enable the reader to understand precisely what the author intends.

The term 'middle manager' is often ambiguous. The term 'university manager' includes MMs in some literature e.g. Szekeres (2006) but for other authors e.g. McInnis (1998) the term refers to those in senior management roles. An analysis of Whitchurch's work over a number of years reveals how her use of terminology changes as her work develops e.g. 'administrative managers' (2004), 'professional administrators and managers' (2006a) and 'professional managers' (2006b; 2007; 2008).

The use of the term non-academic MM makes a distinction which others might not think necessary to make. Researchers such as Szekeres (2004; 2006) and Gornall (1999) voice their dislike of defining of staff by 'what they are not' rather than by what they are. However, non-academic roles are diverse, including all those staff not employed on academic contracts. The duties are many and varied and it is clear that there is a distinction between these roles and those of AS although there is some overlap in responsibility and some roles traditionally performed by AS e.g. examinations officers, admissions tutor, student support officer, may now be performed by administrative staff.

There have been calls for the discarding of the term 'administrator' and Lauwerys (2002:96) suggests those working in higher education administration should 'refer to ourselves as higher education/university managers working alongside

our academic colleagues and their academic managers'. Certainly a mouthful and not necessarily any clearer on what they do rather than what they don't.

In the absence of a commonly understood definition of non-academic MMs, the definition which will be used in this research will be that of relating to those staff members working within MU, who are not employed on academic contracts i.e. are on the University's APM single-spine pay scales and normally working at Level 5 or 6 within the APM 'Job Family' (Appendix III) but does not include those on Technical or Other grades (although it is recognised that MMs also exist within these groups). The implications of change for the APM group of staff will be the focus of this research. For the purposes of this research, those at Level 7+ will be seen as 'senior managers' (SPMs) and those at Level 4 as 'first-line' or 'junior' managers (JMs). Levels 4-7 relate to the former 'academic-related' grades within pre-1992 institutions. Those on the University's levels 1-3 can be seen as holding administrative roles (formerly Secretarial and Clerical grades).

Within HEIs administrative middle managers fill a variety of roles e.g. HR advisers, Management Accountants, Heads of Services or Teams, Project Managers, School Managers, Senior Systems Development Officers, Safety Officers, Counsellors, Librarians, Marketing Managers, or Hall Managers. These roles can be described as either generalist management roles e.g. School Managers, Heads of Service requiring the role holder to perform a range of administrative functions or specialist management roles e.g. Management Accountants, HR advisers, where the role holder performs a function, normally requiring specialist qualifications. The administrative middle managers interviewed in the course of this research were generalist administrators i.e. not HR, Estates, Finance, Library or Marketing professionals.

Within this research, it should be assumed that by 'middle manager (MM)' I mean 'administrative MM' or 'non-academic MM' in every case unless 'academic MM' is specified to make the distinction.

Administration

'The *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) defines 'administration' as the 'organisation and running of a business or system' and the verb 'to manage' as 'to be in charge of', 'to supervise' or 'to administer and regulate". (Denton and Brown, 2010:3)

In common with the authors, I too 'use the term 'administration' in its broadest sense, to include a range of administrative and professional functions' (Denton and Brown, 2010:2) including Registry, Student Support Services, other centrally provided services e.g. Human Resources, and administration provided by APM staff based in academic Schools and Departments.

Running of a business or system in this context would include the operation of functions e.g. examinations, timetabling, records administration, programme administration, student registration, to name but a few.

Leadership and Management

For the purposes of this research, the working definition of leadership and management in the educational context used is that of Bolam (1999:194) who defines educational management as 'an executive function for carrying out agreed policy' and educational leadership as having 'at its core the responsibility for policy formulation and, where appropriate, organisational transformation'. Within this definition the leader is seen as formulating policy while the manager implements and operates it.

Within the context of this research 'management' includes a range of management functions including management of teams, processes, operations, resources and change. This would also include structures and target setting. 'Leadership' includes setting strategic priorities and providing direction for teams, colleagues and the institution.

Professional Services

The term 'professional' as an adjective is defined by the OED as being 'engaged in activity as a professional occupation rather than as an amateur' or 'competent' and as a noun as 'a person having competence in a particular activity' (Denton and Brown, 2010:4). The terms 'Professional Services' and 'Professional Staff' have started to be used in HEIs particularly following the publication of research sponsored by the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (LFHE). HEFCE refers to this group of staff as 'Professional and Support Staff' (HEFCE, 2010). Whitchurch (2004:283) identifies Lambert (2003) noting 'administrative managers as a collective [are] increasingly subsumed under the generic

functional title of 'professional services', the management of which are becoming increasingly visible.'.

MU has adopted the terms 'Professional Services' and 'Professional Staff' and they are now entering the day-to-day language of the institution. Therefore, they are used where relevant within this work although it is recognised that these are not unambiguous terms.

Rationale for Research

There is general agreement that the nature and scope of both academic and non-academic roles have changed and continue to change to meet the challenges facing universities in the 21st century. The literature also reveals an agreement that changes in university work lend themselves to new working practices, more team-working, and a blurring of the boundaries between academic and non-academic work (McInnis, 1998; Gornall, 1999; Szekeres, 2004, 2006; Whitchurch, 2006a, 2007, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c, 2008d). Debate exists as to how far these changes have been achieved at the current time in English universities. Clegg identifies that 'paying detailed attention to how changes are being experienced is an important element to theorising what is happening inside the university sector' (2008:15).

Within the HEI context, MMs exist in a variety of roles within Schools and central administration in both academic and non-academic roles. In recent years, researchers have come to consider issues relating to non-academic staff and their roles. While a body of research has been undertaken focussing on senior management roles, relatively little exists in relation to administrative middle management within the HEI context as contemporary researchers have tended to focus on management at the institutional level.

The University as a 'Business'

Universities are characterised by 'a collegiate resistance to any industrial management model' (Price: 1994:30). The concept of the University as a 'business' would have been considered heretical in the recent past. However, my research shows that the term 'business' is used openly to describe MU and its operations. Observations show that it is indeed a multi-million pound, multi-national business although one with the absence of profit as the key motive as

found in industry. Universities also pursue a social agenda, encourage widening participation, support local communities and sustainability agendas providing many services on a 'not for profit' basis. The changing needs of the University as responses to external and internal factors have led to styles of management and control more akin to the business world driven by targets, savings and efficiency agendas.

Management is not devolved to the extent that Schools or Departments are able to run as fully autonomous units outside of central control although budgetary devolution has allowed local control over sections of resource e.g. employment of School administrators. This local allocation of resource appears to have led in some instances to competition for resources or a feeling of being in competition. Responses to this have led to debates about where services are best delivered and School reactions to perceived uniformity of provision have led those who wish to provide a better 'service' to develop systems and services locally to support their activities.

Within MU there has been a tacit acceptance of the term 'manager' by most AS when fulfilling the administrative part of their roles. However, this is not always the case and the features of a 'manager' were outlined by respondents to explain why this did not apply to AS in particular roles while it did apply to others.

Research Aims

The intention of this work was to look at an area of practice not previously subject to extensive study. The research took a theory-building case study approach using Grounded Theory (GT), investigating the changing nature of a UK university from the perspective of APM staff, seeking an understanding of the experiences of MMs within the context of a changing environment.

As this work took a GT approach, this research did not set out to test an existing research *hypothesis* e.g.:

> That the face of the case study university is changing and that the
> restructuring of administration will improve the efficiency and
> effectiveness of the University within a given period of time and that MMs
> have a role to play;

Or address a previously identified research *problem* e.g.:

> That the face of the case study university is changing and that the restructuring of administration as a means of improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the University is welcomed by the University's senior management team, but that MMs/administration are reluctant to change as they feel this will have adverse implications for the operation.

Rather this research journey began with the restructuring of the Registrar's department following a University review of core services in part, as a response to the challenges facing HEIs in the 21st century, as a research *issue* seeking knowledge for understanding.

The substantive aim of this work was to contribute to knowledge relating to administrative middle management and the roles of MMs, making recommendations in relation to the role MMs can play in the management of change and culture of the organisation through their professional practice conceptualising the role of administrative MMs in HEIs in the 21st century.

Focus on Change

Initially, the focus of the research was the restructuring of the Registrar's department. However, in discussions with fellow administrative managers within the HEI I became aware that this was a political topic and initial conversations included discussions of 'no go' areas. This was because there were political sensitivities around roles particularly as the review had resulted in the early retirement of the previous Registrar and Academic Secretary. It was felt within the department that there were also sensitivities surrounding appointments made to new posts within the new structure. There was also a sense that the department was the subject of negative perceptions within the wider University community and that there could be further changes proposed. This was expressed to me by a member of the academic community when discussing my research informally in a way which could have been perceived as a veiled threat 'you haven't even begun to be restructured yet'. Therefore, while senior management was previously supportive of the original research focus, I could sense reluctance on their part to allow me to continue and I was also aware that there were risks associated with researching a sensitive topic within my own organisation.

It was also recognised at an early stage that change was not only taking place within central administration. Restructuring and change were also occurring in Schools and Departments and the experiences of staff involved in these changes could provide rich and potentially contrasting data. This led to a decision to widen the focus of my work to explore the experiences of those who had experience of restructuring of administration outside of the Department and to ask participants to describe their experiences of administrative changes and to compare and contrast these as part of the analysis of data. One type or form of change was not focussed on in questioning as it was felt that this might limit descriptions of experience and might also lead to a bias in response with participants. In later analysis of data and return to extant literature, strategic change emerged as an area of particular interest.

Scrutiny of primary documents available within the HEI caused me to reflect on wider issues relating to restructuring administration, and to consider recommendations relating to the School-Centre interface and the implications these also have for professionalism both within and outside of PS.

The reality of life within MU for MMs during the period within which this study was undertaken was that of a constantly changing environment. Although undertaken prior to the change of government in 2010 and subsequent plans for the future of HE, the sector had been subject to increased external accountability as government policies changed. The imposition of outside policy decisions resulted in changing agendas and priorities. This required flexibility in policy, process, procedures, and the systems needed to support these. For example, the introduction of the Tier 4 visa system for students required the University to develop and implement systems and processes to ensure that students studying at the University on Tier 4 visas were able to be monitored and reported on to the UK Border Agency. This required internal systems for the issuing of 'confirmation of acceptance of studies' certificates (CAS) to incoming students, attendance monitoring (although at MU this was introduced for all students) and reporting. Dedicated staff are needed to understand the complexities of what and when to report and to deal with the volume of reporting within required timescales. The consequences of non-conformity to the institution are that highly trusted status will be lost and the institution will be unable to admit international students.

Another example of expansion of workload owing to external requirements is evidenced in relation to Student Finance. Reporting to the Student Loan Company (SLC) of changes of circumstance (e.g. withdrawal, suspension, return from suspension, transfer) is now electronic and this has required internal systems development. The consequences to the University of incorrect reporting relate to payment of tuition fees to the institution and maintenance awards to students. Incorrect reporting may result in the claw-back of monies paid to the institution and a student having to repay money received in error.

A Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) visit in 2009 resulted in systems and process developments which were necessary to report on student completions based on a definition from HEFCE relating to whether or not a student had completed a taught course (module) within a defined period of time. This required Schools to return module assessment element marks and to report whether students had been absent from assessments with or without permission which had a bearing on completion.

These are only a small number of the many examples of the constantly changing environment within which MMs are acting. External requirements were balanced with changing internal pressures relating to the implementation of external requirements internally at a time when student numbers were continuing to expand, there was an increased focus on the student experience and student satisfaction, and the University was setting itself 'grand challenges'. These challenges in HE present an 'ideal opportunity for PS staff to prove the added value that they bring to HE management'. (Shine, 2010:12)

Within this constantly changing environment and in consideration of political sensitivities within the institution both within the Registrar's department, as outlined above, and within Schools and Departments which were experiencing changes not necessarily related to restructuring, I made the decision not to focus on one particular kind or concept of change as it was recognised that a number of different types of change were occurring. The completed work seeks to add to research knowledge in the comparatively under-researched area of HE administration.

Key Research Questions

The following research questions, which only emerged sharply into focus in this form following a review of relevant literature, and as my analysis progressed, are seen as key to addressing the substantive issue 'What are the implications of the changing nature of HE administration for MMs':

- What has changed?
- Why?
- How is change managed and implemented?
- Have recent changes enabled University administration to become more economic, efficient and effective?
- What are the implications of change for professional practice/identity?
- What role can MMs play in the management of change and culture of their department/organisation?

Potential Applications for Research

In addition to being of interest to those internal to the organisation at senior, middle, and junior management level, it is hoped that this research will be of interest to an external audience by providing an insight into the changing context for MMs in a university setting, building on existing knowledge by generating substantive grounded theory, supported by empirical evidence and adding to this under-researched area.

The research seeks to identify the changing nature of administrative middle management at an English HEI. It is recognised that the generalizablity of the research may be limited as within the English system there is no standard model of university management as institutions are semi-autonomous, structured according to the goals they are pursuing and their perceptions of their purpose. The research looks at theories relating to organisational change, professions and middle management and to apply these to findings from a study of MMs within MU.

It is hoped that this will resonate with those in senior or middle management roles who are either considering embarking on, or involved with change management within their own organisations, but also to those who are employed

in APM roles providing a professional management and/or administrative service either as members of PS or within an academic School. The intention was to produce a piece of work which, while not providing grand theories or over-ambitious generalisations, will be relatable as 'fuzzy generalisations' (Bassey, 1999). I hope the final picture presented is one which MMs within my own institution will recognise and those at other HEIs will relate to.

Conclusions

This chapter has provided an introduction to the thesis, initially setting out the structure of the following work. The chapter then provided a brief description of the current context of the UK Higher Education System and a description of the University within which this research was undertaken, MU, highlighting challenges faced. The picture which emerged was of an institution which is a complex organisation facing challenges in a constantly changing external and internal environment.

A rationale for this research was provided which included the story of how the research focus changed as the work was being undertaken. An explanation was also given as to why there was no focus on one particular kind or concept of change within this research study.

The chapter has highlighted the research issue and emergent research questions setting the scene for a review of relevant literature which is undertaken in chapter two.

Chapter Two - Review of Literature

Introduction

Chapter two reviews relevant literature from the fields of educational leadership and management; business management; and sociology; appropriate to the study of administrative middle management at an English HEI. The purpose of this literature review was to provide background insight into the research issue as identified in chapter one and to assist with the focussing of research questions, the theoretical and conceptual frameworks for this research, and subsequent analysis of data. It is not intended to explore literature relating to methodology in this chapter as this will be undertaken in chapter three.

The chapter begins with a description of how literature was selected for review before continuing with a review of literature structured around key themes on the topics of management of universities; change management; professionals; and middle management. The literature is then used to define a theoretical and conceptual framework for this study. Gaps in the current literature are identified setting this research in the context of the wider body of work relating to HE Management in England. The chapter concludes with an explanation of how this will be drawn on in subsequent chapters.

Selection of Literature

As Bryant and Charmaz (2007:20) identify 'an open mind does not imply an empty head'. The authors suggest finding a balance between a reliance on the literature to provide a starting framework and a level of understanding to provide an orientation. Consistent with the GT theory-building approach taken to this research, my review of the literature was undertaken on the basis of orientation and relevance, with a return to the extant literature at appropriate times as the research progressed, data was analysed, and themes and hypotheses emerged.

Literature was selected using searches of relevant databases using key words such as middle management, University management; change management; change in universities. Relevant literature was also identified by considering reviews undertaken by other researchers, and from references cited by authors of initial literature reviewed. Literature was chosen for it's relevance to the topic being studied and was then considered in terms of breadth of coverage of the subject and currency. Literature reviews were considered for their comprehensive coverage of the subject

area. In some cases literature was excluded owing to lack of availability. For example, a number of researchers cite the seminal work of Cohen and March (1986) in their own work. However, this text was difficult to obtain and, therefore, other work by the same authors was considered.

To provide background, work from a historical perspective was reviewed including major reports into aspects of HE e.g. Jarrett Report (1985), Dearing Report (1997), Government White Papers (e.g. DFES, 2003), Lambert Report (2003), as was work relating to the changing purpose of universities and the features of successful universities (e.g. Clark, 1998 (Academic tribes); Barnett 2000 (supercomplexity; Hall, 2003 (managing people); Shattock, 2003 (managing successful universities)). From the major reports, it was evident that until the Lambert Report (2003) 'administrators' were largely overlooked, as identified by Whitchurch (2004: 280).

Management of Universities

Literature reviewed in this section relates to the theme of the management of universities at an institutional level. The key debates within the literature relate to models relating to the management of universities. These models have been identified within particular time periods and have been used to explain the features of university management predominant at the time.

Miller (1995) and Mignot-Gérard (2003) provide an overview of a range of models relating to the management of universities. Miller then relates these to the actual purposes of a university giving prescriptive models which promote particular organisational forms, while Mignot-Gérard uses these models to consider leadership and governance culminating in a call for a symbolic approach to university management. The authors are writing eight years apart and they both relate models to the decades in which they identify them as prominent, however these periods overlap and the authors disagree with the 'order' in which models were dominant. This gives support for consideration of a composite model (Miller) or cybernetic approach (Birnbaum, 1989).

The 'rational' (Miller) or 'collegial' (Mignot-Gérard) model is identified with research studies carried out in the 1960s (Miller, Mignot-Gérard, 2003:138). Rational models assume universities comprise rational individuals, with consensus achieved through discussion (Miller, 1995:98). Rational models have included bureaucratic models and Miller identifies aspects of collegiality, described by Mignot-Gérard as having two features: 'decision-making based on consensus-seeking' and 'self-regulation', as rational.

Universities in England were traditionally viewed as collegial institutions where leadership existed amongst equals and where the university as community was the order of the day. Academic culture was epitomised by rationality and involvement in decision making and institutions were 'independent regulators of quality and standards in both teaching and research' (Taylor, 2003:92). Collegiality was used to achieve consensus supported by academic authority being supreme (Middlehurst, 2004:260), although it has been suggested that higher up the hierarchy 'collegial processes [were] often bypassed, subverted or ignored' (Hellawell and Hancock, 2001:188). It is relevant to note that a culture of collegiality did not include groups of staff other than academics. If collegial processes were 'bypassed, subverted and ignored', and other staff were not included, this would suggest that while a model of collegiality has elements in common with rational models e.g. consensus through academic decision-making, it is not entirely rational as a large proportion of the staff are excluded from strategic direction setting and decision-making. While collegiality may be a rational model, the two are not the same, as proponents of collegiality would eschew managerialist approaches.

The notion of the subversion of collegial processes is relevant to models of 'organised anarchy' or the 'garbage can model' Miller (ibid:100). Within this model, diverse individuals may have different cultures and be pursuing different aims. Administrative staff excluded from collegiality may have 'different cultures and aims' and may therefore also be pursuing different goals. Three general properties: problematic preferences, unclear technology, and fluid participation were identified by Cohen *et al* (1972:1). Within a university, this could manifest as constantly changing goals and objectives, ill-defined processes and procedures, and external operation in new areas which are not fully articulated to staff within the organisation, and/or internal restructuring which is either unclear or in constant flux. Choices and decision makers 'arrange and re-arrange themselves' (ibid:11). Cohen *et al* are writing in 1972 but elements of their findings resonate today.

Middlehurst and Elton (1992:253) find the use of the term organized anarchy as 'unfortunate in ... connotations and contradictory in ... form' and Miller (1995:101) criticises the organised anarchy model as '... somewhat dated'. While the model can be seen to have currency in a complex organisation where there are groups of strategic actors who may have loyalties to e.g. research groups external to an individual organisation or academic units within an organisation before to 'the university', ultimately contractual obligations or power of other groups, ensured that solutions will be found which achieve common goals and strategies. Collegiality is identified with rational decision-making and internal regulation of quality and standards but it holds that not all groups will agree with a decision and therefore there

will be dissent. As decision-making is achieved by consensus, the degree to which organised anarchy can be seen is debatable. It may be reasonable to hypothesise that an unwelcome decision may either not be implemented at all or not be fully implemented. This may be identified as bypassing, subverting or ignoring in the same way that collegial decision-making processes may be set aside by SPMs.

For academics at the individual level, collegiality is still the model of choice even though the changing environment in which HEIs operate requires institutional loyalties above all else (Elton, 2008:233).   I would argue that this is not remarkable given the context in which institutions and therefore their AS have found themselves operating and that traditional attitudes may hold resonance in times of constant change, particularly where individuals identify with a sub-group e.g. their research group. Collegiality provides reassurance of status as an academic professional within a 'community of peers' in an unstable world.

The 1980s saw the emergence of a political model of university management (Miller, ibid: 101). Mignot-Gérard places her description as coming before models of organised anarchy, perhaps indicating that organised anarchy was a response to political models of management, while Miller may be indicating that political models were a response to organised anarchy.   Miller details Baldridge's 1971 model of the university as a political system. The key elements of the model are uncertainty, where not all individuals are involved in the political process but a number of interest groups exist. Powerful individuals control policy and, when resources are scarce, these groups are likely to come into conflict. Internal and external groups have an impact on what happens inside a university. (ibid:102). There are elements of organised anarchy in political models and there may also be features of rationality in that a rational response may be non-participation if one is not involved in the policy process. As Baldridge's work was published in 1971 this would suggest that while political models may have been seen in the 1980s, they were identifiable before this with Baldridge prescribing political models as the form of management universities should pursue as professional bureaucracies.

'One way of accommodating the different models is to relate them as a sequence...' (Miller, ibid:103).   Therefore, an institution could be following a rational model of management with collegiate decision-making, when internal or external pressures cause groups to reform around particular interests invoking responses which could be identified as organised anarchy. Responses from the executive could be to exercise political power and authority which in turn could be perceived as a bureaucratic yet still rational model of management, the exercise of power in a bureaucratic way being a rational response to restoring order. An institution could go through a sequential pattern many times with different models being dominant at different times in a series

of phases, dependent on the context within which the institution was operating. The composite approach resonates in that it would appear reasonable to hypothesise that internal and external pressures may cause the form of management of a university to change over time. In so changing, elements of the previous 'regime' (both staff and regulatory) would remain as different groups with different aims and objectives inhabit universities, and therefore elements of each of the models may be seen in different parts of the institution at any one time.

In what may be seen as advocacy of the composite model, Birnbaum (1989:239) presents a cybernetic model of organizations. This approach integrates existing models and suggests how they may operate simultaneously. Stability is accomplished through 'cybernetic controls' – 'self-correcting mechanisms that monitor organizational functions and provide attention cues, or negative feedback, to participants when things are not going well' (ibid, 240). Sub-units will have a commitment to sub-goals within the organizational hierarchy but that these may not necessarily be disadvantageous to the organization (ibid, 245). However there may be unintended consequences of actions. It may be assumed that sub-units come into conflict particularly in times of scarce resource where the goal pursued by one sub-unit may divert resource from another and that responses to this may subvert collegial processes.

In recent years the introduction of a quality and standards culture, increased government intervention, the advent of the QAA and increased internal and external accountability has seen management within HEIs move to managerialism from professionalism/collegiality for AS, and moves towards more professional roles for administrative staff (Whitchurch, 2004). Mignot-Gérard sees this emergence as parallel to the emergence of the 'entrepreneurial university' in the 1990s (2003:140). This has been evidenced by a 'shift to more corporate management practices' (Conway, 2000(a):14). These 'shifts' may have negative effects, as 'corporate values may not sit comfortably within the University environment' (Szekeres, 2004:11) although they may be identified as rational in the contexts within which institutions found themselves as response to changing internal and/or external environments.

'New Managerialism', a style of management which emerged in the UK in the early 1980s, (Metcalf & Richards, 1987 in Randle and Brady, 1997:125) presents within HEIs as:

- devolution of budgets to Schools/Departments;
- use of quantitative performance indicators e.g. service level agreements, KPIs;
- marketisation with HEIs operating in increasingly competitive global markets;
- accountability both externally and internally;

- staff appraisal systems and performance related pay introduced under the Framework Agreement and performance review;
- managerial approaches to control e.g. internal quality audits.

These are features of the corporate world and present a tension with collegiality as by their nature such monitoring systems are bureaucratic and may result in opposition particularly if they are felt to be attacks on academic freedom. However, they could be seen as part of the 'self-correcting mechanisms that monitor organizational functions' as identified by Birnbaum (1989) and may not necessarily lead to organised anarchy within an organisation. They may however, highlight conflict between differing goals, values and a changing perception of the purpose of a university.

New Managerialism assumes that 'good management' will deliver the 'three "Es" of economy, efficiency and effectiveness in public services and therefore can ensure value for taxpayers' money and eliminate waste' (Metcalf and Richards, 1987 in Randle and Brady, 1997:125). The model is both bureaucratic and rational but in this model not all interests may be represented in decision-making. A feature of New Managerialism is seen as the growth in administration and the number of administrators to deal with it (Santiago et al, 2006). However, a growth in administration is also a feature of increased complexity and a need to meet new requirements and challenges particularly when these are externally imposed. The form of New Managerialism observed within HEIs can be seen as a hybridisation of Ferlie *et al*'s (1996) models of New Managerialism: the efficiency model 'doing more with less'; an emphasis on downsizing and decentralisation; and the model of the learning organisation (Deem and Brehony, 2005:224-225).

The growth of managerialism could be related to political models of management whereby the dominant interest group is able to wield power and authority at time where there is uncertainty and individuals are not involved in the policy process. Within a bureaucratic model management is from the top down. It is not clear from studies undertaken within HEIs whether internal governance is a problem, or whether resistance to change and/or a desire to ignore more managerialist approaches can be identified. These may both be reactions to the same problem.

While hybridisation may have been hypothesised as an end to conflict as it brought together collegiality with managerialism creating a new form of management, this may be a contested view (Santiago, *et al*, 2006:224). However, a 'discursive struggle between competing views' suggests that a model of university management which is a composite or cybernetic model may be predicted as the dominant form in the absence of an identifiable new model.

What is a university for?

The question of 'What is a university for?' will produce a different answer depending on who is asked the question, as different stakeholders e.g. students, parents, AS, professional staff, senior management, will all have their own ideas and agendas to pursue. This may not necessarily be to the disadvantage of the institution unless such competing interests cause the institution to be less effective.

In simplistic terms, the purpose of a university could be seen to be to educate, with a university's main functions defined as education and training with AS seeing 'research as primary and teaching as secondary' (Etzioni, 1964:85) However, this is by no means the whole picture and universities 'are now under titanic pressure to reinvent themselves' (Considine, 2006:255). As has already been identified, theoretical approaches to university management are based on an understanding of universities as complex organisations. The university as a centre 'for teaching rather than research' (Ling, 2005) needs to be balanced with research and development, internationalisation, traditional and non-traditional students, knowledge management, marketing, human resources, and local community relations all fall within the sphere of a university's operations, as do social agendas, and the provision of public information.

This does not challenge the principles of a university as a community of scholars but the community may have to adapt more radically ... than it would like (Elton, 2008:230). Elton contends that massification has required the reinterpretation of relationships 'between teachers and students' as well as 'the change of status of the academic profession' (ibid). While how a university is managed, the organisational form, or the relationships within the university may have changed, the fundamental purpose has not. New spheres of activity have been entered into as universities have become more entrepreneurial and continue to seek new sources of funding and operation in new areas of activity.

Massification of HE has required change and this has included a redefining of the relationship between teachers and students. I suggest that this redefinition will continue as students pay higher tuition fees and increasingly consider themselves to be customers. Students need strong relationships with AS but have a need for services on a need to have basis e.g. academic support, disability support. There is no student view of a service if that service is not used but there is an expectation that students will receive AS time. Massification has led to changes in teaching and learning and this may also result in a change in the status of the academic profession.

Prescriptive models are related to the 'actual or ideal purposes of the university' as opposed to models for 'understanding universities and for managing them' (Miller, 1995:107). These are identified as:

- the 'liberal university' where knowledge is pursued for it's own sake;
- the 'research university' as found in large civic universities in the UK;
- the 'composite' and 'multiversity' combining a variety of aims and functions;
- the 'people's university' developed from the traditions of further and technical education.

There are many who would argue that the notion of the 'liberal university' may be eroded with increases in student fees and withdrawal of HEFCE funding for arts courses. The 'research university' may also be an organisational form which may be an ideal rather than actual in the perceptions of many staff. In considering research universities, Whitley (2008) outlines factors which limit universities' ability to 'function as independent strategic actors'. Semi-autonomous institutions pursuing commercial goals may lose the privileges accorded to them as traditionally 'not-for- profit' educational organisations. Prescriptive models suggest the ideals an institution is pursuing shape the culture and structure of the organisation and therefore become the dominant management model, although this may be a composite of models. Miller (ibid:108) states that the model of the university espoused by academic managers (AMs) either 'explicitly or implicitly shapes the sort of responses and strategies they see open to them.' All universities are under pressure to re-invent themselves and as outlined in the introduction to this work, this may mean that while the ideal for some groups is one organisational form e.g. the 'research university', external and internal pressures may mean that in order to survive an institution becomes 'composite' and 'multiversity'. The management model seen in an institution may be a function of a transition of organisational forms and how this is perceived by the staff may depend on the management model dominant at a particular time.

Leadership and Management

Leadership within HEIs can be seen as being distributed throughout the organisation at different levels and among academic and professional staff. This may be described as a model of leadership which is 'hybrid'. The multilayered nature of HE leadership at the individual, group and organisational levels is identified by Bolden et al, 2008. The authors' findings suggest support for a cybernetic model or composite model where responsibilities are shared, recognising tensions between constituent groups and competing priorities.

As previously identified, leadership within university organisations is divided among a number of actors whose interests do not necessarily coincide. These differences can make their co-operation difficult. (Mignot-Gerard, 2003:158). Models of leadership would therefore be dependent on the model or models of management prevalent within an individual HEI. University leadership and management (governance) is seen as the role of the Senate and executive team and a product of a complex web of relationships (ibid). Traditionally, VCs have been academics. This may be owing to the notion of consensus seeking in the collegial model and views that only academics can or should lead and management other academics. Role ambiguity is a common feature in research relating to the management of universities but is not unique to management research.

Leaders have a responsibility for the culture within an organisation and Cicero *et al* (2010:411) highlight the 'profound influence' that leaders can have. For AS role ambiguity can represent as conflict between the professional who researches and teaches and the administrative professional who is faced with HR, Finance and many other administrative tasks. Considine (2006:259) considers it important that academic autonomy is maintained although recognises that external pressures may seek to erode this.

Hogg (2001) proposes a social identity theory of leadership building on earlier leadership research. A sense of collective identity is an important consideration when considering prescriptive models of university organisation. Hogg contends that '[G]ood leaders are people who have the attributes of the category of leader that fits situational requirements' (2001:185). Leadership is seen as a structural feature of 'in-groups'. Within HEIs, leadership is enacted of and by academics with implicit consent, and is normally enacted by respect brought from the individual's professional reputation as opposed to leadership qualifications. MacBeath (2007) considers leadership as a subversive activity, and highlights issues with confusing leadership with expert knowledge and what people represent (2007:243). Leaders may be internally and externally accountable and internal accountability is 'measured by the convergence among what individuals say they are responsible for (responsibility), what people say their organization is responsible for (expectations), and the norms and processes by which people literally account for their work (accountability structures)' (ibid:261). MacBeath's views on accountability can be identified with collegial rather than managerial models of management.

MacBeath identifies that within HEIs, accountability has been perceived as coming from external pressures. Elton (2008) identifies that 'education should be accountable to society' and argues that replacing trust with accountability may prove counterproductive. Quoting Goodhart's law, Elton (2004) contends that when a

measure becomes a target, it ceases to be a good measure and that external performance indicators imposed by e.g. government are a sign of distrust in the professionalism of universities. This is particularly relevant as the model of new managerialism within universities has, as a focus, managerial forms of control, including internal audit and performance review and gives credence to the rejection of managerialism by AS as an external pressure of accountability which is alien to the notion of a professional.

Cicero *et al* identify 'crisis and change' as being associated with uncertainty (2010: 417) contending that 'role ambiguity leads followers to rely more on the shared social reality provided by their organizational group membership' (ibid:413). Their findings suggest that uncertainty is reduced to the extent identified with the group (ibid:417). It can be reasonably hypothesised therefore that in times of conflict or uncertainty, individuals will identify more strongly with their 'group'. Within a university I would suggest that this is at the micro-level rather than at organisational level unless individuals have a role within the dominant decision-making group and that new leaders may emerge. Indeed, Middlehurst and Elton (1992:261) identified that staff at all levels expected leadership to be exercised both individually and by groups, giving work meaning, valuing contributions, and representing interests to the outside world.

Summary

This section of the literature review has focused on the theme of management of universities. Models have been considered by their authors as sequential or alternatively as composite models while Birnbaum has argued for a cybernetic approach, another form of composite.

The predominant models have been identified as collegial or bureaucratic and within the bureaucratic tradition, a new form of management was observed, new-managerialism. The focus within new-managerialism on efficiency has been identified as conflicting with the multi-faceted nature and rationality of the reality of the university. However, proponents would argue that changing complexity and external pressures have required managerialist approaches. Credibility has also been given to the model of organised anarchy within university decision-making although debate exists as to the extent that organised anarchy is a reality within the context of 21st century HEIs and in considering models of management, the composite holds most resonance.

In considering what a university is for, the main debates relate to organizational form with leadership and governance identified as pursing particular ideals. The importance of the way leadership is enacted is highlighted and debates surround the importance of leadership. The main debates surround the role of leaders which are contested and the alignment of individuals to groups in times of uncertainty and role ambiguity. Contested leadership may lead to subversive activity akin to organised anarchy but this is felt to be acceptable in communities of intellectuals where challenge is the norm, and not necessarily a disadvantage to an institution.

Perceptions of accountability are identified as an issue where, while accepting that education should be accountable to society, debate surrounds whether this should be based on trust and professionalism, the staples of collegiality rather than by audit and managerial approaches. An audit culture has been prevalent in the last decade of the 20th and first decade of the 21st century.

While debate may exist as to the ideal form of management of a university, there appears to be agreement that institutions are complex and that in knowledge communities, knowing roles and responsibilities is important. Incremental change rather than major change in management structures would appear to be the way in which university management has developed over time, this in a sequential way with forms of management overlapping and more than one form being identifiable as co-existing in an institution at any one time. Institutional management continues to evolve and this may lead to new models of university management. It is also important to consider the individuals who inhabit university senior academic management roles as these individuals rarely come from a management background bringing to the role their experiences of e.g. economics, sociology, engineering, or science. Management styles and preferences may, therefore, be associated with the traditions of those disciplines.

Management of Change

Literature reviewed in this section considers the management of change and how this is presented in universities introducing the concept of 'change management'. The section also introduces work on Relationships.

The literature identifies concepts of planned and emergent change e.g. Beckhard, 1969; Wilson, 1992; Wallace *et al,* 2007 and Osborne and Brown, 2005.

Planned change is defined as 'change that is the result of a systematic process' and emergent change as 'change that is thrust upon an organization' (Osborne and Brown, 2005:25). These changes include e.g. change in government policy, economic

recession, changes in expectations. How change is managed is dependent on whether change is planned or emergent.

Within MU, planned change could be deemed to have taken primarily a managerial approach. External pressures on HEIs have been discussed above. However, external pressures in the context of this research may also be those which are internal to the organisation but external to a particular Department e.g. the Review of Core Services. 'A core element of ... planned approaches to change and innovation is that of defining the future state required *after* the change.' (Osborne and Brown, 2005:25). However, 'a strong commitment to a particular change may be a barrier to setting up an effective process of change' (Fullan, 2001:186) as this may mean that a change is 'pushed through' when perhaps another course of action would be more efficient or effective. Emergent changes occur as reactions to circumstance rather than a 'grand plan'. This picture of change is consistent with the views of Wallace *et al* (2007:1) in identifying that '[t]he sheer scope, pace, ambiguity and multiplicity of change outstrip the capacity of any individual or group to ensure directive control and certainty of outcomes in practice, whatever their formal position of authority or span of control in principle'.

Meister-Scheytt and Scheytt (2005:76) identify that '[M]anaging change in universities is an odious task'. The authors see resistance to change as a characteristic of the university which cannot be easily overcome (ibid:77). They propose a challenge to organisation theory and argue that 'the rationale underlying decision processes in universities is inherently paradoxical and hence change management in universities is the management of paradoxes under turbulent circumstances' (ibid:86) e.g. accepting the necessity for change but acting in a way which is resistant to change; tensions between research and teaching, both of which have to be delivered simultaneously The authors see change in organisations as 'ambiguous and inconsistent, yet purposeful and meaningful' (ibid:87) replacing the notion of change as an element of organised anarchy as 'accidental and chaotic' accepting change and change management as dealing with 'contradictory but valid possible questions' and setting aside the total elimination of contradiction. (ibid:90). This again supports the notion of a composite or cybernetic approach to the management of universities.

Relationships

A body of work has been undertaken in relation to academic cultures e.g. Knight and Trowler (2001); Becher (1989); McInnis (1998); Pritchard (2000); Tight (2003), and it was not intended that an in-depth analysis of academic culture would be undertaken for this research study. However, relationships within the organisation are highlighted

in the various models of university management and consideration of the relationship between academic and administrative staff as interest groups is deemed important.

Negative perceptions of the 'administration' raise issues of trust and respect and have implications for the professional identities of those working in professional middle management roles within central administration services. This phenomenon does not appear to be unique to either my own organisation or the English HE system, with writers in both Australia (McInnis, 1998; Szekeres, 2004, 2006) and the US (Lewis and Altbach, 1996) reporting on similar experiences. Anecdotal evidence would suggest that there are many staff working within administrative roles enjoying good 'local' relationships with the AS they work with, and these may be extended for particular individuals across the institution but collectively the administration is viewed with suspicion. It has been pointed out that negative perceptions of change may lead to more mistrust between academic and administrative staff (Szekeres, 2006:141) and that a 'perception of growing numbers may be because of their increased visibility' (Szekeres, 2004:18). This suggests that many of the 'ills', e.g. perceived overly bureaucratic approaches, laid at the door of administrative staff may come from their increased visibility and reconstructions of their professional identities or because they are seen as competitors for scarce resource. McInnis (1998:168) identified an administration frustrated with their identities as professional staff and a lack of respect from AS in relation to their abilities. Debate surrounds whether this lack of respect is perceived, real, or both.

Both those in academic and support roles have experienced increases in workload, pressure and stress in recent years (Szekeres, 2004, 2006). AS may not be the only ones to hold negative perceptions of administration and Dobson and Conway (2003:131) identified that few administrators saw their role as fundamental to core business. Szekeres' (2006) respondents also reported negative perceptions of their own roles within their institutions. I would suggest that this may depend on the roles being undertaken by administrative staff and that this may be changing as student support becomes a focus in addition to teaching and research.

Summary

This section has presented literature on the management of change and relationships. The main debates which emerge relate to the form of change and how this is operationalised.

A theoretical approach needs to be based on an understanding of universities as complex organisations. As highlighted in the model of organised anarchy or the garbage can model, there are often many choices and approaches which can be taken

to decision-making and change. Debate exists as to whether this is accidental and chaotic or a process which is paradoxical.

It is recognised that universities are communities which are multi-faceted and that these communities may be competing for resources particularly at times of economy. Strong management as proposed within an entrepreneurial model may lead to negative perceptions of administration who have not been included in traditional collegial models of management. Academic and individual freedom are recognised as important to academic reality and managerialist approaches may be alien. There does not appear to be a dichotomy between planned and emergent change in the picture of change which emerges within MU. The picture is one of 'complexity, contradictions and unintended consequences of change' with both planned and emergent change recognisable within structures and operations. In the same way that debate exists about where academic loyalty lies, questions are also raised as to where the loyalty of administration lies. This is a feature of not only the changing nature of administrative work but also the changing nature of funding within my HEI which has resulted in budgetary devolution and competition for resources.

Professionals

Literature within this section relates to the concepts of 'profession', 'professionalism' and 'professionalization'. The section also introduces work on HE professionals.

Evetts (2005) provides a useful paper which defines the concepts of 'profession', 'professionalism' and 'professionalization'. The concept of 'profession' is defined as representing 'the category of privileged, high status, high income occupational groups' (ibid:2).. Carr-Saunders and Wilson defined characteristics of professions in their seminal work of 1933. Professionalism is seen as 'a powerful instrument of occupational change and social control. Traditionally, professionalism was associated with the traits of a 'Professional', a member of a 'Profession' (e.g. Carr-Saunders and Wilson, 1933). Important in this work was the importance of professionalism as an 'occupational value ... based on trust, competence, a strong occupational identity and co-operation.' (Evetts 2005:5). Professions were characterised by their authority organised around collegiality and shared identity (ibid:5). Shared identity is a difficult concept in the analysis of middle management within HEIs as there are a range of roles which are generalist and specialist in nature and collegiality was never extended to administrative staff until recently and even then this issue is contested. Specialists have their own professional bodies which they may be belong to which identify with their profession e.g. HR, Finance or Estates, rather than their profession as an HE administrator or manager.

In consideration of HE administration as a 'Profession' debate exists as to whether it is truly a profession. While the 'Profession' does have its own Professional organisation – the Association of University Administrators (AUA) re-branded as AUA with the slogan 'promoting excellence in HE management', it's own journal (Perspectives) and it's own Code of Professional Practice with members individually and collectively committed to a core set of values and professional behaviours, HE administration is not recognised as a 'profession of choice' although again this may be changing as institutions introduce Graduate Trainee Programmes to encourage their own graduates to enter. University administration and management as a 'Profession' may be in its infancy but there is a growing professionalization of the staff as identified in research undertaken on behalf of the LFHE. It is, therefore, considered timely for work to be undertaken which examines in depth the experiences of professional administrators and managers, particularly those at the middle management level. HE administration can be seen as an open profession in that no specialist qualifications are required for entry and the profession is looking to expand rather than to close the group to outsiders through specialist knowledge which must be acquired before entry.

Evetts suggests two ideal types of professionalism:

- Occupational professionalism
- Organizational professionalism

These are seen as different but contrasting forms. Organizational professionalism is seen as incorporating 'rational-legal forms of authority and hierarchical structures of responsibility and decision making' and could be seen to apply in the context of this research to administrative staff, while occupational professionalism is based on 'autonomy and discretionary judgement and assessment by practitioners in complex cases. … Controls are operationalized by practitioners themselves who are guided by codes of professional ethics which are monitored by professional institutes and associations.' (2005:9). Occupational professionalism may have been the 'type' most associated with AS in the past but with the growth of external audit and regulatory frameworks, while institutions remain semi-autonomous, this may be changing.

In contrast, Larson (1997:xvi) defines professionalization as the process by which 'producers of special services sought to constitute and control a market for their expertise'. Larson's work on professionalization highlights issues already raised in relation to models of management, identifying conflicts between professional (collegial) and bureaucratic (managerialist) forms of authority. These conflicts present a tension between the self-regulation of collegiality and centralised controls of managerialism (Larson, 1977:190).

The major contribution to the debate relating to HE professional managers in recent years is by Whitchurch who has undertaken a body of work in the past decade (2000, 2002, 2004, 2006a, 2006b, 2007, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c, 2008d, 2009) culminating in a typology relating to professional managers and their identities in HE. Whitchurch (2008c) identifies four types of professional operating across four activity dimensions and sixteen categories of identity characteristics from data.

Within the model the four types of professional are identified by Whitchurch as:

'i) Bounded professionals – located within boundaries of function or organisational location governed by "rules and resources". Such professionals have a desire to maintain boundaries and are primarily found in e.g. registry functions.

ii) Cross-boundary professionals – these professionals use boundaries to build strategic advantage and institutional capacity, capitalising on knowledge of territories on either side of boundary.

iii) Unbounded professionals – these professionals take an open-ended, exploratory approach. Their work contributes to institutional development, with individuals tending to draw on external experience and networks.

iv) Blended professionals – these professionals have 'appeared' in recent years appointed specifically to posts spanning professional and academic domains on the basis of mixed backgrounds and portfolios. These professionals inhabit an ambiguous space between professional and academic domains.' Whitchurch (2008c)

Bounded professionals may be seen as keepers of regulations and therefore bureaucratic in their approach. Whitchurch argues that these new professionals identify a third space where the key is to build credibility as the space is also inhabited by AS. Cross-boundary professionals are likely to move in and out of third space using boundaries for 'superordinate purposes'. (2008:27).

While being the first to identify this space as 'third space' within educational institutions, Whitchurch's work could be considered an extension of the hybrid, multi-professional identified as 'boundary-spanning' in the research of Floyd and Wooldridge (1997) within industry and identified by Currie and Procter (2005) within the NHS and this work is considered in the next section relating to MMs. Whitchurch's analysis could be further extended to MMs who may at organisational and/or School level inhabit a third space. While not academic members of staff, many aspects of roles may be academic in nature providing evidence of third space activity e.g. admissions

which was once an academic activity and is now undertaken by administrators and the new roles which it has been necessary to create to meet challenges e.g. academic support for students with disabilities which has a teaching and learning function and skills modules by administrative professionals. Whitchurch's inclusion of AS in third space raises interesting questions for professionalism and whether individuals to have credibility in this space are required to have qualifications which are identified as academic. As Whitchurch has identified, this is not uncontested space.

These debates have been in existence for a number of years with more recent arguments containing echoes of earlier writing an example of which is the writing of Etzioni (1964). Etzioni (1964:80) distinguished between 'staff' and 'line' as 'two kinds of [management] authority'. In a reversal of the position in non-professional organisations, 'staff' managers within professional organisations were identified as holding the power with 'line' managers as subordinates. Within this model managers were seen as administrative and directing goal activities whereas professionals were seen as dealing with knowledge. Professional subordinates were not treated as such in 'line' management positions outside of the chain of command. In non-professional organisations administrative authority is seen as superior with 'line' hierarchy and less autonomy. In professional organizations administrators were identified as in charge of secondary activities. While this is still the case, emergence of 3rd space activity sees administrators in charge of primary activities in some instances. Etzioni's view that the dilemma of combining professional and administrative authority by dividing responsibilities suggests that third space has always existed at certain levels within the institution e.g. Vice Chancellor level where the incumbent is blending skills necessary to successfully action the role.

Summary

Literature in this section was concerned with the concepts of profession, professional and professionalism and introduced work on HE professionals.

Debates within the literature relate to the characteristics or 'traits' of professions and also what constitutes a profession. The extent to which HE administration and management is a profession is debated. Based on the characteristics identified of the old professions the use of the term profession may be contested when applied to administrative staff. In all of these literatures concepts of trust, competence, discretion and professionalism are seen as linked. Literature on the professions stresses the collegial nature of organisation and self-regulation.

The notion of what it means to be professional and professionalism are introduced as concepts which can be used as instruments of occupational change and social control. The use of professional within central services could be seen as an example of organisational professionalism, placing administrators in hierarchical structures of responsibility and decision making while the arenas in which these take place change; and in occupational professionalism as autonomy and discretionary judgement is introduced into administrative roles e.g. admissions. HE administration is not a closed profession and professional qualifications are not needed to enter the profession. Moves to professionalization could be seen as an attempt to close the group but this has not been evidenced at the current time because although to be appointed to roles at some levels within the APM scale a first degree is needed, this is not a specific HE Administration qualification.

Whitchurch's notion of a third space and identification of four types of professional spans the boundary between academic and administrative staff as she identifies both categories of staff working in third space. The concept of boundary spanning is taken up further in the next section of this work relating to Middle Management. The main debate surrounds the extent to which the theory of third space can be applied and to which it has permeated UK HEIs at the current time. This shared space raises issues for the professional identities of both categories of staff.

A number of themes can be seen in the literature. There appears to be an agreement that the nature and scope of both academic and administrative roles have changed, and continue to change to meet the challenges facing universities in the 21st century. There also appears to be an agreement that these changes in university work lend themselves to new working practices; more team-working and the blurring of the boundaries between academic and non-academic work. However, debate exists as to how far this has been achieved at the current time in English universities. Successful universities are identified as those which are able to restructure and change their organisational cultures to accommodate the colliding cultures of the academic and the non-academic worlds.

Middle Management

This section of the literature review considers theories of middle management and introduces this as a concept. Within the 'Management' research tradition, a significant body of work exists in relation to MMs. In order to further consider the findings from my research undertaken in MU and the hypotheses proposed, extant literature as data was analysed. This literature came from both the educational and management research traditions and a number of theories were identified which proved useful.

Hancock and Hellawell (2003:5) see academic MMs as required to be both interpreters and authors of strategy, making strategic decisions at their own level and operating both inside and outside their organisations. AMs have identified themselves as being caught between a rock and hard place, between senior management and their academic colleagues, and this is supported by evidence in the research (Hellawell and Hancock, 2001; Santiago et al, 2006). This is a position not unique to MMs in HE and has also been identified in other arenas. The position of an MM within HE was identified by one participant in my research as being 'stuck whack bang in the middle between being important and being totally unimportant'. This was described as being an uncomfortable position between those who think you should be able to influence and make change and seek you out because of particular expertise, those who think that you are trying to impose policy and procedures involving decision-making above your 'position'. There was a perception that senior management were uninterested in the day-to-day operation, and therefore those keeping the business running day-to-day were unimportant. However, this could also be that senior management taking a more strategic role, have an interest but leave day-to-day operation to MMs, giving support for the view of institutions as cybernetic organisations as proposed by Birnbaum (1989:246) whereby senior intervention is only necessary when there are exceptions to the system.

The second of the models considered was that of Clegg and McAuley (2005). The authors identify that 'conceptions of management ... need to be placed into the context of higher education institutions' very different understandings of the nature and role of management' (2005:22). The authors identify four dominant discourses which have been prevalent since the 1970s and depicted in Figure 2.1 below. The roles of academic MMs identified by the authors may coexist within a given organisation to a greater or lesser extent. This is deemed to depend on the role played by the organisation. These organisational roles are identified as:

i)   "Corporate" HEIs defined as well-managed institutions with a high emphasis on capabilities of managers at every level of the organisation and in all aspects of organisational life;

ii) "Strong Culture" HEIs identified as institutions where MMs are transmitters of culture across horizontal and vertical boundaries and occupied with preservation and sense of mission and purpose;

iii) "Arena" HEIs defined as having an 'arena' of interest in the way the HEI should be run where senior management, academics, administrators and IT and Estates experts all have input.

iv)   "Communitarian" or "Collegial" HEIs defined as those where academics seek
        consensus with each other and are a community of equals eschewing any
        attempt at active management.

Figure 2:1: Four periods of Middle Management (adapted from Clegg and McAuley, 2005).

Within the context of the organisational form prevalent in an institution, academic
MMs can be seen to be:

i)   Buffers between transient senior management and the instrumental orientation
     of employees;

ii) Self-interested and a redundant layer between the vision and strategy of senior
     management and soon to be empowered employees;

iii) Acting as agents of senior management;

iv) Repositories of organisational knowledge exercising benign control through
     personal but organisationally located wisdom.

(Clegg and McAuley, 2005:22)

In the 'corporate' role, institutions could be seen as operating as entrepreneurial
institutions whereby they operate as businesses, and managerialist forms of
management are predominant. In this form, a strong senior steering team guides the
business with leadership and management delegated from the top down. In the

'strong culture' role, institutions could be seen as operating either in a rational way whereby the culture is that of the whole organisation or as cybernetic system where subunits exist but work in the interests of the organisation. In the 'arena' role, institutions could be seen as composites where a variety of aims and functions are pursued with groups competing with each other for resource. In the 'Collegial' role, collegiality is the dominant model.

The four periods of middle management identified by the authors can be related to models of management with period one equating to rational, collegiate, bureaucratic or garbage can models; period two to political models; period three relates to new managerialism and a loss of control and the introduction of corporate values. Period four suggests the entering of a new era where MMs represent stability as transmitters of core strategic values and organisational capability.

My findings from MU present MMs as fulfilling a number of different roles but suggest that involvement in strategic change may be limited and, therefore, literature relating to the strategic roles of MMs was researched and considered.

In the third model of middle management, Floyd and Wooldridge (1997) investigated relationships between MMs' formal position, their strategic influence and organizational performance. They identify MMs as performing 'a co-ordinating role where they mediate, negotiate and interpret connections between the organization's institutional (strategic) and technical (operational) levels' (1997:466). This research was undertaken within 25 organisations in industry. Floyd and Wooldridge (1992) present a typology of MM influence which is built on by other authors. Within their model, MMs are seen as fulfilling four roles which have either an upward or downward influence within their institutions:

i) Championing alternatives. The persistent and persuasive communication of strategic options to upper management.

ii) Synthesizing information. The interpretation and evaluation of information which affects top management perception. The function is integrative in that it combines ambiguous and diverse data and interprets it within a given strategic context.

iii) Facilitating adaptability. Fostering flexible organisational arrangements encouraging organisation members to sense changing conditions, experiment with new approaches and adapt appropriately.

iv) Implementing deliberate strategy. Managerial interventions that align organizational action with strategic intentions.

(adapted from Floyd and Wooldridge, 1992)

	Upward	**Downward**
Divergent	Championing Alternatives	Facilitating Adaptability
Integrative	Synthesizing Information	Implementing Deliberate Strategy

Figure 2:2: Typology of middle manager influence (Floyd and Wooldridge, 1992).

Clegg and McAuley's 'roles' could be considered in the context of Floyd and Wooldridge's typology and are relatable in that managers acting as agents of senior management could be identified as 'implementing deliberate strategy'; those acting as buffers as 'facilitating adaptability'; those acting as a repository of knowledge as 'synthesizing information' and may 'champion alternatives'; those seen as self-interested and a redundant layer could not be considered 'linking pins' and would inhabit a level of management which may be made redundant if this was considered a strategic priority.

In the fourth model Currie and Procter (2005) extend Floyd and Wooldridge's typology, looking at the role MMs play in strategy in a professional bureaucracy, the NHS. The authors identify 'inconsistent expectations and cues from key stakeholders, including top managers, create role conflict and role ambiguity, making them reluctant to enact appropriate roles'. Their findings supported the typology of MM influence identified by Floyd and Wooldridge (1992) as occupying four roles having upward (Championing Alternatives and Synthesizing Information) and downward (Facilitating Adaptability and Implementing Deliberate Strategy) influence. However, the authors identified that within a professional bureaucracy MMs' ability to influence strategic change may be limited (Currie and Procter, 2005:1326). This is important for this research within a professional bureaucracy with its own professional elite – academics – less influenced by the 'changing priorities of government policy' than the NHS, as HEIs are semi-autonomous entities only reliant on government for a proportion of funding, but still subject to compliance and accountability regimes and a powerful professional cadre which is closed to outsiders.

Where a MM 'sits' may have an impact on ability to influence and engage at higher levels and identifying those who are strategically influential and why was considered important for Pappas and Wooldridge (2007). While not the focus of this research, understanding why individuals may be influential is considered important for considering the implications for MMs of change and by extension implications for professional practice and identity.

'Divergent strategic action' (Pappas and Wooldridge, 2007:325) may be as a response to the dominant model of management prevalent at a given time. In considering divergent activity and strategic regeneration, ideas are generated by individuals who maintain relationships with a diverse set of organisational actors. This enables them to gain insight into the strategy and activities of others. Network centrality allows this. However, as Currie and Proctor have identified, strategic action may be limited in professional bureaucracies for MMs.

Summary

This section has presented literature relating to theories of middle management both within and external to the education sector.

The main debates relate to the roles of MMs and their areas of influence. Clegg and McAuley link conceptions of the role of MM to the context in which their HEI operates linking this theme in my research to the theme of management of universities. Floyd and Wooldridge consider a typology of MM influence upward and downward within their institutions and MMs are identified as important linking pins. As identified in the Summary for the section on Professions, this also has links to the work of Whitchurch on professionals and third space. Currie and Proctor extend this work into a hierarchical bureaucracy, the NHS, and features of their analysis can be extrapolated to a study of an HEI as a hierarchical bureaucracy with professional elite but more autonomous than the NHS.

Gaps in Existing Literature

Within the existing body of research work relating to university administration, much has been undertaken by academics or professional researchers. Little research appears to have been undertaken by researching professionals working within a university's administration. This would suggest that academic researchers see 'administrators' as a worthy topic for research (Anderson & Jones, 2000:434) but also that 'administrators' tend not to be active in researching into their own roles, perhaps owing to their workloads or a reluctance to enter the academic world.

Much of the current literature falls into the 'how to' or 'can do' categories defined by Tight (2003) whereby professionals, usually senior manager practitioners, relate their own experiences and prescribe for future practice. Many of these are anecdotal pieces. Such pieces are useful for practitioners helping to set the author's experience in context but are not systematic pieces of research. Narratives from those at the top are useful to enable a researcher to develop an in-depth understanding of an individual context (e.g. Bull, 1994; Price, 1994; Webb, 1994). However, wider generalisation is rarely possible and such works may be criticised for their reliance on one voice reflecting on their own role in change management without the inclusion of the views of others, either in support or dissent.

Studies identified within this literature review, in the main, did not focus on the part played by MMs in the success, or otherwise, of their HEIs yet it may reasonably be hypothesized that they do have the potential to exert considerable influence depending on factors prevalent within universities at any particular time.

As a number of academic researchers outline, significant gaps exist in the literature in relation to HE e.g.

- Rhoades (1998:143) 'we should develop a fuller understanding of ... managerial professionals' daily lives and everyday practices – "thick descriptions" of their work ... Further we should explore the social relations among these non-faculty professionals ... . The professional and political terrain of colleges and universities is far more complex than our current categories allow for';

- Dobson and Conway (2003) who call for research from an 'admin' point of view to be heard;

- Clegg and McAuley (2005:20) who note that '[T]here is ... an under-researched but important area of administrative managers who are of growing significance';

- Szekeres (2006) who identifies a gap in the literature relating to the need for the stories of administrative staff to be heard.

The exception to this is the work of Whitchurch (2008c:8) examining the identities of 'professional staff', who conducted interviews with Heads of Administration and what she terms 'second- and third-tier managers, at functional director level and below'. Whitchurch describes those interviewed as 'senior and middle-grade staff on what were in 2003-2004 grades 3 to 6 of the Academic-related Staff pay scale in the pre-

1992 sector and on management or senior management grades in the post-1992 sector.' (2008c:9) This group of staff equates to those identified as senior or MMs at MU on the single pay spine Levels 5, 6 and 7. Whitchurch does not appear to include those below grades 3-6 on grades 1-2 on the old Academic-related Staff pay scale. These would typically be equated to Levels 3 and 4 on the MU single pay spine.

Within the Management Research literature, there are also significant gaps in the literature:

- Currie and Procter 'suggest the continuation of fine-grained investigations of MMs' role transition towards more strategic behaviours in other settings, particularly those adopting a methodological approach that combines rich description with comparative logic through multiple cases' (2005:1352);

- Floyd and Wooldridge (1997:481) who suggest that 'future research should focus on interactions and interrelationships among managers. ... What kinds of management teams (outside top management) have a significant influence on organizational strategy, and under what circumstances does this influence arise?'.

Use of Literature in this work

A review of relevant literature has revealed that universities are complex entities, inhabited by a number of interest groups, accountable to a variety of stakeholders, and pursing a number of purposes.   A number of models of management have been identified within universities at different times.   The model being pursued at any one time may be dependent on context, external environment, and or the aims and ideals the institution is pursuing. It is difficult to accept all HEIs pursuing the same model of management at the same time as HEIs are semi-autonomous and so may be pursing some of the same aims, while other objectives will be different. Therefore, composite models of management and form have resonance. As institutions pursue wider aims, the pursuit of different goals and objectives may be delegated to leaders of groups within the organisation.

The way change is enacted may depend on the leadership and management of the organisation and the dominant culture. Many cultures may coexist as different models of management which may be identifiable. There are complex relationships between the different interest groups and these groups may form and reform over time.

There are differences in the roles enacted by MMs and variables such as the model of management prevalent in an institution may see these roles enacted differently by academic MMs and MMs. Outside of HE MMs may be identified as having influence on strategy and as linking pins. This may not be the case within HEIs where professional bureaucracy may mean that MMs have less influence on strategy although they may still have a role as linking pins translating or interpreting between senior management and operation.

The spaces in which HE professionals operate is contested and new 3rd space is emerging. Issues are raised in relation to the identity of these professionals and this may present as role ambiguity and conflict for individuals. There may also be conflict between groups

While drawing on the full range of literature reviewed, the following sections relating to the Theoretical and Conceptual Frameworks outline the concepts and theories suggested by this literature review as being of most relevance to this study. These will be used as comparative data for analysis of hypotheses proposed as a result of applying Grounded Theory Method (GTM) to interview data obtained from this study. The extant literature will be used to identify findings which could have been predicted had literature been reviewed prior to data analysis.

The literature which I have deemed most useful to this study is as follows:

- Relating to the management of universities, in particular that of Miller, Mignot-Gerard, Birnbaum and Deem providing models of university management and organisational form, used to identify the forms of university management with MU.
- Relating to the management of change, Osborne and Brown providing a model of change management; and relating to relationships Dobson and Conway and Szerkes, who provide background to the relationships which exist between academic and administrative staff in HEIs.
- Relating to professionals the work of Whitchurch on 3rd space, examining the identities of professional staff; and Evetts for definitions of the concepts of 'profession', 'professionalism' and 'professionalization'.
- Relating to MMs that of Clegg and McCauley introducing the concept of middle management and the role of management in HE in relation to academics; Floyd and Wooldridge for a typology of MM influence and the extension to this to the NHS by Currie and Procter; and Hellawell and Hancock relating to academic MMs.

Theoretical Framework suggested by Literature

Consideration of relevant literature has helped with the formulation of a theoretical framework for this research. The literature was investigated around four themes; management of universities, management of change, professions and middle management. A theory of administrative middle management can be seen within the theoretical framework of theories of management of universities and organisational behaviour; theories of organisational change and the management of change; theories of professions; and theories of middle management.

Consideration of the literature suggests that there is no 'ready made map' to provide a theoretical framework for this study. Therefore, theories which have not been previously applied to *administrative* MMs will be combined thus demonstrating an original approach to this research.

These theories are:

- The theory of academic middle management proposed by Clegg and McAuley and their discourses on conceptions of middle management and the role of middle management within HEIs;
- The theory of middle management proposed by Floyd and Wooldridge and extended by Currie and Proctor relating to MM influence;
- The theory of academic middle management proposed by Hellawell and Hancock;
- The theory of 3rd space professionals proposed by Whitchurch.

Conceptual Framework suggested by Literature

Consideration of extant literature has highlighted the following concepts which are deemed relevant for this research. These concepts are:

- Change management - role in change management in the context of the structure and culture of the institution;
- Identity – the changing nature of administrative middle management and the implications of this on identity;
- Knowledge – as members of a knowledge community, knowledge, experience and skills;
- Administration – the changing nature of administration;
- Professionalism – as a professional behaviour;
- Professionalization – the extent to which the HE administration is a profession;
- Change – the types of change which are experienced;

- Leadership – at institutional level and within this group of staff;
- Role ambiguity – uncertainty; purpose of role; definition of role;
- Management – at institutional level and within this group of staff;

This research for this study will be framed around the concepts of management of change; middle management; and professionals which emerged from analysis of interview data and form the themes around which this literature review, reporting of findings, and discussion of findings are organised. These concepts will be used to conceptualise middle management and the role of the MM at MU. A dependent variable will be recognition of how the University is managed.

Conclusions

Chapter two has reviewed literature from the fields of educational leadership and management, business management, and sociology relevant to the study of administrative middle management at an English HEI. The purpose of this literature review was to provide background into the research issue identified in chapter one and to assist with the focussing of research questions, the theoretical and conceptual frameworks for this research and subsequent analysis of data. A review of relevant literature provided insight into a number of the research questions posed in chapter one. The extant literature was returned to as theory emerged.

The chapter began with a description of how literature was selected for review before continuing with a review of literature structured around key themes on the topics of management of universities; change management; professionals; and middle management. A summary appears at the end of each section. The literature is then used to define a theoretical and conceptual framework for this study. These frameworks are discussed in more detail in chapter 3, and are revisited in chapters 4 and 5, when findings from this study are reported, analysed, and discussed. This organisation around themes will be used as a framework in subsequent chapters in reporting, analysis, and discussion of data, when the theories considered will be applied at the micro-level in relation to administrative middle management at an English HEI. A constant theme running through the literature relates to recognition that universities are complex organisations providing evidence of tension, potential conflict, and loyalty. Gaps in the current literature are identified setting this research in the context of the wider body of work relating to HE Management in England.

This chapter has added to the story of the thesis by considering relevant literature, highlighting theories and concepts which will be used to frame the study, and as part of the analysis and discussion later in the work. Chapter three will look at relevant methodology and research methods which were used to investigate the changing

nature of administrative middle management, using the concepts and theories identified to inform the research design.

Chapter Three - Methodology

Introduction

Chapter two reviewed relevant literature and provided an insight into the background to the issues relevant to this research and the research questions posed in chapter one. Gaps in the existing literature were identified and this enabled the setting of this research in the context of the wider body of work relating to HE management in England.

This chapter outlines the choice of methodology used for this research. It begins by setting out the philosophical framework within which the research was undertaken. The chapter then goes on to provide a description of the research design, role of the researcher, ethical considerations in undertaking this research, data gathering and data analysis methods used for the study. Conclusions including a summary of the contribution this chapter makes to the story of the thesis as a whole conclude the chapter.

Methodology

The substantive aim of the work was to investigate the changing nature of administrative middle management within an English university from the perspective of APM staff, seeking an understanding of the experiences of MMs within the context of a changing environment.

Key to addressing the substantive issue raised, were questions relating to:

- What has changed?
- Why?
- How is change managed and implemented?
- Have recent changes enabled University administration to become more efficient and effective?
- What are the implications of change for professional practice/identity?
- What role can MMs play in the management of change and culture of the department/organisation?

This research takes a single unit theory-seeking case study approach. This was a time limited study, which is inevitably different to a more longitudinal approach, following and investigating experiences over a number of years. The design of this research

meets the criteria for an educational case study in that the work is set within boundaries of space and time in a natural context. An explanatory case study is the preferred approach when examining contemporary events where the relevant behaviours cannot be manipulated (Yin, 2003:7). An explanatory case study approach for this project is deemed appropriate as I had little or no control over how change is managed at a senior level.

The aim of this research was to take a grounded theory (GT) approach. It is hoped that the findings will be relatable in the way described by Bassey as 'fuzzy generalisations' (1999:46). 'Fuzzy generalisations' is Bassey's own term for 'a qualified generalization, carrying the idea of possibility but no certainty' stating that something might happen without a measure of probability (1999:46). A GT is 'a theory that has resulted from the use of the Grounded Theory Method (GTM)' Bryant and Charmaz, (2007:3).

Although Glaser and Strauss (1967) worked together on 'The Discovery of Grounded Theory' they later parted company and their further work led them to develop different versions of 'grounded theory'. Glaser's (1998) version of grounded theory has been termed 'traditional' and is more positivist in approach. In this approach, the researcher maintains a distance and independence from the data, allowing meanings to emerge relying on reliable facts and certainties. Strauss' (1987) version of grounded theory is more interpretivist and the researcher uses coding paradigms to make sense of the data seeking understanding.

Owing to the different directions taken by researchers in the GT tradition who have adapted grounded theory for their own needs, it is not possible to see developments from Glaser and Strauss to Glaser or Strauss and beyond as a seamless 'trajectory' (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). A number of researchers have continued to work in the tradition and researchers have adapted grounded theory for their own specific needs so that a number of different approaches are now taken. At the simplest level these versions can be described as: Glaserian School; Strauss and Corbin School and Constructivist (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007). Charmaz (2006) takes a constructivist approach to grounded theory constructing theories from the coding of data and memo writing. This approach assumes that interpretation of the studied phenomenon is a construction of 'shared experiences and relationships' (Charmaz, 2006:130).

It is recognised that 'constructivism and constructionism' are becoming synonymous terms for some researchers. However, as identified by Hammersley (2007), the two, while sometimes employed in similar ways, are not the same. The term 'constructivism' is used in psychology where emphasis is on the meanings of reality constructed by individuals, the study of cognition. 'Constructionism' used in social

science literature e.g. sociology and educational research emphasises the production of knowledge i.e construction of knowledge, Hammersley identifies that some constructionists challenge the assumption that understanding other people is possible in the terms assumed by interpretivism as understanding is necessarily a construction among many possible ones (2007:93). I too would suggest that any interpretivist approach that extends into theory building is a construction by the researcher. Corbin (1998:123) states 'How can one remove who and what one is from the comparative process? An analyst can only compare based on how s/he reads the data. One would hope that by 'sticking to the data' the analyst is left out of the interpretive process, but this is highly unlikely'.

In taking a GT approach to this research project I have attempted to stay close to the traditional features of GT research in relation to data collection and analysis, using the constant comparison method, memo-writing, theoretical sampling and saturation whilst taking an interpretivist stance to reach a position where theory emerges from the data and is 'truly *grounded* in the data' (Allan, 2003:3). As an 'insider/outsider', while not rejecting the view that researchers should and could use their prior knowledge to develop new theories, I was looking to balance having knowledge of situations to see 'differences and distinctions in the data' (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007:2), with setting aside preconceptions to avoid introducing bias by imposing my view of reality on the data. In attempting to take analysis beyond descriptions of phenomenon, I looked to understand what my respondents were telling me, then reflected on their statements to propose hypotheses. These hypotheses were interpretations of understandings and were used to build a theory of administrative middle management. This was then compared to extant literature and related to existing theory. In my theory building, I was attempting to show the complexity of the world which my participants were operating in and hypothesise about administrative middle management and MMs. While taking an interpretivist stance initially, by building theory and having experience of some of the phenomena described, I could be said to have moved into a constructionist approach. I would argue that this is not inconsistent with an interpretivist stance and that constructionist approaches are variants within an interpretivist approach.

Philosophical Framework

Criticisms of the case study approach relate to a perceived lack of rigour in the research, an allowance of equivocal evidence or bias and that the case study approach does not follow systematic procedures although this would be disputed by GT researchers. Inherent in criticisms of qualitative research are issues raised about validity and relevance. Central to this is the notion of objectivity. It is questionable

whether qualitative research can ever be truly objective and even if objective research is desirable.

Eisner (2003) argues that procedural objectivity is possible and that following a methodology may eliminate or minimise the bias of the individual researcher. Through a transaction between objective conditions and personal frames of reference we make sense of reality. It is accepted that there are stories to tell and there may be many realities all of which are of equal value. Phillips (2003), in contrast, describes objectivity as a label and the notion of all realities being of equal value is rejected. Objective views are 'opened up to scrutiny, to vigorous examination, to challenge' (2003:66) providing independent validation While it could be said that not all realities are equal, if the evidence provided is reliable then the realities presented may be deemed to be valid. Within a GT approach if the theory comes from the data and nowhere else then it is considered a valid GT. Professional research needs to be relevant, addressing issues of legitimate concern. Two aspects of relevance need to be assessed: the importance of the topic which must be directly or indirectly of importance to the intended audience; and contribution to existing knowledge.

If qualitative research meets these criteria then while it might be possible to argue that it is only the personal impressions of the researcher, at best, it would have been subject to the scrutiny so important for Phillips' (2003) view of objectivity. The credibility of research increases as findings, conclusions and/or prescriptions increase in generalizability. However, generalizability has also been viewed as unimportant, unachievable or both. At the heart of this view is 'the assumption that the goal of qualitative research is to produce a coherent and illuminating description of and perspective on a situation that is based on and consistent with a detailed study of a situation rather than to produce a standardized set of results others in the same situation studying the same issues could produce' (Schofield, 2003:93).

As outlined in the Introduction to this work, the extent to which findings generated from this study can be generalized may be limited as within the English system there is no standard model of university management. Universities are complex places and require complex solutions. 'One hundred universities require 100 solutions' (Clark, 2005:183).

Research Design

The paradigm underlying this research is that of interpretivism arguing that there are no absolutes but that all phenomena can be studied and interpreted in different ways. Researchers in the interpretivist tradition accept that they are not clean sheets nor are the phenomena they study 'the core task is to view research participants as research

subjects and to explore the "meanings" of events and phenomena from the subjects' perspectives' (Morrison, 2002:24). This approach accepts that individual experiences are brought to bear on our conceptions of reality and how we make sense of the world affects our perceptions. Positivism with a focus on reliable facts and certainties and a claim to objective, scientific knowledge is not appropriate to the design of this research project.

With a focus on providing descriptions and explanations, this research would not have benefited from a survey approach being taken as this would have produced a volume of data that would have been unmanageable. A quantitative approach would have produced a different piece of work which would not have enabled an in-depth situational analysis of data as an anonymous survey or questionnaire approach leaves the researcher with an inability to question or follow up to check understandings.

Action-centred research with its focus on problem solving was not deemed appropriate given the intellectual project underlying the research. Taking an action-centred approach would require an ability to influence change at a senior level. While being able to act as an agent for change within my own area of one division of the Registrar's department at an operational and strategic level, I am not always in a position which is senior enough to influence change in structure within the Department or organisation as a whole although I may have input through a consultation process in some situations.

One approach to this research work would be to assume that some or all of the participants in the study are hiding what they really believe or feel and that the role of the research is to break down these 'fronts' through forceful interviews (Hammersley, 2007:107). It was recognised that there were political sensitivities relating to undertaking this work within my own organisation and the substantive issue being researched, and observation of day-to-day practice and situations was used to try to identify whether participants were using 'fronts' or deliberately deceiving. As the findings from the research will show, in the main, interviewees appeared to be giving honest responses to questions and in some cases were very free and open with their views.

Consistent with a GT approach I was careful not to define the research too narrowly initially, to allow hypotheses and theories to emerge as work progressed.

Researcher Role

Merton defines the insider as 'an individual who possesses *a priori* intimate knowledge of the community and its members.' (Merton, 1972 in Hellawell 2006:484) and so 'one

definition of *outsider* research is where the researcher is not *a priori* familiar with the setting and people s/he is researching.' (Hellawell, 2006:485)

I have been employed in HE administration, in a variety of roles for more than 20 years. My current level is that of a MM, and as such I am currently based within one of the three Divisions which comprise the Registrar's department. At the start of this research project my role involved leading and managing one of the offices in a major area of the department's activity. This was primarily an operational role but gave scope for being involved in change management, policy development, proposals to University committees and academic boards, involvement in University level working groups and also in one-off projects. My role evolved over time and my current role, following a further restructuring of my Division, is as the Head of one of the four sections comprising Academic Administration.

I am an insider within my own Division and group of MMs but consistent with this position am not always given full access to sensitive information when decisions are made at senior management level (Floyd and Wooldridge, 1997). In other groups interviewed, e.g. School Managers (SMs), AMs although we had shared experiences of the research setting my knowledge of their experiences was more that of an outsider as I was not aware of individual situations unless the individuals were known to me personally.

It is recognised that advantages and disadvantages exist for the researcher in both insider and outsider positions (Hellawell, 2006; Mercer, 2007). The advantages for an insider come from being familiar with the setting they are researching into, meaning that there will be no culture shock, benefits from understanding of shared experiences, and an enhanced rapport with participants. Disadvantages for the insider include the inability to be distant from the research, power relationships, relationships which need to continue once the research is over, and over-familiarity with the research setting. An individual may also introduce bias or manipulate situations. Respondents to an insider may respond by telling the researcher what they think the research wants to hear.

Advantages for the outsider come from being able to question the unquestionable 'truth' (Hellawell, 2006) and to look at the situation and report freely. However, the outsider may become an insider as knowledge is gained and the outsider may come to empathise with the group being researched. Disadvantages for the outsider include the lack of knowledge of the past. However, the extent to which one is truly an insider or outsider when researching within the researcher's own organisation and whether these positions are dichotomous requires consideration. The notion of a continuum from insider to outsider in the position of the researcher is proposed

(Hellawell, 2006:488, Mercer, 2007:7) and if this notion of a continuum is accepted then there is no dichotomy with 'the ideal position of the researcher ... being both inside and outside the perceptions of the 'researched'' (Hellawell, 2006:487) having an insider's knowledge but an outsider's objectivity (Anderson and Jones, 2000:440).

Potential issues may arise from interviewing those in comparable positions and senior management positions.   Particular problems arise in relation to interviewing those in subordinate positions, as was evidenced from the initial study for this research. As Tight (2003:137) notes 'researching managers, particularly senior managers, is, at least potentially a risky business'. If a topic is controversial internally, what is not studied may be as significant as what is, and the pressures for an upbeat study may introduce bias by the researcher not wanting to threaten organizational legitimacy (Anderson & Jones, 2000:449).

Ethical Considerations

This research was conducted under ethical guidelines as published by the British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2004) and, although it was not foreseen that the work would involve risk to participants, clearance was sought from the OU Human Participants and Materials Ethics Committee. This clearance was granted. Data was stored to comply with the terms of the Data Protection Act 1998 and will be destroyed once use for the purposes of this research has ended.

A decision was made not to interview anyone for whom I had direct line management responsibility throughout the course of this research. This decision was made to ensure that those I line managed didn't feel that they were under an obligation to be interviewed. I felt that there was a possibility that to do so would introduce bias into the work by them telling me what they thought I wanted to hear, particularly as I had 'control' in the form of undertaking their performance reviews.

Consideration was also given to interviewing staff below junior management level as within Schools where there may not be a hierarchy of staff at all of the levels indentified in PS, it was felt that their experiences might provide alternative perspectives. However, it was felt that there may be issues with interviewing staff in this group such as a breadth of knowledge of issues or the introduction of bias by giving answers they thought I would expect, and a decision was made not to include this group.

Consideration had to be given to when I was a researcher and when I was undertaking my role within the Division. I also had to consider what I would do if I learned something in the course of my research which I would need to address in my

professional context. I made the decision that if I did find something as part of my research which I would need to address in the professional context that initially I would discuss this with the interviewee and, that if they were unwilling for me to take the matter further, I would look for a way to find out the information through an alternative route unless there was a risk to a third party from my not acting. Consideration also had to be given to the sharing of positive information in the professional setting and again I discussed this with interviewees where Good Practice was identified.

Research Methods

Primary and secondary sources were analysed to set the work in the context of developments of both external and internal policy in recent years.

The research was supported by the use of informal observation of own practice and the practice of others and the use of semi-structured interviews, initially with individuals identified as stakeholders (middle and SPMs working with PS, those external in APM and academic roles). These groups were extended following discussion with relevant managers and outcomes of initial interviews with participants, this being consistent with a GT approach.

Consistent with a GT approach, data collection and data analysis were undertaken concurrently as opposed to allocating them to distinct phases of the research project.

Pilot Study

A Pilot Study was undertaken to test research design and questions for use in semi-structured interviews. The full report on this study appears as Appendix V.

It was anticipated that pilot interviews would enable me to practice interviewing techniques and would also provide an opportunity to test whether the use of key concepts and definitions was understood by those being interviewed and to gain an understanding of participants' experiences in relation to the management of change (restructuring) and the implications for the professional practice of MMs.

Participant answers suggested that their understanding of 'academic' and 'APM' staff was the same as my own and that those perceived as MMs, also saw their roles as such. The availability of participants was raised as an issue in the planning of the initial study and problems with availability did threaten the pilot. My workload had increased considerably prior to the planned initial study data collection phase and those to be interviewed had experienced similar issues relating to workload. However,

all interviewees approached were keen to be involved irrespective of workload and so a schedule was able to be negotiated which allowed me a clear day between interviews for reflection and adjustment of the research questions.

An important lesson learned was that I should have got going earlier and developed as a researcher as the interviews went on, rather than hoping to read everything necessary, write perfect questions, have clear coding categories and have a final view of how the data would be presented before interviews could start. Also important was my mind set on the day. The interview with JMF01 was short and I had come straight from another meeting. For future interviews time was scheduled before the interview to get into researcher mode making the distinction between researcher role and professional role.

Although care was taken to ensure that questions were not leading but allowed the interviewee to express their views, I felt that on reflection, perhaps too much empathy had been shown with interviewees and that not enough development of emerging themes took place.

Review of Relevant Documentation

An in-depth study of relevant documentation was undertaken to provide contextual information and to provide insight into the context within which APM staff operate.

At the instigation of Management Board (MB), a Review of Core Systems and Processes (CSR) was undertaken by the Operations Group at MU during 2005 with Management Board receiving a Report in October 2005. Recommendations from the Review were taken forward by Project Groups with the work split into Work Strands.

The minutes of relevant committees were retrieved and scrutinised for references to the CSR as were the Vice Chancellor's Statements to Senate. These documents are in the public domain and proved to be factual reports which do not describe decision making or sensitive topics. This is hardly surprising as even documentation for internal consumption only will be sanitised and for a number of reasons will not always present the full picture depending on audience.

While it is possible to find reference to the CSR in minutes of University committees in the public domain (accessible through the University's website) the Report and Implementation Report remain confidential to the University as do briefing papers from Work Strands and the Review of the Registrar's Department.

Observation

Informal observations of professional practice were recorded in a research diary. Audio notes were also used to enable observations to be noted immediately and written up afterwards.

These observations were mainly used to enhance description of practice but were also used in relation to question design and to enhance understanding. Although this work was an investigation of experience, alternative meanings of perceived observed behaviours were also sought, together with triangulation and, consistent with a GT approach, constant comparison to other data. As the observations were not fed back to those observed, it was hoped that there would be less likelihood that these would induce procedural or personal reactivity into behaviours although it was recognised that relationships with individuals were different and that how I was seen as a participant in particular situations was relevant.

Semi-structured interviews – Main Study

Selection of Participants

For the purposes of this research it was felt important that interviewees had a minimum of four years service to be able to comment on experiences relating to the management of change.

Consistent with a GT approach whilst reflecting on emerging hypotheses other individuals were identified and included in the study as I moved towards saturation of categories. The group of staff identified were a theoretical opportunity sample, chosen from within the volunteer population as potentially having something useful to contribute to the understanding of the research topic. An explanation of the characteristics of the research population e.g. the code names given to them and biographical details including gender, career stage, length of time in HE or elsewhere is outlined in chapter four.

It was initially anticipated that the sample would consist of Senior and MMs working within University administration as APM staff. In order to provide rich data, a minimum of three members of each group were identified to be interviewed to try to eliminate situations where there were competing explanations without corroboration. It was anticipated that Senior and Middle AMs would also be interviewed. It was recognised that some of these staff, may not describe themselves in the category of management which I have outlined and, indeed, might not consider themselves as managers first.

As the focus of the research was widened to discuss issues relating to the nature of change within the University from the administrators' perspectives, the topic became less sensitive and, following internal discussions of questions to be asked, no group of staff was identified as 'off limits'. It was recognised that AS not already in identified 'management' positions within their Schools or the University may have different experiences to those who were and again, consideration was given as to whether to extend proposed interviews with AS to this group. A decision was made to also interview a small number of AS not in senior management positions within Schools while recognising that all AS have an element of administration and/or management within their roles.

A decision was taken to limit interviews to a manageable number which would provide sufficient data to provide answers to the research issue and research questions and a desire to saturate categories. My final interview sample consisted of 26 semi-structured interviews with 15 female and 11 male APM and AS. The interview population ranged in age from 26-30 to 60+. The majority of interview participants were aged either 36-40 or 41-45. The youngest participant had been employed in a number of roles within HE administration and had experience of working in both academic Schools and central administration.

Interview Questions

I began by outlining the purpose of the interview setting out ground rules. Interview questions were developed from the pilot study but did not change substantially. Additional questions were added relating to roles of AMs, whether interviewees accepted that PVCs and VCs would be AS and the meaning of 'Faculty' within MU.

At this stage, equity and social justice were not felt to be relevant as it was not anticipated that interviewees' experiences would be shaped by inequality in the traditional sense. However, relevant to the research was the perceived or actual divide between academic and APM staff and academic and APM managers, how they are managed and notions of collegiality and managerialism.

Factual questions relating to job title and role were asked as how participants described themselves was deemed relevant. An early discussion raised the issue of culture within the organisation and, that although role holders within central services might describe themselves as managers, those in senior academic roles did not recognise them as *managers* but as *administrators* carrying out the wishes of Schools identified by those in senior academic roles.

This is interesting as 'Administrator' can be perceived as a derogatory term or one used for someone at a lower level within PS or a School administration office and a recent trend for senior APM managers to use terms such as 'Head' or 'Director' co-relating to titles used by senior academic managers within academic Schools has been observed. AMs within MU do not use the term 'manager' generally to describe their role preferring Professor, Head or Director identifying them with their Professional status within the academic community.

Interviewees were asked questions relating to the length of time they had been working in administration and HE administration (for those not working as administrators how long they had been working in HE) in particular, and how they would describe their role (professional identity) allowing insight into level and skills deemed important for later considerations of professionalism.

Recent work undertaken for the LFHE found that for many working in HE administration was an 'accidental event' (Wild & Wooldridge, 2009:6) rather than career of choice. Length of time within HE and how participants came to their current roles was considered of interest as a causal relationship may appear between experiences and reactions to change and experience within or outside of the sector. It was anticipated that those with experience of either School and Centre roles or roles within and outside of the sector, may be more likely to exhibit a broader range of skills and professional behaviours.

The next set of questions related to participants' experiences of change and the ways in which it was managed, the factors which they felt had influenced change, and barriers to effectiveness in their areas of operation.

The next set of questions focussed on relationships with academic and APM staff and accountability. These questions arose from an awareness of the work of Whitchurch (2000, 2002, 2004, 2006a, 2006b, 2007, 2008) which discussed the changing roles of administrative staff and it was felt that this was an interesting avenue to explore in relation to the implications for MMs of restructuring and change and their roles within that.

Participants were invited to consider whether they felt that their experiences would change over the next two to three years and were given an opportunity to comment on anything in relation to the topics being discussed that they had not had an opportunity to talk about. Additional external factors not recognised at initial stages of the research included the UK and world-wide economic situation, potential change of government and changes to the visa requirements for international students.

With the exception of those already outlined, none of the questions posed were explicitly asked by researchers whose work had been reviewed as part of the literature review. However, Fitzgerald et al (2006) use similar questions in undertaking research reported as 'Managing Change and Role Enactment in the Professionalised Organisation'. The interview questions asked of participants in this study emerged through the sorts of interview questions which could be expected to provide data in order to address the substantive research issue. A schedule of questions and prompts is provided as Appendix VI.

Interviews lasted between 45 minutes and 1 hour and 50 minutes, with the majority lasting between 55 minutes and 1 hour and 5 minutes as I was conscious that I had indicated in the invitation that I anticipated taking an hour of the interviewee's time. Given the voluntary nature of their participation, I tried to keep to time, whilst ensuring that I was able to collect rich data for analysis. The shortest interview was with an interviewee who had had limited opportunities to experience change but had interesting perspectives on a number of issues raised. The longest interview was with an interviewee who had a wealth of experience from both within and outside of MU and who had indicated that there was no need to curtail the interview to adhere to the hour initially asked for.

Full transcription was undertaken to ensure that interviewees could be given a transcript of what they had said, and had a copy of the data which I was holding in relation to them. This was deemed important for this insider research. However, following a comment made by one interviewee about the number of times they said emm, er and used a particular a phrase, I did remove these from later transcripts.

Data Analysis

The substantive aim of this work was to contribute to knowledge relating to administrative middle management and the roles of MMs, making recommendations in relation to the role MMs can play in the management of change and culture of the organisation through their professional practice.

My aim in analysing my data was to seek answers to the research questions posed in chapter one, using a GT approach to data analysis, allowing patterns in the data to be observed and hypotheses to emerge. In so doing, I hoped to generate new hypotheses which could be related to the extant literature providing a conceptualisation of the role of administration MM within the context of HEI management either by providing empirical evidence for existing theory or new theory. My reasons for approaching the work in this way were that an initial review of existing literature had not identified one specific theory which could be applied to the nature of

administrative middle management within an HEI, suggesting the need for a new theory or the combination of theories to provide explanation. As findings began to emerge I was able to return to the literature to seek relevant theories which could provide insight and be used to support or disprove my hypotheses, find 'fuzzy generalisations' (Bassey, 1999:46) from analysis of data collected within my own organisation which would be relatable in the wider HE context.

My stance on GT as an inexperienced researcher learning the method was to recognise that Glaser and Strauss (1967) provided a basis for undertaking qualitative research but that the early texts were not 'how to' manuals. Traditional views of GT suggest that a review of extant literature should be delayed in order to allow the researcher to approach the data with an open mind allowing theory to emerge. However, for those like myself undertaking a programme of doctoral study, the 'rules' may mean that it not possible to delay commencement of a review of the literature. By researching as an 'insider' within my own organisation on a topic of relevance to my professional context, and having previously undertaken a relevant Masters degree, it was not possible to come to the research with a completely open mind as proposed by traditionalists. I came to this project, therefore, with prior knowledge from previous experience but with an intention to suspend what I thought I knew.

Consistent with GTM, data analysis began soon after the first interview had been undertaken and transcribed, and comparisons were made with subsequent transcripts, documentary evidence, observations, and extant literature. Differences and similarities between the interview transcripts were noted. These findings were compared to the extant literature and also to other work undertaken by MU.

Technical terms in GT e.g. open coding, constant comparison and axial coding need to be learned and understood and the 'how to' of the method takes time to master. As an inexperienced researcher, I experimented with different ways of working with data. NVivo was explored as a tool both for data analysis and project management. However, I found that my methods of working as a part-time researcher did not lend themselves easily to the use of computer software which was only available in one location. I eventually found that the best method for me was to carry an A5 notebook and to note observations and plans of action, together with a variation on the 'index card in a box' technique – a small ring binder into which index cards could be filed and cross-referenced. GT concepts, codes and categories were also written on index cards and used in elevating codes to categories visually. Codes were elevated to categories and categories were elevated to concepts. Concepts were then related to the conceptual framework and subsequently related back to the literature in analysis of findings. There was, of course, a risk with the use of this method. Had I lost my ring binder a considerable amount of work would have been lost and so ideas were also

reproduced as diagrams, notes, and memos. I also found it important to keep a typed list of codes and categories to which new codes and subcategories could be added.

When analysing transcripts, lines in the transcripts were numbered. I read through the transcripts line by line noting comments, observations, queries, and notes to self against 'bits' of data. Once this had been done, the notes, comments, and queries, were typed up into a document. I then went back over the transcript and began to group comments and notes which seemed to go together, and a running list of codes was also prepared at this time using an 'open coding strategy'. I then went to the next transcript and repeated the process. Patterns and regularities became categories into which subsequent 'bits' of data could be coded.

Once the process was underway, my index cards were used with the code on them noting the transcript and line number where the code was used and data was transferred into documents relating to the code. An example of a redacted transcript appears as Appendix VII. An example of a redacted coded transcript appears as Appendix VIII. Interviewees and their attributes were stored as cases and I was able to link transcripts of interviews and memos relating to analysis of emerging concepts and categories. Categories, sub-categories and codes appear as Appendix XII.

Memos were written at various times during the analysis process, at first using a 'free writing' technique, with later memos being more defined as categories were developed. An example of a memo appears as Appendix IX. Visual depictions of the emerging categories were also created. An example of such a diagram appears as Appendix X. These memos were sorted and compared and I started to conceptualise how codes related and move in a theoretical direction. Hypotheses began to emerge and these were then subjected to further comparison by a return to extant literature, new interview transcripts, and a return to existing transcripts. This resulted in an emergent GT conceptualising the role of a MM in the English HEI in which this study was undertaken.

Conclusions

This chapter outlines the choice of methodology used for this research. The chapter began by setting out the philosophical framework within which the research has been undertaken. This was followed by a description of the research design, the role of the researcher, ethical considerations, data gathering, and data analysis methods used for the study, including the aims of the research analysis.

Descriptions have been given of the research methods used including interview questions proposed for a series of semi-structured interviews, documentary evidence from within the HEI and observation.

This chapter tells the story of planned research methodology and methods and provides a link between the theories and concepts identified as a result of a review of relevant literature; design of appropriate research questions; consideration of appropriate research methods to answer these questions; and reporting of findings from the implementation of this methodology.

The thesis continues with chapter four which will present findings from the implementation of this planned methodology. Chapter five will provide analysis and discussion of those findings and will seek to relate these to existing literature to answer the substantive and theoretical questions posed.

Chapter Four – Presentation of Findings

Introduction

This chapter will present findings from the implementation of the planned methodology as outlined in chapter three, to answer the substantive issue and theoretical questions posed. Findings are broken down into categories emerging from GTM analysis of the interview data relating to the research questions posed and related to themes outlined in chapter two. The chapter begins with a presentation of information relating to the interview population.

As outlined in chapter one, the substantive aim of this work is to seek an understanding of the changing nature of a UK university from the administrators' perspectives and from this an understanding of the role MMs can play in the efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation through their professional practice.

In order to investigate the experiences of those working with the institution in relation to change, interview questions were posed. Interview questions produced rich data and this was then analysed, coded and categorised using the GT method. These categories are outlined in sections reporting findings below, organised around themes first outlined in chapter two: Management of the University; Change and Change Management; Professionals; and Middle Managers. This represents a reporting of first order constructs i.e. reporting interviewee meanings, with relevant commentary, seeking understanding. Four main categories emerged and from these hypotheses to be tested. These hypotheses are considered in Chapter five.

The chapter concludes with an articulation of how analysis will be taken to second order constructs in Chapter five and a Summary.

Interview Population

This section begins with tabular information relating to the interview population.

Code Name	Age Range	Gender	Role	Roles in HE	Years in HE	Current Level	PS/AS	School/Centre
JMM07	31-35	M	JPM	2 to 3	4 to 6	APM4	PS	C
JMF01	31-35	F	JPM	2 to 3	7 to 10	APM4	PS	S&C
JMF03	26-30	F	JPM	4 to 6	7 to 10	APM4	PS	S&C
JMF06	46-50	F	JPM	4 to 6	20+	APM4	AS	S&C
JMF05	56-60	F	JPM	0 to 1	7 to 10	APM4	AS	S
MAF01	60+	F	MAM	2 to 3	11 to 15	APM6 Equivalent	AS	S
MAF03	41-45	F	MAM	4 to 6	16 to 20	APM6 Equivalent	AS	S&C
MAM02	46-50	M	MAM	4 to 6	16 to 20	APM6 Equivalent	AS	S&C
MMF08	36-40	F	MPM	4 to 6	11 to 15	APM5	AS	S&C
MMF05	51-55	F	MPM	2 to 3	11 to 15	APM6	PS	C
MMF06	36-40	F	MPM	4 to 6	11 to 15	APM6	PS	C
MMM01	41-45	M	MPM	4 to 6	11 to 15	APM5	PS	C
MMM02	31-35	M	MPM	4 to 6	11 to 15	APM5	PS	C
MMM07	36-40	M	MPM	2 to 3	11 to 15	APM5	PS	C
MMF16	41-45	F	MPM	4 to 6	11 to 15	APM5	PS	S&C
MMM11	56-60	M	MPM	4 to 6	16 to 20	APM6	AS	S&C
MMF13	36-40	F	MPM	4 to 6	16 to 20	APM5	PS	S&C
MMF04	46-50	F	MPM	2 to 3	20+	APM5	PS	S&C
MMF09	41-45	F	MPM	4 to 6	20+	APM5	PS	S&C
MMF10	60+	F	MPM	2 to 3	20+	APM5	AS	S
MMF03	31-35	F	MPM	4 to 6	7 to 10	APM5	PS	S&C
SAM01	56-60	M	SAM	4 to 6	20+	APM7 Equivalent	AS	S
SAM02	51-55	M	SAM	4 to 6	20+	APM7 Equivalent	AS	S
SAM03	41-45	M	SAM	4 to 6	20+	APM7 Equivalent	AS	S&C
SMM02	36-40	M	SPM	4 to 6	16 to 20	APM7	PS	S&C
SMM01	46-50	M	SPM	4 to 6	16 to 20	APM7	PS	C

Table 4.1: Interview Population

Key:

AS = Academic School, PS = Professional Services

C = Centre, S = School, S&C = School and Centre

Participants were given a code name made up from their level (Junior = J, M = Middle, S = Senior), whether they were an Academic (A) or Administrative (M) member of staff, their gender (M, F) and a unique identifying number. Also recorded was the age of participant within a band; whether they were male or female; their current role and level e.g. MM = Middle Professional Manager, SAM = Senior AM; the number of roles

they had undertaken in HE; the number of years they had worked in HE; whether they were currently working in Professional Services (PS) or an Academic School (AS); and whether their roles had been only within Professional Services (C), Academic Schools (S), or both (S&C).

As previously stated, the interview population was an opportunity sample. There were links between the participants in relation to experience of some of the same changes in administration and administrative structures. Some participants had worked together previous to their current roles and so had experienced changes in administrative structure before; others worked in the same area currently and so had experienced the same administrative changes. Short biographical histories appear at Appendix XI.

Participants in this research were predominantly in the age ranges 31-35, 36-40 and 41-45.

Interview Population by Age	Number
26-30	1
31-35	4
36-40	6
41-45	5
46-50	3
51-55	2
56-60	3
60+	2

Table 4.2: Interview Population by Age

The largest group of participants had undertaken between four and six roles in a HEI. For administrators this could be seen as career progression 'through the ranks'. For AS this involved roles both as an academic member of staff, and administrative roles at School and/or University level. Those administrators who had undertaken fewer roles in HE described their reason for remaining in a role as the ever-changing nature of the work being undertaken, meaning it could effectively be described as having had more than one or two roles.

Number of Roles in HE	Number of Interview Population
0-1	1
2-3	7
4-6	18

Table 4.3: Interview Population by Number of Roles in HE

The largest group of participants had spent 11-15 years in HE, closely followed by those who had spent 20+ years in HE. 21 interviewees had worked in HE for more than 11 years. In the interview population, 14 participants had only held roles within MU. These included interviewees in all categories and a number of these had worked at MU for 20+ years. This demonstrates some stability of the workforce within MU but is balanced by 12 participants who had held roles in other HEIs before taking up a role at MU. These were typically those who had spent 11-15 years in HE and previous posts had been at both pre- and post-92 institutions. It is also interesting to note that, before this study concluded, seven participants had been promoted either within MU or by moving to a post outside of MU at another HEI. While this may suggest that it would be difficult for HE administrators to find comparable work outside of HE, as will be explored later in this work, the skills needed as a MM working in HE, could be transferable elsewhere.

Number of Years in HE	Number of Interview Population
4-6	1
7-10	4
11-15	9
16-20	5
20+	7

Table 4.4: Interview Population by Number of Years in HE

The larger group of participants had undertaken roles in both a School and Centre setting. For AS, this had involved an administrative role at University level. As will be reported later in this chapter, the 'awareness' that experience of more than one area of operation brings, was considered by respondents to be an important attribute.

Location of Roles	Number of Interview Population
School	5
Centre	7
School and Centre	14

Table 4.5: Interview Population by Location of Roles

As would be expected from a study relating to the experiences of MMs, the largest group of participants were working as MMs within MU.

Type of Role	Number of Interview Population
Junior Manager	5
Middle Manager	13
Senior Manager	2
Middle Academic	3
Senior Academic	3

Table 4.6: Interview Population by Type of Role

Reporting of Findings

As outlined in chapter three, transcripts were analysed with text coded to single words. These codes were then sorted and grouped first in sub-categories and then from sub-categories to an overall category. The original categories, sub-categories and codes from my GT analysis of the data appear as Appendix XII. Individual transcripts where these codes appear e.g. Change, Planned, MMM01, Line 134, appears as Appendix XIII. Unless otherwise stated in this section, the reported findings are those from the coded transcripts of interviewees, or my own observations as an 'insider' within MU during the course of this research.

Management of the University

This section is made up of the sub-categories 'Culture and Structure' and 'Goals and Objectives' from the GT category 'Change' and relates to the theme of 'Management of Universities'.

Culture and Structure

An academic culture is evident in MU demonstrated by observation of day-to-day life within the organisation. However, MU does not have a proclaimed official ethos whereas it is argued elsewhere in other HEIs in official documentation that there is a culture which permeates the institution in e.g. the 'Warwick way', the Loughborough vision of 'Community' or the Sheffield 'professional behaviours for professional staff'. The values and beliefs of APM staff were evidenced in their professional behaviours and when discussing accountability, moral accountability was cited on more than one occasion e.g. being prepared to sidestep a line manager to protect the University's

reputation [MMM07], a moral accountability to keep academics or other administrators informed [JMF06], a responsibility to act in the best interests of students [MMF08].

Decision-making within MU at institutional level is primarily by Committee often following extensive periods of consultation to ensure that 'collegiality' is able to function. The University's MB may take decisions or alternatively refer matters to e.g. Teaching and Learning Board to ensure inclusive decision-making. Decisions reached in these forums are recommended to Senate for ratification. Where this decision-making is subject to extensive consultation in relation to implementation at a 'local' level, the time taken to make decisions is cited as a barrier to effectiveness but is accepted as a function of 'collegiality' and the importance for those affected by a decision to be involved. However, it was also recognised that over-consultation was a feature which was not appreciated where those affected were not able to be part of a final decision which they felt had already been made e.g. 'an overabundance of communication and consultation to the point it becomes pointless' [JMF03], 'often it's a fait accompli and no genuine consultation' [MMM07]. This was particularly true of the Review of the Registrar's Department where PS staff at most levels were not involved in decisions in response to the report and were not able to see the full final report. There is a degree of localised decision-making with Heads of School responsible for strategic direction as budgets are devolved to Schools and Departments. However, how far this decision making could go in pursuing aims and objectives which are against University aims and objectives would be debatable as the University has committees responsible for quality and standards and teaching and learning. This is not uncontested and it could be argued that e.g. a university initiative to increase the number of students on a popular course could be counter to the aims of the teachers of that course if their aim was to increase the amount of small group teaching to achieve better outcomes for students.

I identified a number of communities within MU, namely: academic, administrative and student. Communities within a wider 'community' were also identified e.g. a body of administrative staff within an academic School. Relationships with the wider local community were also important to MU as was evidenced from initiatives run to involve the local community e.g., open garden and facilities events, appointment of community liaison staff, initiatives run with students to become better neighbours.

Goals and Objectives

Goals and objectives were identified as important drivers for change. While participants identified themselves as being aware of the goals and objectives of their

own sections and possibly their Division or School/Department they did not generally identify, or show an awareness of, the University goals and objectives at all levels:

'NO. No for that level, the strategic level I don't have ... I cannot say ... I've got no idea.' [MMM01]

'University wide goals again by the time you get to goals they are so generic, very difficult to care about them.' [JMF02]

Where goals and objectives were identified by middle and junior managers (JMs), they felt that the overall goals and objectives of the university had little impact on their day-to-day work but that these were eventually 'pressed down'.

'I don't think so much for the whole University although there are things that are sort of pressed down on us in terms of sort of this is where we're going.' [MMF03]

'they don't affect how we work on a day-to-day basis.' [MMF08]

However, those at more senior levels indicated that they had a good understanding of the goals and objectives of the institution although these were not always communicated to them directly.

'If you work in a business you should know the objectives.' [SAM01]

This knowledge came from attendance at Committee meetings and Groups which spanned functions across the institution and were attended by senior academic and PS managers. University goals and objectives were seen as general in nature and competing agendas were identified.

'... general in nature and cover all the competing agendas that exist'. [SMM01]

'you know more if you service committees and get a University plan and view.' [MMM07]

Where MMs demonstrated awareness, this appeared to be because they had actively sought out information rather than that it was communicated to them formally. It was recognised that until recent years, the University Plan had been restricted but that this had now changed:

'I guess over the last few years it's been much more transparent because that information [the officially transmitted plan] has been cascaded down to all members of staff.' [MAM02]

A number of staff identified the sheer number of goals and objectives as having a negative impact on them or their areas of work e.g. managing more with less, work intensification, recruitment, student experience, and adding value.

Change and Change Management

The category 'Change' is made up of the sub-categories 'Sorts of change', 'Drivers of Change', 'Challenges and Barriers', 'Reactions to Change', and 'Efficiency and Effectiveness' and relates to the theme of 'Management of Change'.

'Sorts' of Change

As previously outlined in the Introduction to this work, participants were asked to talk about experiences of change over time rather than being guided to describe specific events. The question which prompted these responses asked that participants describe their experiences of changes within administration in the last two to three years.

Planned changes were identified as being primarily reactive e.g. to the external environment or internal reaction to changes in University policy or procedure e.g. enhancing the student experience [JMF05], responses to QAA audit [MMF04]. Some planned changes were identified as proactive e.g. the setting up of a Student Services Centre [MMF04], changes in Faculty structure [MMF13]. They also included *Process changes* in relation to maintaining a position or maintaining a service as e.g. a response to increased student numbers [MAF01] or increased complexity of provision [JMF03]; to improve a position or service; as 'keeping up' [JMF05].

'It worked quicker, ... I think the end results were better, ... didn't have a negative comment to make about us at all either the way we did things, or the product that we produced ...' [MMM11]

Proactive changes were identified by fewer respondents. Changes coded were at the operational level where those interviewed felt most able to make changes e.g. when integrating and streamlining the process of dealing with exam papers and external examiners:

'It worked quicker, it probably worked better ... the end results were better, the external examiners didn't have a negative comment to make ... .' [MMM11]

Some change involved some physical relocation for operational reasons but this in part was driven by the University's acquisition of another campus site near to the main site which allowed the relocation of non-student facing functions away from the Main Campus. This change could be recognised as a planned change taking a managerial approach as a response to the CSR with the intention of improving efficiency and effectiveness and reducing resource costs.

Structural changes were identified by interviewees as being in relation to realignment of provision or reorganisation of e.g. departments within a division leading to changes in structure of administration or teams [MMF04], [MMF08], [MMF06], [MMM01], or as changes to e.g. committee structures and decision-making bodies [MMM07], [SMM01]. These were identified by participants as coming primarily from above 'as part of PVC led review' [MAF03]. It was felt that a number of these were 'done to' rather than 'done with' and described as a 'political way of effecting change' [MMF05].

'Usually my experience is I find out via my manager .... Sometimes I feel as if I'm a middle manager and at other times I feel as if I'm a junior manager.' [MMM01]

Systems changes had taken place but at a slower pace than APM staff would have liked. Following recommendations, as part of the student management systems project, that Schools adopt the use of 'central' systems, some respondents felt frustrations when there were delays, thus pushing further away the date when Schools would have a system which could be used by all e.g. [MMF03, JMF06], [JMF05].

Strategic changes identified by respondents related to the future direction of the organisation, department, school or PS and at institutional level were identified as being 'vision' and the domain of senior management staff , 'the highest level is exclusive to MB' [SMM01], 'PVC defines strategy' [MAM02]. Strategic changes included the diversion of resource from one area of activity to another, changes of focus, and changes to service delivery. In order to be involved in strategic change, APM staff needed to be aware of the goals and objectives of the institution, division or unit and aware of the drivers for change. They also needed to have an operational knowledge where their opinions may be sought as 'an authority' if respected for their

personal reputation. This created opportunities for individuals who may become involved in Committees, Working Groups or University-wide Projects.

> '... depends on your character and who you're working with and what your knowledge is and what your drive is and how much you're prepared to do. ... I have quite a lot of expertise and knowledge.' [MMF06]

Inputs into strategic change tended to be from providing research or information or providing alternatives for consideration at a higher level of management, in some cases PS staff would be responsible for writing cases presented by more senior administrative, or AS to MB. Where they were not involved in development of strategic change, MMs were often responsible for implementing that change and selling the vision to their teams or other academic and APM staff they had interactions with:

> ' my job is to marry the goals and objectives with the realities of the operation.' [MMF13]

When faced with the implementation of an 'externally' imposed change whether this be a change external to the Department, Division or School or external to the University, MMs appear to act as interpreters and synthesizers of information.

> '... government policy has had a real knock-on effect ... we've had to make changes to policies and procedures ... that may have an impact ... and I have to take something forward on that side.' [MMF04]

> '... well for me the sort of work that I do it's all about responding to ... usually government changes and therefore agency changes.' [MMF06]

Other changes identified related to changes in personnel, and the growth and professionalization of administrative staff. Individuals identified changes which had been significant for them e.g. changes in role [MMF16], changes in operations [MMM02], changes they have had to implement and manage through teams e.g. centralisation of functions [MMF13], and strategic changes they had input into [MMF04].

The **constant pace of change** with its inherent pressures was highlighted by a number of respondents. Research participants within MU identified change as having been constant in recent years. Most change was identified as being incremental: no 'big bang' but a feeling of constant change with 'nothing staying the same' and a sense of having 'no time to think' or reflect on changes already implemented.

'There's ... change is continual. It doesn't stop. You know you don't get to the end of it ...' [JMF06]

' ... there isn't any thinking time so you just keep doing things more or less the same every year when I'm sure they could be improved ...' [MMF10]

The constant pace of change presents issues for all staff across the organisation.

'it's difficult knowing who to talk to.' [MAM02]

'the team can't always accommodate changes.' [MMF13]

'change at short notice brings crisis management.' [MMF10]

Communication of change was perceived to have been poor and difficult to understand. Managers identified the need to provide administrative support in areas not considered the remit of administration before e.g. admissions, student support. The constant pace of change led to a feeling of things being in a state of constant flux, where priorities changed constantly [JMF05] and where there was a sense of competition for resource, between PS and academic Schools, and within teams within the same Division or School [MMF06]. The constant pace of change was seen as a barrier to being able to think about strategy.

Drivers of Change

Drivers of change identified by respondents were extensive and shine light on the complexity of the environment in which MU and, therefore, staff operate. The core 'business' of the institution is education, teaching, learning and research. However, the size of the institution leads to complex structures, complexity of provision and complex operations to support this. Drivers were coded as relating to e.g. RAE, HEFCE; change in budgetary units; efficiency; consistency/fairness; widening participation; surveys and league tables; disability agenda; national decisions; national/international context operating in; governmental; media drive; enhancing society; global aspirations; social responsibility agenda; making money from research; audit and accountability agendas; external reporting; resource availability; vision; funding body agendas; work intensification; massification of HE; personnel changes; serving communities; engagement of senior management; legislative change; centralisation of function; meeting expectations.

Participants within PS identified drivers for change as those within the internal environment e.g. in new personnel bringing new ideas and new strategies, the review of core systems, operational changes, internal strategy, efficiency drives, and work intensification; and external factors e.g. the NSS increasingly important for universities as their position in the league tables gains importance, an increasingly competitive market, the Economy, QAA Institutional Audits and policies, RAE, Bologna, and the local community. During the course of this project the importance of a savings and efficiency agenda became prominent within the organisation.

'Internal the biggest factor has been finance without a doubt.' [MMM11]

'Obviously in the current economic climate one of the drivers has to be getting the most for our money and being financially robust and financially frugal.' [MMF06]

'Externally I think it's … I think just pressure on [MU] to try and hold it's place across the board.' [MMM11]

Participants outside of Central Services identified additional factors relating to social responsibilities, and overlap between roles of central services and Schools, particularly duplication of effort:

'I think external influences … whole emergence of the social responsibility agenda has made the University think more widely about it's contribution to society and to the economy locally, regionally, nationally.' [SAM02]

'I think there are more demands from the centre asking for things and there is this duplication which has always gone on.' [MMF10]

'You still get comments and you think you know they haven't told us about such and such and there's a policy which is actually going to be implemented partway through an academic year which has come from the centre and it's them the centre and School.' [MMF03]

Participants also referred to a lack of control:

'… sometimes I have no control over factors that lead to an increase in the volume of work …' [MMF08]

Challenges and Barriers

In answer to the question relating to barriers to effectiveness, participants responses were related to: the way that decisions were made in a professional bureaucracy, IT systems, the underutilisation of existing resources in relation to expertise and experience, challenges in team management, silo mentalities, relationships, culture, resource availability and lack of resource, the organisational structure, communication, no formal mechanisms for receiving feedback, involvement in decision-making, environment, authority, empowerment, pressures of increased compliance, student satisfaction and expectations, responsibility and work intensification.

'... you know there have been some good things but there's a heck of a lot more we could do. But we're just kind of resigned to the fact that you're not going to have a perfect system ...' [MMF13]

'there's different levels of management and we're not able to effect change as quickly as we used to and I that's a bit of a barrier but we're working on that.' [MMM01]

'well you know it's all change again within the School and I've got a member of staff off on long-term sick and so I'm covering their role again and there is only so much you can do.' [JMF05]

'... students do seem slightly more demanding and you certainly have to be more accountable to them over procedures.' [MMF10]

Challenges to the University were identified in the Introduction to this work, and these were also identified by interviewees who were aware of the context within which the University was operating.

Reactions to Change

While not specifically asked about reactions to change, analysis of interview data revealed participants reactions to change. A number of these were negative with interviewees showing signs of frustration, stress, and even depression. One participant, JMF06 referred to issues described as 'soul-destroying, demoralising and demotivating'.

'I lost my forward momentum and you know my ... well not lost entirely but it certainly blunted my forward momentum and my ... I guess creativity I would say.' [MMF16]

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'... it was too much for me to process it and there was an amount of emotional pain.' [MMF03]

'there were a lot of people very protective, very ... concerned about the future and about how their job was going to change.' [MMF13]

'as a professional, it is demotivating to be told how to do things.' [SAM02]

Other participants actively embraced change and sought opportunities to take on secondments or projects in order to be involved in the work of the University outside of their area of operation, seeing this as a potential opportunity to know more about the institution and to gain experience in other areas for professional development.

'You get your first opportunity, you make the most of it and then that opens up other opportunities.' [MMF06]

'Academics need exposure to well-qualified, able administrative staff who don't have to be academic.' [SAM01]

Effectiveness

Both formal and informal measures of effectiveness were identified although these words were not always used. Informal measures of effectiveness included perceptions of effectiveness within an area of operation and informal feedback. Formal measures of effectiveness included results from Institutional Audit, RAE, Quantitative Data Sets, external awards e.g. University of the Year, NSS results, student feedback at student-staff feedback committees, measuring against service level agreements, reputation.

It was recognised that it may be difficult to have quantitative indicators of effectiveness when undertaking functions where formal measures could not be taken.

When considering KPIs for measuring whether change resulted in increased effectiveness, objective effectiveness can be measured by the collection of data to support claims. As identified by one research participant:

'I think this data is important particularly when there is pressure on budgets so as a manager you can say actually we've had more pressure on our time not less and this is the data to back it up. There's that phrase isn't it, if you can't measure it you can't manage it.' [JMM07]

I would argue the level of service use doesn't necessarily correlate with effectiveness but could point to ineffectiveness or lack of other services.

Equally important can be the subjective views of users of a service or the perceptions of a service by those in more senior positions as these may drive calls for change particularly if student satisfaction is a key driver:

'... the only sensible way is through customer satisfaction.' [SMM01]

Participants in PS reported that they often measured their effectiveness by lack of complaints. This appears to be a negative function of there being no formal feedback mechanism outside of established reviews, although individual units are able to seek informal feedback themselves.

'Key performance ... historically if complaints dropped to nil we are being successful.' [MMM01]

'informal feedback from your School contacts who you deal with on an informal basis.' [MMM02]

Effectiveness was also measured by volume of activity:

'the amount of activities every year.' [MMM01]

'small error rate in terms of a few queries coming back .. we know that we're more or less doing an OK to good job but I don't think we're in a culture where we would regularly monitor performance [KPIs as opposed to staff performance management].' [MMM02]

Respondents within Schools highlighted the importance of the NSS, internal University surveys e.g. SET and SEM questionnaires and Student Staff Feedback Committees. Were it to be accepted that KPIs for PS could be measured by the results of the NSS and School/Department Feedback, perhaps in the form of a 'league table' of Divisions, subjective effectiveness would become an important consideration in interactions between groups within the institution as an incentive to compete over scarce resources.

Efficiency

As the research progressed, increasingly participants referred to the need to be more efficient. Initially, this was reported as in response to increases in student numbers and work intensification. Latterly, the effect of known and anticipated future Government spending cuts began to be planned for and MU instigated a 'Savings and Efficiency' Task Force.

> 'It's looking to make economies of scale. It's looking to save money. It's looking to redirect it's resources into other areas.' [JMF06]

> 'I think we're becoming more accountable to the budget holders in terms of the ... Management Board centrally so there's always that pressure from the Director down ... to you know provide information and feedback and justifications, rationale for why we're doing certain things in certain ways.' [MMF03]

Efficiency savings introduced also included the non-replacement of staff when individuals moved to other posts within MU, left, or retired, and a voluntary severance scheme. An amount of streamlining and working smarter had already been implemented and this was identified by a number of participants:

> We also need economies of scale you know ... we're very large and in order to operate in a very large business ... we need a very professional and effective administrative team.' [SAM01]

> '...not only have I got a lot more students and a lot less staff in terms of per capita we also do more work than some ... offices do as well. You know teaching is based on FTEs and staff load is based on FTEs but administration is not.' [JMF06]

Restructuring of University level committees was introduced and while this introduced efficiencies in the time taken up with committee work and reduced delays in decision making, there was a sense that this had led to a disconnection and the introduction of barriers:

> 'It is more difficult now because there seems to be a kind of veil drawn between the Schools and Centre ... it seems more difficult to find out something ... I don't think that there's much understanding within the Schools in terms of the decision making in the Centre. ... the restructuring of certain

committees and things, you know we don't get to hear about them and we don't get to be told what the reasons are.' [SAM01]

'I get the impression that there's probably less engagement now by academic staff within the University with how it runs and operates and that's probably a function of size.' [SMM01]

An understanding of what is meant by 'efficiency' is important, and it should be recognised that what may represent an efficiency saving in one area may result in additional burden in another:

'So where there are compliance things that have to be implemented or Management Board decisions that have to be implemented that can be a barrier to us being able to work efficiently and effectively even if they are for a greater good they still have to incorporated ...' [MMF13]

'... there are initiatives which maybe the School wouldn't buy in to as much as they'd like [if they had the choice] ... they're coming from your PVCs and your MB rather than from [School] ... you have to make that work.' [MMF03]

'How Schools choose to ... deliver their provision has a major impact on how we operate but ... is outside our control and therefore any inefficiencies in how that operates ... unnecessary costs being imposed on us ... we're in little position to influence.' [SMM01]

It is important to distinguish between efficiency and effectiveness as, although used synonymously by some respondents in this study, the two are not the same. Efficiency relates to what is output given defined inputs and efficiency savings normally relate to savings in terms of human, physical, economic resources, doing more with less. Effectiveness relates to delivery against goals and objectives. It is possible to use resources efficiently in a way which might not be effective or to use resources effectively but not necessarily efficiently. SMM01 identified:

'... if we are able to provide the same level of service to Schools and students with the same resource when the number of students has increased that does suggest an increase in efficiency within that.' [SMM01]

This could demonstrate that the service was operating with increased efficiency as the service continues to be delivered by the same resource to an increased number of students. However, if the team were actually providing services which were no longer necessary then although the service was being provided to an increased number of

students the service would not be effective. Of course, the aim would be to be both efficient and effective although this might not always be possible.

Restructuring of administration was also identified as a response to drives for more efficiency although whether this had been wholly effective was debatable:

> 'The University has to keep looking at its admin structure ... there was an idea of efficiency to be gained from it. I'm not sure if you actually analysed it whether you would say that changing that structure has seen an efficiency ... or a real genuine efficiency or whether it's allowed us to absorb some student numbers ... ' [MMF06]

There was a sense that at the operational level pressures on resource had resulted in new, more efficient, ways of working:

> '... you know there is this whole thing about resources and the efficiency gains and so you have to actually manage the team and what you're doing on a day-to-day basis in perhaps a different way to how you would perhaps.' [MMF03]

> 'So we've had to spend quite a lot of time this year because of the expansion in numbers looking at how we can really strip down the processes and make [process] faster so that they can get through more, so that they can clear the backlogs and then yes ... looking at OK is it physically just not possible to get this through in this amount time at which point we then have to review our service level and say OK if you want us to continue expanding at this rate we cannot deliver in that amount of time and that's the reality of it.' [MMF13]

There was recognition that refocus as a response to the external environment may require changes of direction:

> 'We have to respond to the environment in which they believe, or which we believe we can deliver world class education ... and that's about an internal pressure to respond to an external market. The drivers are many and varied. And some are stronger than others and some up the agenda far quicker than others ... And other things fall back because they become less significant.' [SAM03]

It was also identified that the realities of efficiency measures may be perceived as being detrimental to, for example, the student experience so that economies of scale may mean the introduction of a 'vanilla' service which met the needs of the majority

but did not provide a personal service recognising the needs of students as individuals:

> 'It tends to be focussed on the bottom line on you know what cost savings can you deliver by doing this thing and sometimes that means that ... sort of students or staff or you know your customers if you like might not get the same level of service because you know it's a trade-off. You know you could do it very quickly but it would cost more because you would need more staff or whatever.' [MMF08]

As previously identified, efficiency was, for some respondents, synonymous with effectiveness and efficiency of delivery was measured in similar ways:

> 'I suppose I measure it in a more structured way by seeing what tasks need to be complete by a certain date with the team and having those all done.' [FMF02]

> 'So it's fairly obvious if we're not being efficient I will get complaints from Schools, I will get complaints from [students] and you know things are backing up. You know you'll go to that office and there are five boxes of post that haven't been opened and I'll look at somebody's in box and they've got 200 e-mails in there ... so it is quite easy to measure because if the stuff is not getting pumped out fast enough there it soon flags ... comes to me.' [MMF13]

However, the same respondent also identifies:

> ' So it's not difficult to see whether we're being efficient. It's harder to make people more efficient when they are at capacity.' [MMF13]

Consideration of notions of efficiency highlights tensions between the goals and objectives of different sections of the organisation and identification that there is no single set:

> 'In a large diverse organisation I don't know whether it's really possible to talk about a single set of goals and objectives that drives the organisation forward. If we find ourselves in a ... fight for survival that might change ... we have options as to where the University is going.' [SMM01]

A number of the issues discussed in this section have led to a perception of change in relationships, power and authority and this is taken up in a discussion of 'centre-ism' in Chapter 5.

Relationships

Analysis of interviews with research participants identified the many and complex relationships existing within the institution and these were categorised separately.

Relationships with students in terms of the increased importance of the student experience were identified by both APM and academic participants. Those working in some roles within central administration were more removed from students on a day-to-day, face-to-face, basis but were filling a variety of roles and purposes which supported teaching and learning (including research). It was recognised that not being 'in the front line' could lead to less empathy with the student experience, and a feeling that 'the Centre' was often blind to the realities of academic and administrative 'life' in Schools and Departments was identified.

Academic members of staff who had been supported by administrative staff within their Schools and had built up relationships with them had a perception of working as a team but it was recognised that this may not be the case throughout the institution and that there were still staff who took a 'master/slave' approach to the academic/professional roles. It was felt however that AS were open to the opportunities provided for them by good administration and that this was based on individual working relationships built up over time as 'trust' relationships while being ever mindful of the dangers of losing goodwill through 'amateur' approaches to change and to administration. This was equally true of University senior management approaches to change.   It was felt that there was always the risk of alienation and loss of goodwill, and that good working relationships with all staff, but in particular relationships with AS, ensured the success of the organisation.

> '[If] you're imposing on Schools and academic units you know you need to
> retain their good will ....' [MMM07]

Anecdotal evidence suggested that there are many staff working within administrative roles enjoying good 'local' relationships with the AS they work with and these may be extended for particular individuals across the institution but collectively administration is viewed with suspicion. This view is consistent with findings in research undertaken by e.g. Szekeres (2004; 2006), McInnis (1998) and borne out by anonymous feedback to the RRD:

> 'Good relationship with staff who deal with both UG and PG – very good
> responses to requests.'

'Very speedy and helpful responses received from individuals.'

'Support from individuals is good.'

'Excellent support and interaction on a daily basis. Our objectives and concerns are shared and liaison is very good ...'.

'Communications have been extremely efficient and I have nothing but praise for the staff with whom I have been involved'.

Accountability Relationships

Both 'hard' and 'soft' accountability relationships (Simkins, 2003) were identified within MU. Research participants were asked to whom they were accountable and a variety of stakeholders were identified e.g.:

- To my line manager;
- Everyone who pays taxes;
- People in the management hierarchy;
- Anyone we work with;
- Students;
- Vice-Chancellor (VC);
- MB;
- School/Department;
- Registrar.

For APM staff, formal lines of management went through line managers, to e.g. Directors of Divisions or senior administrative staff within Schools. For AS, the Head of School (HoS) and then e.g. a PVC, and ultimately the VC were identified as the formal line of management.

To whom they felt accountable was dependent on the role of participant, with those at lower levels in the organisation more likely to identify a line manager or their line manager's manager as the person to whom they were accountable. Those at more senior levels were more likely to identify higher level accountabilities and to feel less constrained by accountability relationships. This could be because at more senior levels staff were more likely to have autonomy over the way their role was enacted and so to feel accountable to their 'managers' at the highest level rather than those below them. It could also be because these more senior staff did not experience 'soft' accountability relationships in the same way as their more operationally active junior

and middle management colleagues and so did not immediately list these as accountability relationships.

There was an acceptance that AS and APM staff were managed differently. This acceptance came from a recognition that the tasks which each group was performing were different. However, what was apparent was that while this was accepted from both sides, APM staff did not want to be 'treated' differently and by this they meant that they wished to be treated as professional colleagues rather than as a 'second class citizen'. Some AMs, while accepting that the administration was professionalizing, retained negative perceptions although this was more likely to be in connection with those in PS who were less well known to individuals than those within academic Schools.

Informal accountability came from what was identified as a 'moral accountability' to particular groups or from respect or loyalty to individuals. Loyalty of academics was seen by administrators as to themselves first and then to their disciplines (either within or outside of the institution) and finally to their institution.

Loyalty of 'generalist' administrators in PS is more likely to be to the institution but examples were identified of loyalty to their teams first. Loyalty also appears to change dependent on role, so that when PS or AS moved between roles, where their loyalty lay changed. Staff moving from, or to, central services had a perception that they were deemed to have 'turned traitor' when moving from the School to Centre or as 'going native' when moving from Centre to School.

Working Relationships

Working relationships were seen at a number of different levels and these had changed in some areas in recent years where, for example, APM and AS were seconded to projects working together. MMs are members of many groups and the formal and informal relationships which they build within the organisation may have an impact on their ability to enact their roles. This is particularly true of relationships with AS.

A number of participants felt that relationships with AS had changed in recent years and that the changes had been positive:

> 'I think academic staff are ... it's become I find a little bit easier over the years.'
> [JMF01]

'... the more that they perhaps play a part in a joint process that you're doing, the more empathy you'll get and more shared understanding you'll get.' [MMF06]

'... they really do want to hear what you think and have an input into the contribution of how we are going to develop things or how we're going to you know put a certain process in place.' [MMF03]

Others, however, felt that nothing much had really changed in terms of relationship although the tasks undertaken by each group had changed.

'I wouldn't say [the relationship has changed] because the people I deal with are usually senior people within Schools or within the management here. Those people who sort of are in a position of responsibility and they know the score to a certain extent so they know what the University requires of them.' [MMM07]

'I don't think it's changed that much. I mean ... jobs have changed ... most of the AS do their own handouts and what have you ... whereas years ago the office might have got involved.' [MMF10]

Some participants felt that relationships may have worsened:

'There is a clear divide between School and 'the Centre' or central administration. I think we've become alienated almost.' [MMM02]

'I feel as if maybe it's change and are they being made to feel as if like they are actually competing against each other in different areas.' [MMM01]

And that new working practices and structures may afford less opportunity for engagement:

'... I get the impression that there's probably less engagement now by academic staff with the University, with how it's run and how it operates ...' [SMM01]

Professional staff identified that it may be difficult to 'make' AS do things that they did not want to do without taking managerialist approaches or appearing authoritarian. AMs are seen as having undertaken those roles as a conscious choice and therefore relationships between AMs and PS staff were viewed as being more equal and with a fellow-feeling of working towards the good of the institution although it is recognised

that 'the good' could be contested and that this might explain difficulties experienced when requiring AS to do things they may see as lower priority.

Networks

The networks of contacts built by MMs were identified as being important for effective operation. These contacts built at a number of levels, on a personal basis also allowed informal use of reciprocity, 'a favour for a favour'.

Outside of the institution APM staff built relationships within e.g. their Professional body (the AUA). Other networks of relationships also exist outside of the organisation, for example with colleagues working in the same area at other HEIs:

> 'The one thing that I've really gained in this role because I'm the only person doing it is being the University's representative on external bodies. I do meet people from other Universities say two or three times a year and we have got e-mail networks ... I would know if we were out of synch with other universities so that is a big benefit.' [MMF04]

Informal opportunities for networking are afforded by attendance at internal training courses e.g. APPLE and PEAR programmes and through internal networks and the use of 'workspaces' on the University intranet.

Middle Managers

The category 'Middle Managers' is made up of the sub-categories 'Roles', 'Professional Behaviours' and 'Authority' and relates to the theme of 'Middle Managers'.

Descriptions of Role

Participants were initially asked to give their job title and to describe their role and areas of responsibility.

Administrative staff gave their titles as either a title akin to the corporate world e.g. Director, Deputy Director, Manager; or a title akin to the traditional roles e.g. Head, Officer, Administrator. While this usage of title was not on the face of it significant as these were titles given by the University, it could demonstrate support for the concept of the University as a business or, when roles were advertised, to make them attractive to those outside of HE with transferable skills.

The titles given to these administrative staff identified the growth in 'new' roles to support new functions e.g. student support, financial support, academic support and to meet new and complex demands both internally and externally while 'traditional' roles e.g. Registry, Examinations Office, Timetabling Office remained. Of the administrative staff participating, twelve were identified as being in new roles undertaking functions which had emerged in the last five to ten years. Within academic Schools titles of Secretary, Administrator, PA, were likely to have been replaced by School Manager, Courses/Programmes Manager, 'Function' Manager, again mirroring the titles of the corporate world. For MMs within Schools, these roles were normally identified as SM or Programme Manager roles. Some title inflation has been observed within MU, possibly as a response to the perceived professionalization of roles and functions undertake e.g. Directors and Heads of service akin to Directors and Heads of academic Schools, equating PS with Schools.

Roles involved a number of tasks relating to management and operational functions, managing processes and staff; supporting teaching and learning; monitoring performance; allocating resources; as well as more traditional functions e.g. committee servicing. Within academic Schools, while still performing some traditional support functions, advances in technology had changed what, and how, these were performed.

In describing their responsibilities, administrative staff defined their roles by describing the operational functions of their roles talking about administration and management. Higher level staff defined their roles as 'being responsible for ...', and it was interesting to note that administrative staff did not normally describe their role as 'leading' except in the context of leading a team. This could suggest that administrative staff in management roles see their primary function as management and don't feel involved in leadership in relation to e.g. setting strategic priorities, target setting, or policy formulation other than at the level of their individual teams.

A number of participants felt that experience gained in both School and 'centre' made them more effective in their roles as they were able to 'see things from both sides'. It was also identified that while APM staff may have job descriptions which their performance could be measured against, these role profiles were rarely definitive with roles being defined by the individual undertaking them:

> 'I've come in with a certain understanding of what the role was historically and I have advanced it and what I'm doing was certainly not done when I first started.' [MMF04]

> 'It's been something of a moving target really.' [MMF16]

This was not necessarily a negative experience:

> 'It's a role that sort of morphed since I came ... and my current role is a lot fuller than the role was before.' [MMF06]

And it was recognised that, particularly at higher levels, there was an expectation that individuals would develop their roles:

> '... we are appointed to do things ourselves and to operate independently, strategically, proactively ...' [SMM02]

> '... at a certain level of seniority your line manager is expecting you to work out to a fair extent ... to do things that are going to produce general satisfaction within the organisation.' [SMM01]

It was also recognised that for AS there is no job description for the administrative responsibilities within their roles:

> 'I have to know what the remit is without having written down because a lot of the ... academic management roles don't have job descriptions.' [SAM01]

Professionals

In describing their roles and experiences, it was possible to identify the skills, knowledge and experience which APM staff and in particular those in middle management roles bring to their work.

These skills could be identified as: negotiating skills, exhibited in interactions with academic or other staff who perhaps were unwilling to provide information or adhere to a deadline; influencing, exhibited where MMs wanted to put forward a particular course of action or to ensure that a team followed a initiative; persuading, when implementing strategy imposed externally or internally when not involved in strategic decision-making; facilitating, at an operational level, getting the job done, implementing new strategies, allowing teams to try new working practices, assisting AS to complete their academic management functions; interpreting e.g. policies to their own team members, academic colleagues or other APM staff. MMs were also seen as interpreters between their own staff and senior colleagues and between operational and strategic functions. Exhibiting these skills led to feelings of confidence and a feeling that they were respected for their opinions and as 'an authority' in their area of operation.

MM 'knowledge' was identified in transcripts at the operational level but also at the institutional level as 'the way we do things around here', values, beliefs and the ethos although this was knowledge of unwritten rules as opposed to a clearly defined culture. MMs used their knowledge of the institution and those they interacted with to ensure that, for example, what they perceived as effective outcomes from meetings were achieved by being well-informed and knowing those involved.

This knowledge of the institution included 'speaking the right language'. Some staff were identified who 'didn't get it' and were perceived as not 'on corporate message'. This is hardly surprising given that these rules are unwritten. These were primarily members of APM staff who in recent years had been appointed from outside the HE sector into particular functions. These members of staff were perceived as not seeking to gain institutional knowledge and as imposing their practices and processes without consultation.

MMs also demonstrated tacit knowledge of the institution and culture particularly with an acceptance that senior management roles within MU would, certainly for the foreseeable future, be undertaken by academics. This can be seen a function of working in a professional bureaucracy where the professional elite – academics based either within academic Schools/Departments or in senior management positions - hold the balance of power. Informal knowledge was gained at University level by committee servicing. MMs also built knowledge through informal opportunities, by reading, scanning the environment, and actively looking for updates of information.

Both academic and APM staff identified that the moving of central administration including academic management away from the day-to-day lives of AS made interactions more difficult. In particular it was felt that this made communication more formalised when in the past an informal communication would be had. AS also felt that this meant that those in management roles built knowledge more slowly.

> 'You know … bumping into each other … I've just got this problem with a student … done rather than having to frame it, thinking about how do I write this in an e-mail because this is going to be a permanent record.' [SAM03]

> '…whereas once upon a time we had things like the Assessment Committee they've gone. Where you learn what other Schools are doing that learning is all being taken away from us in a way.' [MAF01]

It was also felt that 'awareness' not only of the University, its status and reputation, but also the wider HE sector was an important attribute, as was experience of more

than one area of University operation. Experience in more than one role appeared to enable MMs to fulfil their roles more effectively as they were more aware of the internal politics and potential issues which might arise. This allowed them to have picked up on unwritten rules and hidden agendas.

Authority

Participants were asked whether they felt that they had sufficient authority to do their job well. A number of participants indicated that they did:

'... as a Programme Manager I think that you get a lot of authority to be able to actually run your area quite autonomously ...' [MMF03]

'... on the whole given the task set I think I have sufficient authority to make sure it's a good job on the whole yes.' [MMM02]

Negative perceptions of the 'administration' raise issues of trust and respect and participants identified authority in their roles with how they felt they were perceived:

'I think authority is partly what you make your authority to be.' [JMF05]

'I'd say experience gives you a certain amount of confidence and I suppose the way people react to me makes me feel that I've got a certain amount of respect.' [MMF04]

'I'm in a relatively privileged position ... of being more expert than my line manager .... Because I am the recognised expert in the area.' [JMF02]

These participants identified themselves as being in authority although for e.g. MMF04 and JMF02, authority appears to come from being an authority in their specialised area rather than from having delegated authority to effect strategic change. This is considered further in chapter five.

Not all participants felt that they had the authority in their role to deliver operational and/or strategic requirements:

'I felt I used to have basically full authority to initiate new processes to ensure that the job was done better ... I feel as if now to be able to ... make changes, major changes, you've got to got through various processes whereas I think there is added bureaucracy ...' [MMM01]

'I am not given the opportunity to talk to the right people for the right length of time.   They don't have the time to listen and they won't delegate.' [MMF05]

Those at lower levels acting in a more operational capacity felt they had sufficient authority to undertake their role. This authority may come from acting at the behest of, or on behalf of, more senior academic colleagues. Those at higher levels are more likely to feel they don't have sufficient authority as there is recognition that their authority is drawn from working on behalf of others. This can be identified as an issue for MMs working in professional bureaucracies where senior management consists of a 'professional elite' in this case academic members of staff and where legitimate power is dispersed within the institution.

Communication

Formal communication strategies exist with sections responsible for student communications, internal and external communications. However, communication was identified as a problem. Participants were unsure whether failure to communicate was owing to an inability to communicate or an unwillingness to communicate, perhaps as a deliberate decision rather than 'forgetting'. Often change was communicated by rumour and this raised feelings of distrust or a suspicion when change was communicated as to why it was being done at that point.

Formal chains of communication primarily come from the top down. Opportunities for communication from the bottom up are sometimes afforded but it was felt by interviewees that these opinions may not be listened to, particularly in relation to strategic decision-making even if someone 'knows what they're doing' and has experience.

Identified was a feeling of not knowing what senior management was thinking. MMs also identified occasions where there had been too much communication, not enough communication, or occasions where formal chains of communication were used when not necessary. In some instances it was deemed inappropriate to communicate as planned change may be amended or because those at lower levels may wish to be involved in decision-making drives and indeed caution should be taken in deciding what to communicate and when, as change by rumour or the overabundance of communication without taking on board any of the messages being transmitted back produce the same feelings of distrust as not being communicated with at all.

Conclusions

This chapter has presented findings relating to the changing context for APM staff within MU and an identification of emerging theory together with how this relates to the research questions posed.

The chapter began with reporting information relating to the interview population. The chapter then presented findings reported around four categories or themes which emerged from the data using the methods outlined in chapter three.

Chapter five will present a discussion of these findings, together with an analysis of proposed hypotheses, detailing the process of how each was arrived at, the theory and data generated, how this relates to the literature and further details of the data supporting the hypothesis. The chapter will also relate these to the literature used to illuminate aspects of my findings, interpreting and explaining findings, and distinguishing those which were predictable had extant theory been applied to the research at an earlier stage and those which were unpredictable.

Chapter six will provide a consideration of the implications of these findings and recommendations for further work together with reflections, evaluations and final conclusions.

Chapter Five – Discussion of Findings

Introduction

This chapter will present a discussion of the findings reported in chapter four, together with an analysis of proposed hypotheses detailing the process of how these were arrived at, the data and theory generated, how this relates to the literature, and further details of the data supporting the hypothesis.

The findings reported in chapter four represented a first order construct i.e. reporting interviewee meanings, with commentary, seeking understanding. This chapter represents a second order construct i.e. my theory building in relation to administrative middle management and MMs.

I will interpret and explain findings, distinguishing those which were predictable, had extant literature been consulted before data collection and analysis, and theory been applied to the research at an earlier stage, and those findings which were unpredictable.

The chapter ends with conclusions and an articulation of the unique contribution to knowledge represented by this research.

Emerging Hypotheses

The hypotheses which follow below relate to an articulation of what could reasonably be hypothesised on the basis of analysis and interpretation of responses given by interviewees in this study. The hypotheses began to emerge as the first transcripts were analysed, and were further developed as more interviews were undertaken and interview data was analysed. As the hypotheses emerged, I returned to the extant literature performing literature searches on key words to investigate whether these hypotheses had been proposed before and, if so, whether the literature supported the evidence from my research or provided an alternative explanation for consideration. This was consistent with the constant comparison method expounded by those working in the GT tradition. These hypotheses are used to identify the form of MU, conceptualise change and the role of MMs within MU, and from this provide a theory of administrative middle management, thus producing empirical evidence for the theories suggested by my review of existing literature.

The questions I was seeking to answer during this research related to i) what had changed and why?; ii) how change was managed and implemented?; iii) had recent

changed enabled administration to become more efficient and effective?; and iv) what were the implications of change for professional practice and identity?. During my first phase of data analysis, I was reporting my understanding of reality for my interview respondents and this produced the GT categories reported in chapter four. In my second phase, I looked to take my analysis beyond these descriptions of phenomenon, reflecting on respondent statements to propose hypotheses. In my theory building, I was attempting to show the complexity of the world which my participants were operating in and hypothesise about administrative middle management and MMs.

It appeared to me that the first three of my questions could be answered on one level by reporting interviewee responses relating to what had changed for them and why they thought it had changed as my respondents had also provided evidence of their understandings of how change had been managed and implemented, and evidence of whether for them change had enabled administration to become more efficient and effective. Further analysis was needed to fully answer these questions and I considered that question four could not be answered without theorising about the nature of administrative middle management and MMs. This allowed me to identify the role MMs could play in the management of change and culture of their organisations and implications for the future.

In this second phase of analysis I moved from open coding to selective, more theoretical coding. I was looking to identify what was of interest in each category and why it was interesting; how factors were related; and why relationships between categories may be causal.

Links between Categories

Analysis of data was not a linear process, but a process of going backwards and forwards between transcripts, comparing statements and looking for what was of interest. I was looking to see how codes may relate to each other to formulate hypotheses. Initially, links were identified between the four major categories through codes which were common to both and could not be coded to one category alone.

Reactions to change were linked to *professional behaviours* and those who were operating as 'higher level' MMs exhibited more positive reactions to change possibly because they were operating more widely across the institution.

Strategic change was linked to *'awareness'*. Those who have an awareness of the sector, the institution and an in depth knowledge of a functional area are more likely to be in a position to be involved in strategic change. *Professional behaviours* are

linked to becoming 'an authority' and the building of trust relationships from increased professional and personal credibility. *Effectiveness* was increased through the skills, knowledge and experience exhibited as a professional behaviour. *Barriers to effectiveness* were linked to *professional behaviours* where negative perceptions between academic and APM staff exist. *Barriers to effectiveness* are also seen where *trust relationships* do not exist.

Barriers to the implementation of efficiencies were also seen and careful management of these appeared necessary in the context of the attaining of institutional goals and objectives. My perception was that goals and objectives were easier to pursue if these were explicit and familiar and coincided with the personal values and beliefs of individuals. *Professional behaviours* were linked to *relationships* and relationships were enhanced where individuals were identified as acting 'professionally'. These professional behaviours were particularly important attributes. *Change* was linked to *communication, relationships and professional behaviours* permeating communications, the relationships which exist within the institution and the professional behaviours needed to manage change in the context of a constantly changing environment.

The importance of communication and particularly informal communication was highlighted and it was recognised that in order to enhance trust and cohesion, communication was necessary both across organisational levels and across departments. Communication was also necessary for higher level understanding. Building on this identification of links, my analysis continued with free writing and writing of memos relating to codes and categories and hypotheses emerged. All hypotheses were formed using the process described above. Data relating to hypotheses is presented in chapter four and referred to, with additional data where relevant, below.

Hypothesis 1:
That MMs may provide a steadying influence in times of constant change, balancing operational management on a day-to-day basis, managing the expectations of a number of stakeholders, while translating and communicating change to their teams.

As I identified in a memo:

> *'Universities are changing places and MMs are managers of 'business at an operational level; projects; staff management (leading teams); implement operational change; input into strategic change; historical perspective but this may colour what they do; keeping in synch with other universities.'*

I developed interpretive codes which I named 'being a steadying influence', 'balancing tasks and functions' and 'managing expectations':

OPEN CODING (First Construct)	INTERPRETIVE CODE (Second Construct)
Roles Constant change	Being a steadying influence
Roles	Balancing tasks and functions
Internal/External Stakeholders Translating Communicating Accountability	Managing and meeting expectations

Being a steadying influence included providing stability within an operation in times of chance. Within a constantly changing environment, MMs were managers of the 'business' at an operational level, had input into projects, managed and led teams and processes, implemented operational change and, when they had been in post for a significant length of time, provided a historical perspective. Managing expectations included deciding what to tell and when if change was being proposed, acting as a gate keeper to information and meeting the expectations of others. It also included accountability to a range of stakeholders both internal and external to MU.

Key findings reported by respondents were that:

- Change was fast moving, constant, and involved accommodating many types of change;
- MMs were often responsible for implementing change and selling the vision to their teams or other academic and APM staff they had interactions with;
- When faced with 'externally' imposed change, MMs appeared to act as interpreters of information which included interpreting policies either to their own teams, academic colleagues or other APM staff. MMs also appeared to act as interpreters between their own staff and senior colleagues and between operational and strategic functions. MMs described operational responsibilities which included responding to a variety of stakeholders both within and outside of MU.

Data supporting this hypothesis included the following shortened extracts:

There's a lot of different processes and policies and procedures that are now in place that just weren't. So I'd like to think I've been proactive but I've still got that basic knowledge of where we came from which might be colouring my view and where I'm taking things. [MMF04]

Change is just constant and I think you get used to dealing with it so things change every year one way or another. We're constantly adjusting. You know we've had to react at very short notice to that which wasn't particularly helpful. And maybe we should have said realistically we want a bit of time to plan this properly. [MMF05]

There's no such thing as static here and there's no such thing as one goal or one theme. It's a hugely complicated set of conditions that we're working under really you know. With us, you know everything could be turned upside down and the ... the intelligence of all the people around both help to stimulate and help to make it more of a challenging environment. I don't think it's an easy environment to work in is what I'm coming to. [MMF06]

So I'm responsible for the development of policy and practice. This is done through consultation with the University, formalised through the committee structure and then obviously put down in the Quality Manual. I also undertake quite a lot of development work with the learning and teaching strategy so that's more an enhancement role. So looking to improve the student experience so that's once again working across the University, working with PVCs, working with Senior Management, and then going down to Schools and engaging with them and developing policy and practice that way. I also disseminate best practice and also relative to that responsible for various funds which support projects within the Schools. [MMM07]

The lower levels expect you to actually know what is going on and to tell them everything and it's not always appropriate to tell them everything at the point at which you learn it ... you sort of have to make judgements on that. So it's balancing sort of keeping in touch with what is the right information to give at the right time. [MMF13]

MMs could be considered 'boundary spanning' in the definition used by Floyd and Wooldridge (1997) and Currie and Procter (2005) as 'between the organisation and customers, suppliers or professional associations' (2005:1329). A steadying influence should not be confused with promoting stability without change. A number of the MMs interviewed in the course of this research actively embraced change. They appeared though to be acting sometimes as a 'buffer' (Clegg and McAuley, 2005) between senior management and their teams and at other times as agents for senior management. MMs providing stability in operations may allow more SPMs to be strategic. Institutional strategy will be set at MB level and then transmitted through the organisation. Goals and objectives at this more senior level relatec to the position of the HEI; league tables; research and teaching strategies; new technologies; financial position.

MMs enacting this element of their roles could be seen to be operating within an institution operating as a 'corporate' HEI where they were the 'transmitters of core strategic values and organisational capability' (Clegg and McAuley, 2005:31).

While the findings which support this Hypothesis may have been predicted by existing theories in relation to the translating and communicating aspect of the middle management role, unpredictable were the range of external stakeholders MMs are now responding to and the complexities of balancing this with management of complex operational areas which are constantly changing.

Hypothesis 2:

That MMs are relationship builders building trust relationships with the academic and professional staff they interact with, enabling those MMs to function as 'an authority' in their areas of expertise.

Hypothesis 2 built on Hypothesis 1 and looked at the relationship building role of MMs, identifying the importance of trust. As I identified in a memo:

> *'Self- perception – what do they think the role is for? Grow into roles and gain experience and confidence. Build respect and become an authority. Manage change by building trust. Trust relationships.*
>
> *Authority can be 'an authority' or 'in authority'. MM01 describes expertise and recognises is 'an authority'. Those 'in authority' are empowered, feel important and that they can effect change. External [to the Division/department] perceptions important. Doesn't feel empowered although has 'authority'. Doesn't have power?'*

I developed interpretive codes which I named 'building and sustaining relationships' and 'functioning in role':

OPEN CODING (First Construct)	INTERPRETIVE CODE (Second Construct)
Trust Implementation Authority Distrust	Building and sustaining relationships
Skills Experience	Functioning in role

Key findings were that:

- Negative perceptions of administration raised issues of trust and respect;
- Participants identified themselves as 'an authority' in areas of expertise coming from having a high level of knowledge of an area of operation;
- In describing changed relationships with AS, participants described working as part of a team and building relationships as important for effective working. As

trust relationships were built up, knowledge and expertise was recognised and individuals were trusted to advise or to undertake tasks previously undertaken by AS;

Data supporting this hypothesis included the following shortened extracts:

We have an awful lot of communication with School Managers, administrators, assistants, all sorts of people, non-academics in Schools with regard to [our area]. We get on very well with them. We've got very close ties with our points of contact within the Schools be it School Managers or whoever. And we've developed that. That was one of the first things when I came to the University was that ... to ensure that you get effective performance, you get the best possible customer service and they get what they require you've got to have very close communication. They're an extension of your office in other words and that has been .. you know it's worked very well and it's continued to. We pay an awful lot of attention to that. [MMM01]

The most important for us that that is a two-way communication process to communicate effectively with them and we do that very well. [MMM02]

There are some Schools who will just take my word on a matter. You know they will have worked with me before and they will have understood that if I say ... if I say it can't be done it can't be done for good reason. [MMF04]

I think I've appropriate authority within the institution but quite often it's you're working on behalf of someone else. [MMM07]

I feel that ... I maybe have quite a lot of expertise and knowledge but more often than not the authority is drawn from working for [Manager] rather than in my own right. [MMF06]

Authority was identified formally as coming from being in a position of power where the manager does not necessarily have to have operational knowledge in order to be effective. Those who felt that they did not have authority felt that this was because the nature of their roles either meant that they were reporting to senior management or that they were acting on behalf of e.g. a committee or powerful individual. In these circumstances they felt that they were wielding delegated authority. This has resonance with Clegg and McAuley (2005) identifying one role of middle management as acting as an agent for senior management.

Where interviewees identified themselves as 'an authority' this led to a growing self-confidence in themselves and their abilities, the perception of having the respect of academic and other APM colleagues and increased personal effectiveness. Being 'an authority' came from a high level of knowledge of an area or operation or as a 'keeper of the institutional wisdom' through experience built up over a number of years. However, academic members of staff did not appear to need this affirmation, a possible function of the credibility which came from their 'primary' role as 'academics'. The findings of this research identify the increased power of PVCs as managers of

areas of University business setting agendas e.g. staffing, student experience and internationalisation.

Interviewees on occasion confused being 'an authority' with being 'in authority'. This may be owing to their perceptions of authority coming from their specialist knowledge of an area of operation. However, it should be noted that it is possible to be 'an authority' without being 'in authority'. It is possible to have power without authority and to have authority without power. Perceptions of authority also appeared to be linked to accountability and, therefore, MMs were likely to identify having sufficient authority where they were responsible for an area of operation and were held accountable for success or failure. The extent to which these MMs were truly accountable is debatable as responsibility was often delegated by more senior management who would be held accountable by MB. Authority as a position of power of MMs is also debatable. MMs may have power in the sense that their knowledge may be specialist and they may use this knowledge to advise more SPMs or AMs. However, power in the sense of being powerful individuals was not identified at this level. Pappas and Wooldridge (2007) stress the importance of knowing who strategic players are. Some MMs could be identified as strategic players influencing outcomes but this was likely to be covertly rather than overtly. Power is more likely to lie with the 'professional elite' although in some areas of central administration power could be exercised over the allocation of resource.

Negative perceptions of the 'administration' raise issues of trust and respect and have implications for the professional identities of those working in non-academic middle management roles within central administration services. My observations within MU have seen what could be deemed negative perceptions of those working in support roles even when the apparent intention was to present these workers in a positive light e.g. during speeches by PVCs to degree congregations in July 2007 where students were asked to applaud first their academic teachers and then 'cleaners, gardeners, catering staff and also those staff in School and other offices'. By July 2010, this changed to 'all staff' and was presented more positively although emphasis was put on the roles of those who supported students e.g. sports facilities staff. Such presentation highlighted an emphasis of the speech aimed to encourage a life-long relationship with the university and requests to 'give something back' through alumni and gifting.

Operational changes have been needed to support increased numbers of students and much of the change identified had been incremental but leaves PS in a state of flux. It could also be said that the 'academic' tasks which are passed to administration are those which require less skill and, therefore, can be undertaken more cheaply by administrators. These tasks e.g. Admissions, are those which can be systematised to

an extent, with decision-making against a set of criteria which may have been agreed with AS as a framework for delegation.

Hypothesis 3:

By speaking the 'right' language and having knowledge and understanding of the environment within which they operate, MMs may become facilitators and influencers using negotiation and persuasion but they may have limited input into more strategic change within the organisational hierarchy and limited authority unless exercised on behalf of AMs.

Hypothesis 3 built on Hypotheses 1 and 2, and extended theorizing into the knowledge and understanding MMs had, the skills they needed to operate effectively, and why they appeared to have limited input into strategic change at the policy level.

As I identified in a memo:

> 'Professional behaviours enable MMs to operate between operation and strategy in School/Centre between senior management and colleagues 'below' them.   A number of skills appear necessary and are evidenced – negotiating skills (working towards solutions negotiating between diverse interests), influencing skills (linked with persuasion of a course of action), facilitating (using operational or experiential knowledge to facilitate work or solutions, interpreting (senior management policy in operation; data; interpreting upwards to senior management); knowledge (tacit knowledge gained through experience of the organisation or function facilitates operational and strategic change); experience leads to 'awareness' (necessary skill – awareness of own area but also wider – division/school, university and sector) not necessarily 'helicopter vision' but wider than 'localised' knowledge.
> MMs ability to be involved in strategic change appears to be limited by their role and management structure plus the management structure of the wider Uni – hierarchical bureaucracy with a professional 'elite' academics who have the major deciding roles in strategic decisions. Example given of MM who says is majorly involved in strategic decision making and then describes behaviours which are influencing, prompting, interpreting for senior management team but own role is not to make the decision. Difference between involvements in decision taking – how much influence?'

I developed interpretive codes which I named 'behaviours in role', 'effecting change' and 'having authority':

OPEN CODING (First Construct)	INTERPRETIVE CODE (Second Construct)
Facilitating Influencing Language	Behaviours in role
Drivers Challenges Barriers Reactions	Effecting change
In Authority An Authority Accountability	Having authority

Key findings related to:

- Observation, and individual reporting, that MMs were either not involved in strategic change or decision-making or that they were not involved in visible strategic change or decision-making;
- Participants reporting they were not always party to senior management thinking;
- Descriptions of involvement in decision-making and communication of change;
- At higher levels reporting of individuals developing their own roles;
- MMs using their knowledge at operational and institutional level to ensure effective outcomes;
- Descriptions of negotiation;
- Participants describing how knowledge was gained informally;
- Examples of effective outcomes which required managers to 'know the rules';
- Identification of increased power of PVCs as managers;
- Formal chains of communication come from the top down;
- MMs are not always communicated with and so were unable to contribute strategically;
- Understanding external and internal factors allows MMs to synthesize information and present alternatives to senior management for discussion and selection.

Further data supporting this hypothesis included the following shortened extracts:

Schools are quite autonomous so they have a lot of power, a lot of responsibility, they're almost like mini fiefdoms in certain aspects. A lot of budget responsibility. So I think when you're coming from, a central administration there is a perception that the power balance is within the School

to a certain extent. So we cannot just turn round to people and say do x because we want you to. I think there's a lot more negotiation required and a lot more persuasion and stuff but there still is the potential for Schools still not to do certain things or if they do them to do them in such a way that they kind of undermine the kind of process. [MMF06]

I felt I used to have basically full authority to initiate new processes to ensure that the job was done better than it was done then. So continue to evolve. I feel as if now to be able to make changes, major changes, you've got to go through various processes where I think there is added bureaucracy now whereas beforehand I was able to say yes, I want to do this and get on with it. [MMM01]

I'll go and say I need a decision on this but my recommendation is this and they'll say yes that's fine. But certainly when [my managers] are not here I don't feel the need to ask because I can't … I'm not going to go all the way on up to somebody else higher to ask about it and yet if they're here I suddenly feel like I have less authority merely by them being here to ask. [MMF03]

As was seen in consideration of MM input into strategic change in MU, while MMs at what will be termed the 'higher level' may have opportunities to fulfil roles where they are able to champion alternatives or synthesize information, the majority of MMs are in positions where they can be deemed to be facilitating adaptability (often by allowing team members freedom to experiment with new strategies) or by implementing deliberate strategy (external policies or processes), sometimes without a full understanding of the drivers for change or aims and objectives.

MMs within MU implementing deliberate strategy can be seen to exhibit negotiating, persuading, and influencing behaviours based on their knowledge of the institution and its culture and these are used to make sense of the strategy they are implementing, translating between the policy and operational requirements. However, it is recognised that they may not share the same level of consciousness as senior management. Their operational knowledge is used to give sense to those they are 'selling' the change to e.g. translating and interpreting the University's Quality Manual, often justifying why change needs to be made to the wider community.

Committee structures and ways of working have changed within MU in recent years. More recently, members of PS have membership of University committees rather than attending as Secretary to the group. Committee membership at present is limited to senior members of PS but middle and JMs have membership of a number of Working Groups bringing together academic and professional staff from across the University and attend University level committees to present papers and reports which they have been responsible for producing. Depending on the area of activity, Working Groups may have been chaired by senior members of PS although in the main would have been chaired by a member of AS. In practice, the work of the Group would be undertaken primarily by PS staff undertaking research and putting forward proposals

which the Group may consider before drafting reports for consideration by the Group before onward transition to University Committees for consideration at institutional level.

Where the goals and aims of a division, department, or the University as a whole are ill-defined, it is difficult to know what they are, or they are seen to be irrelevant to day-to-day operations and the culture of the organisation suffers. Within MU a number of MMs and other staff were vaguely aware or were aware of the aims and objectives of their division or department but when considering the aims and objectives of MU most felt that these were not communicated widely and that they had to seek out information. This could be explained by the pace of change which on occasion meant that MMs were not 'up-to-date' with developments and also that until recently University Plans were not routinely circulated to all staff. It may be suggested that professional staff should be seeking this knowledge and awareness and, indeed, those MMs operating at the 'higher level' showed this characteristic. However, respondents also identified particular communication strategies within MU which they felt ran the risk of alienating some staff and disenfranchising others. The importance of 'talking the right language' and 'knowing the rules' has already been identified (Whitchurch, 2008c). These together with understanding the same points of reference can enable MMs to work in partnership through shared understandings of the HEI goals and objectives. However, in order to act in the best interests of the HEI it is important that the drivers for change and institutional goals and objectives are clearly articulated even if these are competing. What also emerges from my research is the importance of being made aware when these change to avoid duplication or wasted effort.

Hancock and Hellawell (2003:5) see academic MMs as required to be both interpreters and authors of strategy, making strategic decisions at their own level and operating both inside and outside their organisations. The same may not be true for MMs. Currie and Procter (2005:1326) identify that strategic contribution is 'subject to influence from a powerful professional cadre of core employees'. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the findings from my research suggest that the same is true of MU as a professional bureaucracy where the professional elite (senior academics) hold the positions of power. Within MU one of the barriers identified by interviewees was an issue with being unable to act as they were not aware of the thinking of senior management.

Hypothesis 4:
Within the group termed 'MMs' there are different 'types' of MM not limited to 'generalist' and 'specialist'.

Hypothesis 4 built on previous hypotheses, and considered the differences and distinctions between the managers interviewed. I developed interpretive codes which I named 'awareness' and 'describing role':

OPEN CODING (First Construct)	INTERPRETIVE CODE (Second Construct)
Structure Decision-making Roles	Awareness
Roles	Describing role

As I identified in a memo:

> *'Successful MMs speak the 'right' language and 'know the rules' of the game. Exposure to Committees, senior management 'thinking', self-motivation – socialisation? Concept of 'institutional benefit'.'*

I considered it important to think about the differences and distinctions between MMs in my study so that when considering implications I could identify an 'ideal' type of MM.

MMs appear to have two sets of skills, those brought as a professional and those which are brought as an individual with their own values and beliefs and previous experiences.

> *I think there are MMs who basically are stuck in their area and that is all that they're going to do. They're not going to anything else. They're not going to think more on their feet. They're not going to be more creative to change things, to improve the processes, they're just going to manage what they've got. And that as far as I am concerned ... that is ... we'll just go backwards with that sort of middle management. You've got to have progressive middle management and I think there are people here who are ... that way inclined, enthusiasm counts for an awful lot at this level to make, to effect change, to make it happen. To communicate with people. To develop things. They might not actually know how to do the process but they know how to affect the change, they know how to get things moving. [MMM01]*

Within traditional roles, individuals often identified their roles as specialist although these were not specialist roles in the sense of being within HR, Finance or Estates. These respondents were generalist managers who identified that the complexity of their roles meant that they had to become specialised in order to enact their roles. This could be seen as a barrier to future career progression and was also given as a reason for an individual not to be included in strategy or decision making.

Within the group identified as MMs at MU there appear to be two 'tiers'. These do not relate directly to those whose roles are graded as Level Six or Level Five within the job families. Analysis of the self-described roles and responsibilities of research participants suggests that seniority does not necessarily come from pay grade levels. Within their descriptions of their roles MMs could be identified as being either 'higher level' or 'lower level' MMs. Those at 'lower levels' were more closely aligned to their area of operation and did not appear to look 'outside' except to interact with those in other functional or School areas in order to deliver their function. This lack of 'awareness' could be perceived by those in Schools and Departments as exhibiting a silo mentality although this criticism is not limited to lower level managers alone.

Those at 'higher levels' were more likely to be Committee secretaries, involved in project work, or operating in areas where they were responsible for a function which was institution wide and/or had management responsibility for a number of functions. MMs at Level Six were 'higher level' operators exhibiting the full range of professional behaviours identified in chapter four. These were also seen in some but not all of the MMs at Level Five. Some of these characteristics were also seen in JMs (those at Level Four) and JMs exhibiting these characteristics, when asked how they felt their experiences would change over the next two to three years started by stating that they hoped that they would be able to progress their careers. This suggests that these JMs may be learning behaviours which they hoped would enable them to pursue their careers within HE administration and management.

MMs within Level Five operating at the 'lower level' tended to be in operational roles where they had less opportunity to be involved in cross-institution groups even if their operational role meant that they had an institutional wide remit. They were also less likely to be aware of the University goals and objectives.

Characteristics were different for professional staff based in Schools and again level did not necessarily restrict how they enacted their roles. School/Department based professional staff were less likely to have a cross-institutional role and there was some duplication of task with that provided by central services. One participant identified areas where Schools and Centre were in direct competition with each other to say 'we can do this better and cheaper' but where this had happened e.g. admissions, student services, there was a concern that the service provided centrally did not meet the specific needs of the School concerned and that administration should be provided where it could best be delivered, regardless of the institution's move towards more uniformity of service provision, as a drop in service for a School or Department could mean the loss of surplus income generated for the University.

Individual antecedents e.g. past history, background, qualifications, the number of years of experience within HE and whether this was for just one HEI or for more than one, together with personal experiences of change have a bearing on the role enacted and the professional identity of the individual. The longer an individual is based in a particular institution the more they might be expected to 'know the rules' although this may actually be a barrier to effectiveness if they become 'bogged down' by previous experiences creating 'organizational rigidities and resistance to change' (Floyd and Wooldridge, 1997).

Hypothesis 5:
Restructuring administration will not in and of itself improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the University.

As I recorded in a memo:

> *Restructuring to improve economy, efficiency and effectiveness. Barriers to effectiveness may mean that what was intended isn't delivered. Are senior management aware of barriers? Are barriers communicated?*
>
> *Initial barriers to effectiveness identified as: negative perceptions of administration, IT systems, under-utilization of expertise or experience, under-utilization of resource/lack of resource/competition for scarce resource, relationships (respect, failing?), organisational culture (positive or negative), organisational structure (bureaucracy), communication (delays/action), opportunity, involvement in decision-making, environment, authority, work intensification (increase, change).*
>
> *MMs may also be a barrier to effectiveness if reactive and/or unambitious? Progressive MMs move areas on – do barriers constrain?*
>
> *What do senior management want from MMs – if MMs are unaware of goals and objectives how do they become more effective managers?*
>
> *Overlap of category with issues relating to communication – how and what is communicated has implications for MMs and how they go about actioning their roles.*
>
> *Organisational structure perceived as a barrier to effectiveness where a complex committee structure means that decision-making is slowed and change takes time to effect. Important for major changes where buy-in from stakeholders is necessary but not always necessary when minor decisions need to be made – collegial decision-making implies that decisions will not be made without the agreement of the academic community – on occasion is this a rubber stamping exercise – use of 'formalisation of existing practice'.'*

I developed an interpretive code which I named 'improving efficiency and effectiveness':

OPEN CODING (First Construct)	INTERPRETIVE CODE (Second Construct)
Effectiveness	Improving efficiency and effectiveness
Efficiency	
Culture	

Key findings included:

- Identification that recommendations from reviews were not fully implemented;
- Review of major projects should be undertaken to assess the achievements of objectives and to identify lessons arising;
- Feedback on operation of services was subjective;
- Initially restructuring was portrayed as 'realignment';
- Rounds of change were proposed;
- Systems change was at a slow pace;
- Conflicting goals and objectives and drivers of change;
- Dichotomy between institutional priorities and service delivery;
- Barriers to effectiveness not addressed by restructuring;
- Measuring of effectiveness by lack of complaints;
- Feelings of distrust or suspicions when change was communicated and why;
- Unclear information relating to drivers of change.

Data supporting this hypothesis included the following extracts:

The University has to keep looking at it's admin structure and making it most appropriate. I don't know that I fully understand the reasons why we went there. Why we suddenly went from a … some central offices and some Faculty offices into everything central. I presume though I can't remember that there was an idea of efficiency to be gained from it. But I don't know if that's borne out. I'm not sure if you actually analysed it whether you would say that changing that structure has seen an efficiency … or a real genuine efficiency or whether it's allowed us to absorb some student numbers. [MMF06]

I see that quite often across the University these kind of things you know we need to do x OK we'll get a project team, we'll do it and then there's no thought to the afterlife so … you know certain projects you can do that but certain projects, quite a lot of projects you need to continue. [MMM07]

I think there is a culture here where people don't seek feedback and partly I think that's just … it's not built into their thinking. It's not necessarily they don't want to put themselves out there and get feedback it's that it's not valued as much as it should be. [MMM02]

When change happens … I don't necessarily think that the immediate management are doing it in a threatening kind of way. It's adaptation because I think they do recognise that you know there are individuals, there are human beings involved and stuff. I think it's at the high level of the University when

they dictate a change, when they don't really have any realisation of the consequence for them. But I think that's a distinction between strategic and your kind of more immediate operational issues. [MMF06]

I'd say for instance with [Dept] it's been quite a painful process. I mean I had at least three meetings with them as you may know we've had them up here and we've tried to explain very clearly where our function starts and their function finishes. So that's … that was very difficult for them to adjust to and trying to get them to use our procedures. Because they weren't used to proactive management and there's a little bit of resentment there that we are … you know poking our noses in to be honest. [MMF04]

Within the Registrar's department, restructuring was rejected as a term for the change being undertaken with 'realigning' being the preferred term. This use of realigning instead of restructuring could imply that the changes were minor and as an attempt to reassure, given that the perception of those outside the Department was:

'that the University has been going through some kind of continuous reorganisation for the last 20 years. In the Registrar's department has been reorganised how many times. No role seems to be the same for more than about three years.' [SAM03]

As an insider, I was not aware of explicit discussion of the term to be used for reorganisation but this was hardly surprising given that the Review remains a confidential internal document which has never been fully published within the Institution and has not been made available to all members of the Department. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the review did not appear to take into account streamlining which had already been undertaken and staff working in the units which comprised the department at the time were not interviewed or consulted for clarification during the course of the review. Following the outcome of the review there were changes in personnel including the creation of new senior posts appointed to from outside MU. The part of the review which was available appeared to conclude that existing structures were not best serving the needs of the University and that change was necessary.

Another view could be that for political reasons realigning was the term used to 'disguise' another restructuring because of the expected negative perceptions outside of the Department owing to a number of 'restructurings' in preceding years. Given that restructuring could be a response to a need to become more efficient and effective as the organisation became more complex, this 'disguise' appeared to be less about reassuring the wider community, or even those within the department, but more about covering up failings.

Restructuring in Faculties was large scale but even in those cases, communication with those not directly affected was kept to a minimum although 'restructuring' was the term used. Noteworthy was that while School reviews are scheduled to take place every five years, there has been no further review of Central (Professional) Services. Such a review is now long overdue. One explanation for this lack of further review could be related to senior University management viewing other areas of operation as more in need of attention but not necessarily as a vote of confidence in the current administrative structure. Anecdotal evidence suggests that there is a tension between different Divisions and Departments within PS. Tensions could be seen as competing over scarce resource or alternatively as an emergence of new dominant sub-groups as organisational form changes (Miller, 1997) in response to the unprecedented challenges faced by MU.

While change was primarily seen by respondents as an opportunity rather than a threat, the experiences of many interviewees of change, the way in which it had been communicated, and the constant nature of change, appeared to be giving them 'change fatigue' and a number expressed a wish to have breathing space to allow one change to 'bed in' and be reviewed before new changes were presented particularly where it was felt that changes were 'for change sake' and 'tinkering at the edges'. The constant pace of change led to a sense of there being no time to let previous changes bed in as new changes came every time there was a change in staff. It was also felt that this constant change signified a blame culture.

Without effective communication of the drivers for change, this perception of a blame culture takes hold. Interviewees did express that they were not always sure what the drivers were and that sometimes it was a case of guessing what senior management wants. That was balanced with occasions where they were able to find out if they asked the right questions which was identified as a skill necessary for MMs to exhibit. Understanding external and internal factors allows MMs to scan the horizons and to be able to synthesize information or have the ability to undertake roles where they are required to present alternatives to senior management for discussion and selection.

While communication presents both problem and part of the solution, there are implicit expectations from working relationships and interviewees report feeling disconnected when not included in communications or feel that change has been implemented with poor communication. Lack of communication is one of the major barriers to effectiveness and the top down composition of change can have implications for its implementation. This could be identified as a style of management which does not include consultation. Although the emphasis of a 'Corporate' HEI was 'on the capabilities of managers at every level ... and in all aspects of the organisation's life' (Clegg and McAuley 2005:23) lack of involvement in strategic

change at policy-making level suggests that while operational responsibility may be delegated, responsibility for strategy remains primarily with senior management.

'In administering policies, the interests of one customer group can sometimes take precedence over (and cause dissatisfaction within) another customer group.' (Pitman, 2000:169) and this was identified as an issue in feedback to the Review Group (RRD):

> 'There is always a problem of reconciling institutional and local needs and occasionally the integration of local needs into standardised procedures is not possible or easily achieved.'

Barriers to the effectiveness of an organisation can be structural, physical, environmental, or resource related. One such barrier to effectiveness may relate to the culture prevalent within the institution, as a feature of the management structure or organisational form, and in particular the relationships between academic and professional staff. A common misconception reported by AS is a perception that administrators make the decisions (Dobson and Conway, 2003). This may be a genuine misperception through lack of understanding, although this seems unlikely, as major decision-making is normally the province of university committees, senior management teams, or management boards (consisting of AS members). It may be a way of passing responsibility for perceived poor decision-making to the administration who may have influence. My own experience as an insider within MU is that there are occasions, particularly in relation to decisions where Schools are given discretion, when administrators are asked to make a decision rather than advise on regulations and that on occasion this is then used to justify if the decision is challenged.

This may also be a function of the model of management and the disengagement or exclusion of some groups within the organisation. Academics who are alienated from institutional leadership, who are loyal to their discipline (or research/research group) rather than to the institution, may find 'administrators' an easy target for expression of dissatisfaction with the 'marketization' of institutions (Lewis and Altbach,1996). However, loyalty to a discipline first is not unique to the academic profession. Questions have been raised as to where loyalty of administration lies, and again this supports the hypothesis that restructuring will not in and of itself improve efficiency and effectiveness. For those generalists in PS, this is more likely to be their department or institution; specialists may identify primarily with their 'profession'; while for those in Schools/Departments it is more likely to lie with their School or Department. This may be explained by identification of those in PS with the management of the institution. Those in academic Schools may be subject to management practices which support the collegiality of AS, and the enactment of roles supporting those academics may mean that administrators identify on a personal level

with the pressures of academic life. This identification with the School as a sub-group may lead to tensions with perceived overly bureaucratic initiatives from 'the Centre'.

Hypothesis 6:

Moving the day-to-day operation of administration away from the day-to-day lives of academic staff may fuel distrust recognising that 'it's easier when you know people' and views of administration per se have not changed dramatically.

Hypothesis 6 is related to Hypothesis 2 and also linked to Hypothesis 7.

As I recorded in a memo:

> *'Organisational culture (positive or negative) relates to how MMs feel about work – negative perceptions, under-utilization or opportunity, involvement in decision-making. Experiences of interviewees different in relation to what the culture offers them. Different experiences within same Division. Differences within divisions? Different expectations of MMs from different line-managers? Are all MMs managed in the same way? If not, why not?'*

I developed the interpretive codes 'outcomes of change', 'experiences of negative relationships', and 'experiences of positive relationships'.

OPEN CODING (First Construct)	INTERPRETIVE CODE (Second Construct)
Challenges Barriers	Outcomes of change
Hierarchy Relationships Communication	Experiences of negative relationships
Relationships Communication	Experiences of positive relationships

Key findings related to:

- Bringing PVCs together in an office away from Schools has been viewed as hampering working relationships;
- The concept of 'Institutional Benefit';
- The academic/administrative divide has a bearing on working relationships;
- Academics as incentivised workers;

- A shift in recent years towards 'sharing the workload' between academic and administrative staff;
- Positive feelings when good relationships were built between groups;
- Issues of trust and respect;
- AS supported by administrative staff within Schools had a perception of working as a team;
- AS open to opportunities provided by good administration;
- The dangers of losing goodwill through 'amateur' approaches;
- A recognition there is a divide but it may be narrowing;
- A recognition that the tasks performed by each group were different;
- Negative perceptions were more likely to be in connection with staff who were more remote than those well known to individuals within academic Schools or through Committee attendance.

Data supporting this hypothesis included the following extracts:

> Culture, I think it's something that to break the culture down it needs to be done at a very high level, Management Board. We're going to ensure that you know they will ensure that we're working as a team here it's not us with the academics and the you with the administrators. We're a team and we're basically one big team and we're looking to try and improve [MU] not only in this country but in other countries and campuses where we have involvement. [MMM01]

> I think previously there was no culture of taking risks or creating change. The changes that we may have bragged about were so minimal in what they were that they didn't give real credence whereas I think now if you say you are trying to implement some change you've probably got the management support in the Department to do it. [MMF06]

> I have found it quite difficult and obviously what I'm continuing to do is visit those Schools and keep trying to build stronger working relationships with colleagues so that they can see where we are coming from and understand why the Centre wants them to do things in certain ways. [MMF04]

> I've got a feeling that you don't stay in a central administration job if you need the constant gratification and appreciation of all those around you. Because you don't get it. [MMF06]

> I think as we have shown them that we actually offer them a service and we want to basically help them as much as possible to give them a service and we're actually passionate about ensuring that they've got this service they've taken that on board and they realise that well actually these people know what they're doing, they might not get it right every time all the time but they actually are here to help us rather than to hinder us and that is the most important thing that has changed. Although there is still the old culture of this University, it was a blame culture. If something went wrong it went from an academic member of staff to the head of School and then the Head of School to possibly a PVC and then the PVC would come down to the [Dept] ... and then [person] would come either direct to me or to my line manager who would then come to me and say what are you doing, get it sorted. When really all they needed to do was go from the School lecturer to us and we would effect that

change that they required. That has been the major problem where it is very easy to sort out but ... they still do that sometimes. The blame culture to go all the way round the houses when all they really need to do is come to us because we can sort out their problems very quickly. [MMM01]

I get on very well with Directors of programmes. They've ... I would like to think that they feel supported. So I ... if you were ask to certain research directors they would you know feel well supported in terms of problem solving. And being backed up. [MMF04]

Obviously the academic staff that I mostly work with are [Senior managers], now usually they're quite appreciative because you know they're academics who've then been put in a management position and that makes a difference you know. They're not trained managers so that makes them a little ... a little less complacent, a little more vulnerable, a little bit more willing, to take a joint approach I think. [MMF06]

Physical changes in environment and location as well as the centralisation of functions were perceived by interviewees as making central services and decision-making bodies remote from School staff whether these be academic or APM staff. This is perceived by those interviewees as being detrimental to personal relationships; knowing AS less well, removed from the day-to-day operations, and less involvement for AS not involved in cross-institution Committees in decision-making.

I also recorded in a memo an informal conversation I'd had about how individuals came to be involved in committees:

'Choosing who sits on committees and working groups is based on experiences of them and their work. We don't choose people who we feel won't do things the way we think they should be done or people we think won't be effective. We don't choose people who we think will be difficult. We choose people we think will be 'sensible'. Does this move the institution on – from one perspective yes, when we want to be progressive we choose people we know will be on 'our side'. What does this say about the way we do business? We would say we're acting in the best interests of the institution but wouldn't other staff say likewise? Are we working in different directions or just taking different paths?

Surprisingly, enhancements to teaching and learning were not routinely identified as drivers for change. This could be explained by administrators seeing these areas as 'academic' rather than administrative and so focussed responses on administration. Given the more public external drivers for change, administrative staff may be more aware of publicly stated drivers, rather than digging beneath the surface to understand the true nature of change. This may also support the view of academics that administrative staff do not understand academic work. The majority of factors identified appeared to be responses to external drivers initially rather than internally driven e.g. results of NSS. These external factors resulted in initiatives which did deliver enhancements in teaching and learning e.g. PVC set 'grand challenges'.

Hypothesis 7:

University management is a profession in its infancy but there is a growing professionalization of the staff and this is being recognised by AMs who are working in partnership with APM staff in a number of areas.

Hypothesis 7 builds on previous hypotheses to think about MMs as professionals. I developed an interpretive code which I named 'being a professional' to consider how administrative professionals could be defined.

OPEN CODING (First Construct)	INTERPRETIVE CODE (Second Construct)
Professional behaviours	Being a professional
Relationships	
Culture	

Key findings were that:

- Committee membership at present is limited to senior members of PS;
- Working Groups may be chaired by senior members of PS;
- Members of PS may be members of Working Groups;
- Professional behaviours have enabled individuals to operate more effectively;
- The concept of 'sharing the workload' with AS and acting for institutional benefit was discussed;
- Values and beliefs of PS included descriptions of accountability;
- AS identified the need to recruit and appoint professional and effective administrative teams;
- Differences in where loyalty lay but a recognition that experience made PS more effective in their roles;
- An expectation at higher levels that PS would define their own roles to some extent;
- A need for an awareness of not only MU but the wider HE sector;
- A recognition that authority may be drawn from working on behalf of others;
- APM staff wanted to be treated as professional colleagues rather than as second class citizens;
- Professional networks were important for effective operation.

Examples of data supporting this hypothesis included the following:

> *What I do think is that senior administrators and middle to senior managers should realistically all have a similar set of skills. I wouldn't object if we got the chance to rotate around a bit because I think it would be refreshing and I*

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Examples of data supporting this hypothesis included the following:

> *What I do think is that senior administrators and middle to senior managers should realistically all have a similar set of skills. I wouldn't object if we got the chance to rotate around a bit because I think it would be refreshing and I*

think ... I've been doing my job now for six years and I don't particularly want anyone else to take it off me but having said that if somebody were to come in with a fresh point of view they might do something to the role that I haven't thought of. [MMM01]

What you do with it, how much input you have depends on your character and who you're working with and what your knowledge is and what your drive is and how much you are prepared to do. Because often with these projects it's not ... you know you get taken off other things in order to do them. So it's how much you perceive that that's of University benefit and therefore you're willing to put in the extra to do it. There's no time off for good behaviour, you know, nothing else drops off your radar so that's about personal choices that you make. [MMF06]

I think within [Dept] we have learned to bring down some of the barriers between the different units. Or learned that there are benefits in doing so. [MMF05]

Recent changes in HE administration have seen a growth in governance and compliance agendas, complexity, and new areas of operation. New roles have been created as responses to these challenges. For administrative staff this has led to a taking on of work traditionally undertaken by academic members of staff e.g. admissions; programme management; although AS may remain the final decision makers where an academic judgement is necessary. University administration and management as a 'Profession' may be in its infancy but there is a growing professionalization of the staff as identified in research undertaken on behalf of the LFHE, particularly that of Whitchurch (2008c).

Gaining acceptance of new legitimacies is one of the key challenges for these professionals. MM professional behaviours exhibited within MU included skills (negotiating, influencing, persuasion, facilitating and interpreting); knowledge (tacit, operational, strategic); experience; 'awareness' (own area; division/school, university, HE sector); and speaking the 'right' language.

Participants' experiences highlighted their roles and how they used these behaviours in their day-to-day lives. The MMs in MU could, therefore, be deemed to be a mix of bounded professionals, cross-boundary professionals and blended professionals. MMs in traditionally 'bounded' positions can be seen exhibiting 'cross-boundary' or 'blended' characteristics within MU as the demands of their roles and the environment within which they operate changes. One reason for this could be how they construct their roles, interpret what they do, and how they do it. MMs appear to be aware of the boundaries of their roles and their authority but also of boundaries as barriers e.g. not being able to speak to the person they need to do get something done; decision-making hierarchies. This awareness of boundaries may hamper development of cross-boundary working practices. However, if MMs have role ambiguity they may overstep areas of responsibility and/or authority and this may be 'frowned on' by senior

management. My initial observations were that use of the title 'Manager' or 'Head' or 'Officer' to imply status and level is not consistent across divisions within the same department of my institution and was certainly not consistent across the institution. However, there has been evidence of 'title inflation' which could be seen as a sign of administrative staff redefining their professional identities and seeking status particularly in times when career progression is difficult e.g. within my own division, restructuring resulted in 'Supervisors' becoming 'Officers', 'Officers becoming 'Managers' and 'Managers' becoming 'Heads'. Within another area, I observed that all administrative staff had the title 'Manager'.

Some roles are identified as 'boundary-spanning' (Floyd and Wooldridge, 1992) or 'cross-boundary' (Whitchurch, 2008c) and give the role holders the opportunity to influence outside of an area of operation. Role holders in these positions are better able to understand strategic priorities and this has implications for their career development and progression.

Hypothesis 8:

In the absence of formal programmes, MMs may need to make the most of/generate their own opportunities to gain knowledge and understanding by e.g. taking up secondment or committee servicing opportunities as well as seeking formal training or education.

This hypothesis was generated from analysis of what MMs were saying about their roles and opportunities, their personal ambitions and their considerations of what they thought would change in the next two to three years and I developed the interpretative codes 'becoming a MM' and 'developing as a MM'.

OPEN CODING (First Construct)	INTERPRETIVE CODE (Second Construct)
Professional Behaviours Professional Identity Relationships	Becoming a middle manager
Roles	Developing as a middle manager

Data supporting this hypothesis included the following extracts:

> *So say I'm a level 5, and I want to develop myself to the point where the University has got to look at it and say by god he's really doing well, he knows what he's doing and he's got the expertise and then I've got to look at the situation where I've got my level 4s who are really doing well, good expertise and they're really going pushing for higher sort of ... that is good for the University and that's what they've got to develop. Not only that, levels 4s down to level 3s and then level 3s to level 2s. Continuing to push them to*

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*move them forward rather than stuck in the comfort zone, sticking with what
they've got. So it's a business now. It's not just a University it's a business
where you have to ... you know there is competition out there. Other new
Universities, they're not going to stand still. They're going to compete. So you
need the administrators who are innovative. You know they want to move ...
you know they are basically enthusiastic. They're clever people. They want to
move forward, you want to retain these people so you have basically ways of
ensuring you retain them to develop them and by doing that you're going to be
a stronger University. [MMM01]*

*I think you probably end up being a better Registrar or Director if you've got
both of those experiences [School and Centre] so I think it's to my detriment
that I didn't try and make a move like that at an earlier point. I mean I would
have been very, very nervous to do it. But I think it probably overall would
have benefited me to do it. [MMF06]*

It was recognised that career paths for administrative staff were not always clear and
that, while formal programmes existed for e.g. graduate trainees or SPMs aspiring to
become registrars, formal training offered within the University related to e.g. IT
systems, project management, action learning, with no specific training for those
aspiring to move from middle management to senior management.

Whitchurch (2008c:32) identifies that '[T]raditional, 'universal' career routes ... have
tended to be implicit, rather than explicit ...'. While an element of 'patronage' exists,
my observations both as an interviewer and interviewee for administrative posts
within the Institution were that increasingly appointments were made where the
successful applicant could bring a number of skills and previous experiences to the
role and that, given the constant pace of change, there was simply no time to allow an
applicant to grow into a role. It could be reasonably hypothesised that MMs may need
to take ownership of their own career progression by ensuring they seek out
opportunities to enhance their CVs, but also those opportunities which enhance their
practice in their current roles.

It is somewhat surprising that, given the emergence of HE administration as a
profession, and identification outside of HE suggesting 'significant involvement in
strategic decisions usefully extends beyond the top management team' (Floyd and
Wooldridge, 1997:482), formal training programmes to enable MMs to acquire skills
and proficiencies necessary to fulfil middle management roles and to progress to
senior roles in HE are not more prevalent.

Management of Universities

Traditionally within MU 'the Centre' has been used within Schools and Departments as
a term for central administration and usually pejoratively. This research shows that
the concept of 'the Centre' is changing within MU. Recent years have seen the

development of a cadre of professional managers based both within academic Schools/Departments and in central administration. In part this has been a response to the increased complexities of administrative work and the need for 'professionals' to undertake these tasks. However, there is also a body of administrative work which it is accepted by interviewees, needs to be undertaken by AS and academic decision-making bodies. Management responsibilities at AM level are allocated on a rotating basis with individuals serving a period of time in office although a small number of roles now appear to be semi-permanent. Within academic Schools/Departments this has implications for the priorities of both the School/Department and administrative staff working within them as each change of 'manager' can see a changing agenda dependent on the skills, knowledge and experience of the academic leader. Within central administration, changes in PVC can have a major impact on strategic direction.

University management may be seen as a career choice as academic MMs progress their careers but these are not normally permanent positions unless they are 'administrative' posts and Etzioni identifies that 'most successful professionals are not motivated to become administrators' (1964:82). By this it is assumed Etzioni means academic professionals and that this suggests that only unsuccessful professionals would be motivated to move into University academic management posts. However, one of the criticisms of AMs is that they are successful academics and that administration is not their forte. As reported by one interviewee:

> 'part of his remit was for [area] and I think you did have to question why he was given that remit. Probably brilliant academic in his own field and then almost as a way of getting promoted you do get ... you know you're given Head of School and then Dean and then PVC because you're a very good academic and you've got a publishing record ... but it might not necessarily translate into someone who is a good administrator and someone who is organised and ... the [committee] wasn't very good and it was because the Chair wasn't very good. And probably the reason that he'd got to that level was because he was very good at a different job.' [JMM07]

A number of senior academic management posts are now permanent or semi-permanent posts and senior academic management can be seen as a halfway house between being a cadre of professional managers, and 'manager-academics' who will return to their Schools or Departments following a term of service. This has added to a feeling of more 'managerialist' approaches within the institution where this 'semi-professional' group of AMs together with senior administrative managers are exhibiting increasingly 'centre-ist' behaviours, moving away from the collegial relationships of the past as the institution evolves. These behaviours include the restructuring of

Committee structures, a sense of loss of shared ownership of decisions, together with a move towards more uniformity in the provision of services.

Centre-ism

It is important to recognise that there are distinctions between 'the Centre', 'centralisation' and 'centre-ism'. As already identified, 'the Centre' (sometimes termed 'the University') is seen as being made up both of central administration and University senior academic management, the central steering core. While different 'parts' of the Centre, these are viewed from outside as pursuing the same objectives. A feeling that 'the Centre' was often blind to the realities of academic and administrative 'life' in Schools and Departments was also identified.

> 'It was feeling like it was coming from the centre but it wasn't necessarily external ... you have to comply. It's always 'the centre' this mythical central person or ... Because you never say Management Board or University Senior Management. It's always 'the centre'.' [MMF13]

> 'And that attitude actually is quite difficult to overcome that there is 'The University' and there is me ... you know somehow it is divorced.' [SAM03]

Centralisation of some functions has been identified as bringing efficiencies by economies of scale and also to ensure that single points of failure can be avoided as expertise is able to be shared. It was also identified by some interviewees that there was a need for more centralisation and professional management in some areas as a response to the unprecedented complexity of operations requiring strong governance and acceptance of a quality and standards agenda. Centralisation of functions was perceived as making functions easier to audit and to make external reporting and compliance easier to monitor. This was not always welcomed by Schools:

> 'But they are very defensive, they are very protective and they do think you're not going to do this as well as we do it even though there are massive external benefits. It's very difficult to get people within the organisation to see the bigger picture and to believe that other people might be able to actually be able to do it as well if not better. And it's not necessarily a reflection on them it's just a better way of doing it.' [MMF13]

> 'I think there was definitely a perception that the drivers for change were coming from central university rather than from the School itself and I could see why having worked externally to that environment you can see where there are things that need to be improved and shaken up.' [MMF13]

While understood, this was not always seen as a positive move owing to a change in relationships.   This change in relationships may have an impact on the efficiencies centralisation was introduced for:

> 'Now what's happened with that sort of retrenchment back to a central unit which I fully understand in terms of efficiency, getting people to work together, sharing knowledge and so forth makes a great deal of sense, it changes the nature of the relationship because that relationship becomes a phone/e-mail relationship.' [SAM03]

Within MU, features of 'managerialism' are identified i.e. a devolution of budgets to Schools and Departments; the use of quantitative performance indicators; marketization; internal and external accountability; and managerial approaches to control (Metcalf & Richards, 1987). MU also exhibits features of an entrepreneurial institution having a strengthened steering core (Management Board); a diversified funding base; and an expanded development periphery (Clark, 1988).   With a focus on decentralisation in some areas e.g. devolved budgets, but an increased quality culture and need to react to the external environment in a competitive marketplace, has resulted in competing priorities and in what I would deem an important development, I identify the term 'centre-ism' and put this forward as a form of 'managerialism' within MU:

> 'I get the sense now that PVCs are more monitors, monitoring what [individual Schools] do. ... I think the overwhelming sense of what principles underpinning the current strategy are that it looks much more controlling and centralist. ... I don't really think it is all due to hard times because I think it started before things really, really went negative ... you know a controlling philosophy at the centre ... you feel that the communication between the periphery and the core was much stronger [in the past].' [SAM02]

> 'There is very little face to face communication that I can see between the senior officers of the University and ordinary people like me. ... So now that the University management has been centralised and streamlined which has been going on for 30 years you've got to a point now where you know key Schools don't really know much about what is going on.' [SAM01]

> '... you know with the shift over the ten years that I've done this job there has been a shift in terms of sort of having much more a feedback and accountability to the centre ... sort of justification ...' [MMF03]

'There is a tension over the effective devolution of responsibility as opposed to central control.' [SMM02]

It is difficult to reconcile these views with those from within 'the Centre' that Schools and Departments have freedom and control owing to the devolution of budgets and that a number of options are able to be pursued.

As identified in reporting findings relating to 'efficiency' it does appear that a function of the size and complexity of the organisation is that there is a sense of less engagement by academic staff with the University. Communication was identified as an issue and may provide an explanation for some negative reactions:

'And of course sending us a whole load of e-mails isn't the solution either because we get officious e-mails from the Centre all the time.' [SAM01]

'... if we started off any change process by saying there is a need to save money ... that would have an unsettling effect on people ... there is a perception at a higher level of unsatisfactory performance within particular units ... to say it would have a demoralising effect ... an attempt to communicate these things might be helpful.' [SMM01]

Authority to compel individuals within Schools and Departments to comply with University initiatives was felt to lie with the central steering core:

'I don't think I have the authority to tell people what to do. That would come from [PVC]. I do have the authority to encourage people to do what we hope they will. ... But if it came down to mandatory things that people weren't doing ... and this has happened ... then it has come from [PVCs] . [I haven't got] those types of authorities ... the sort of mandatory you know 'thou shalt' authority.' [SAM03]

The way change is enacted depends on the leadership and management of the organisation and the dominant culture. Many cultures coexist and there are complex relationships between the different interest groups. These groups form and reform over time. Tensions, for some, represented a shift in the balance of power from Schools and Departments to 'the Centre' and this was perceived as a response to a quality and standards agenda:

'I think there perhaps is a ... shift in that in terms of the power that we are ... perhaps have more power than we used to in terms of quality control and you know that kind of compliance with everything else.' [MMF13]

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Interpretations of 'centre-ism' have included a notion of 'guilt by association' where administration takes responsibility (blame) for centrally-made (committee-made) academic decisions.

> 'Or if I am saying something is out of step or wrong it's not something that the administrator is necessarily responsible for. And sometimes they'll actually be looking to me to give them ammunition to take back to their managers to say well centre says we have to get rid of x,y,z; centre says we need to do this, it's not me. So you know ... the bad guy sometimes ... I can be blamed.' [MMF08]

And as identified by one respondent:

> 'Some of the time it's also knowing the rules. You know, there's absolutely no point ... trying to force something through when, you know, there are lots of reasons why it's not going to happen.' [MMF06]

In recent years, the 'form' of organisation within MU has been moving from that of a 'collegial' HEI to a more 'corporate' HEI (Clegg and McAuley, 2005). As the institution pursues wider aims, it becomes a more complex entity with accountability to a variety of stakeholders. Features of the corporate world have resulted in tensions and Centre-ism is identified by some as having impact on the traditional academic values of 'challenge and dissent' balanced with 'tolerance and diversity'. This is seen by some to manifest itself as 'controlling and centralist'. Respondents also identified a sense of disconnection between 'the Centre' and the periphery (academic Schools and Departments) and that these had been features for a number of years. This sense of a detached 'centre' could lead to disengagement by individuals and might be seen as a function of the diversity of the organisation and the complexity of the goals and objectives which are driving the institution forward. This could also be understood as a tension between the features of centre-ism/managerialism and traditional collegiality.

Management of Change

How change is managed is dependent on whether change is planned or emergent. What emerges strongly within this research is that while interviewees were resigned to some change without input they nevertheless felt that in some circumstances when changes were presented they were able to have input and that they were listened to. However, AS reported that they felt that they were less able to have input into change outside of their own departments than had been the case until recently.

The concept of 'institutional benefit' was introduced into the discussion by one of my interviewees. This relates to perceptions of the *raison d'etre* for University work and is complex in nature. At the simplest level, 'institutional benefit' relates to the notion of working for the benefit of the organisation rather than self. Complexity is introduced within the organisation when consideration is given to where, and by whom, particular tasks are undertaken and whether all work is for 'institutional benefit' or even if it should be. Examples identified by administrative interviewees of working for institutional benefit were where upholding the University's position (reputation) or delivering institutional priorities was the main focus of activity. Examples of behaviours or incidents which were identified by interviewees as being against the interests of the institution were outlined e.g. AS limiting hours when they were available to students or not engaging with administrative processes. However, it should be recognised that AS have competing priorities which may not be there in the same way for administrative staff. While this can be further broken down into working for School or institutional priorities with an assumption that School priorities are institutional priorities it should be recognised that what is against the interests of the institution may be contested. Part of the 'skill' identified in working at middle management level is an ability to 'marry goals and objectives with the realities of an operation'. However, the realities of an operation and associated administrative processes may not marry well with goals and objectives relating to teaching and learning. This may provide support for an argument that AS should not undertake administration. However, it is recognised that a number of 'tasks' and decisions may need to be undertaken by AS.

There is a question as to whether there is a dichotomy between institutional priorities of efficiency and in delivering what is needed (or felt to be needed) for the benefit of students or others. Massification of HE has seen changes within the student population from a body of 'scholars' to a wider population including those for whom University education is seen as almost a 'finishing school' experience whereby higher education becomes more compulsory for future career prospects rather than voluntary in nature. [MAF01]

Students are also the products of their previous experiences and many at MU have experience of a privately funded compulsory education. The introduction of tuition fees has also produced an expectation of, and perhaps misconception from students as to what they are 'buying'. There is a fine balance between massification and a student wish for personal attention. A feeling of not working for institutional benefit was identified in examples given by interviewees of feelings of frustration at not being able to achieve or deliver everything which had been done in the past to support the student experience, although 'student experience' is a relatively new term. While there have been drives to increase student numbers, it is clear from the NSS and

other feedback that as defined by one interviewee 'students don't like being part of a large cohort'. An increase in the number of international students, while benefits of their presence were acknowledged, had also 'altered' the student experience.

New technologies were introduced which were also seen as examples of adding benefit to the institution but these had, on occasion, had unexpected effects e.g. students using laptops in lecture rooms, or using social networks to mount campaigns against particular policies. While transparency was felt to be a good thing, risks to reputation had to be managed and the speed with which 'bad news' could be transmitted through e.g. Twitter or Facebook was identified as an issue.

The academic/administrative divide has a bearing on whether individuals are perceived by interviewees as working for institutional benefit. As has been previously described, roles within MU have broadly drawn role descriptions and there is no definition of the administrative work which will be undertaken by academic members of staff. During the course of my research, academics have been described to me as 'incentivised workers' who have a clear idea of what the incentives are to progression of an academic career. This has implications for how they are managed but also may lead to a perception amongst administrative staff (and on occasion academics themselves) that individuals are not always working for institutional benefit. This is hardly surprising in a culture where progression for AS is very much dependent on being research active and this brings with it pressures. Other examples of working for institutional benefit included the centralisation of decision making either at the academic level by University MB or at the functional (administration) level e.g. a centralised admissions service. The majority of respondents did feel that there had been a shift in recent years and that most members of staff, both academic and administrative, recognised that they were employees of the University and that the need for increased efficiency and effectiveness meant that they must work for the benefit of the institution. The concept of 'sharing the workload' between academic and administrative staff was identified as acting for institutional benefit as was the concept of 'making better'. 'Making better' was identified in relation to the improvement of the University's services or reputation rather than as a notion of something which was broken and needed to be mended.

Much has been made of the subversion of senior management strategy. This could be seen as a slowing of the pace of change by not implementing strategy immediately, particularly if this was felt to be to the disadvantage of a particular unit or School. However, given the pace of change, by not implementing immediately, another change or strategy may overtake which is more in line with the values and beliefs of the individual, unit or School. Anecdotal evidence suggests that where an initiative is welcomed at the local level by a particular sub-group, it will be 'marketed' as imposed

from above or 'from the Centre' whereas when an initiative is thought unnecessary by the dominant sub-group, it will be ignored.

Professionals

Within my research sample there was recognition that the world within which both administrators and AS were operating was changing and that this world was not always a rational one. There has been a shift in balance between academic and administrative staff, in part in reaction to the increased quality and standards agenda.

Some tasks previously performed by administrative staff e.g. library searches, word processing, were undertaken by AS themselves as technologies evolved. Some administrative roles which had once been fulfilled by AS e.g. admissions officer, student support officer, disability liaison officer, examinations officer, were now undertaken by administrators unless an academic decision was necessary, and this freed up academic time for other 'work' e.g. research. In some areas it was felt that this was a negative experience for AS who enjoyed this aspect of their role. For administrative staff it could have positive benefits as it extended the level at which work was undertaken and lead to more team and joint working with academic colleagues.

Consideration was given as to whether the movement of 'work' from academic to administrative staff devalued the work. For APM staff, this movement of some administrative decision-making and the need for more professional approaches has added to the recognition of their roles although for some, there was a sense that the work became less 'important' once the take was not being performed by an AS member. Professional life for academic and administrative staff is changing and for AS this could be seen as a reprofessionalization as opposed to a deprofessionalization.

> 'the values that are associated with old-style professionalism – of independence, critical reason, communication, a disinterested attention to a set of standards outside oneself – still linger.' (Barnett, 2008:203)

The spaces in which those interviewed for this research work are contested. Issues are raised in relation their identity as professionals and this may present as role ambiguity and conflict for individuals and may also lead to conflict between groups particularly where the values and beliefs of administration may be different from that of other groups.

Participants in this research took it for granted that PVCs and the VC would be academics while recognising that with the increased management component of the

role, it did not necessarily need to be the case. Surprisingly, academic participants in the study were comfortable with the notion that some PVC roles in the future could and/or would be undertaken by managers who were not academics. Only one PS interviewee identified particular individuals with the potential to fill a PVC role from outside the academic community. However, the individuals identified had acquired, or were working towards, higher degrees and, therefore, could be said to be acquiring academic credentials and credibility. While it is recognised that PVCs at other institutions are from other backgrounds, I wonder whether MU is ready for such an appointment. Certainly, there would need to be a major sea change for this to happen as at the current time PVC appointments are for three years only and PVCs eventually go back to their Schools/Departments. This recognition by the small number of academic participants in this study of a future where PVC roles could be undertaken by managers who were not academics could perhaps be related to a greater awareness that a number of the areas where academic PVCs currently had responsibility were areas where specialist non-academic managers operate in some UK HEIs already and that the UK already has at least one VC from a non-academic background. This awareness could also extend to a recognition that the complexity of provision and areas of operation are such that an academic member of staff taking a quasi-management position would be effectively giving up on academia for their period of office. I suggest that in order to 'do' administration or act strategically to the benefit of the institution it isn't necessarily important to be an academic. A number of senior academic management roles could be undertaken by non-academic staff. However, there is a notion that senior academics need to be involved in running the business as they are best placed to understand issues relating to 'managing' academics. This because they have a professional interest in research and teaching i.e. that this is not just about making money, holding a traditional conceptualisation of what a University is for.

In interviews with AS, I observed, what I termed an impression of a sense of loss of something which was felt to be valuable and unique, the values of an academic community and its notions of collegiality, academic freedom and autonomy. This is not to say that the increased professionalization of administration and the roles which were undertaken were not appreciated, and that the need for more professionalization within academic management roles skills was not recognised. The increased complexity of University working life and the need for a professional cadre of administrators and managers who were well-trained and able to run a 'business' was recognised. However, it was not without what I perceived as a sense of something lost, that, although enthusiastic about the professionalism of administrative staff, and a recognition that there was a need for change, one participant commented '[I]n 20 years all of the decisions will be made by the administration'.

Middle Management

For research participants in MU it could be said that for some there is role ambiguity e.g. in being given particular responsibilities to undertake but then not having the authority to enact these when more senior staff are involved in the decision-making or where power is legitimately held by diverse units across the institution. It is recognised that these are contested spaces. MMs with operational responsibilities may find themselves in conflict with their own line-managers and the staff they manage or having to implement a strategy which they are not entirely signed up to.

My research has shown that within MU MMs have a number of elements to their roles. These roles had formal aspects which related to their job descriptions and informal aspects which related to what they perceived their role to be. Formal tasks included e.g. managing operations; leading and managing teams; undertaking projects; and effecting change; and making improvements. Informal elements to the role included managing expectations; providing stability; building and sustaining relationships.

Variables such as the model of management prevalent at any one time within the organisation see these roles enacted differently by academic and MMs. MMs could be seen to grow into their roles and to gain experience and confidence within them. This enabled them to build respect and become an authority. MMs appear to manage change by building their credibility and from the trust which is placed in them as individuals rather than as part of a cadre of professional MMs. A number of the MMs felt that to a degree their roles had developed over time and that they had been able to define elements of their roles dependent on their personalities, skills, knowledge and strengths. This enabled them to use their previous experiences and knowledge for 'institutional benefit'. However, on occasions, this 'self-definition' of the role had led to role ambiguity and a feeling of not knowing what the boundaries of the role were in terms of responsibility and decision-making ability.

MMs' strategic influence is primarily limited to strategy within their Divisions or Schools. They act as linking pins between their own SPMs and the teams they manage. These SPMs then interact at higher levels which may be across Divisions and/or Departments or at University level where their role in strategy may be constrained by the senior academic management. While SPMs within their divisional or School hierarchy, these SPMs have their own linking role between institutional management, e.g. MB, Committees, Registrar, and their units. This could be likened to the middle management role when enacting this part of their senior management remit.

Conclusions

This research posed a number of questions and the presentation of findings and discussion of findings chapters have provided some answers to these questions, producing empirical evidence for the theories suggested by my review of existing literature.

How these hypotheses and findings link to the original research questions is depicted in Table 5.1 below.

Research Question	Category/sub-category	Hypothesis
How change is managed and implemented?	Change Middle Managers Relationships Communication	4, 6
What has changed?	Change – 'Sorts' of change	1, 2, 3
Have recent changes enabled the University administration to become more economic efficient and effective and how might success be measured?	Change – challenges/barriers Change – drivers of change Change – Efficiency/Effectiveness Change – culture/structure Relationships Communication Middle Managers	5, 6
What are the implications of change for professional practice/identity?	Middle Managers Relationships	1,2, 3, 4, 7, 8
What role can MMs play in the management of change and culture of their department/organisation?	Change – 'Sorts' of change Change – Efficiency/Effectiveness Relationships Communication Middle Managers – Roles Middle Managers – Behaviours	1, 2, 3, 4, 8

Table 5.1: Research Questions, Categories and Hypotheses

In summary:

    i)   how change is managed and implemented?

Change is primarily implemented as top down and MMs have a role in interpreting and implementing deliberate strategy. Change is managed in different ways depended on the sort of change but there is a general feeling that the drivers for change are not always known and that some changes are 'change for change sake' and 'tinkering at the edges'. This relates to issues surrounding communication within the organisation and how change is approached.

    ii)   What sort of change?

The institution is a dynamic organism. Change within MU has been constant and takes many forms, is both proactive and reactive, and in response to external and internal factors.

iii) Have recent changes enabled University administration to become more economic, efficient and effective and how might success be measured?

Changes within administration have not, and will not, in and of themselves improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the University. Administration needs to understand the drivers for change, the internal and external factors affecting change, and the aims and objectives of their unit or the wider organisation. Success may be measured in a number of ways either by formal KPIs or other indicators or by informal methods e.g. observation and perception. There have been efficiency savings and administration works to streamline process and provision.

Moving the day-to-day operation of administration away from the day-to-day lives of AS may fuel distrust and views of administration *per se* have not changed dramatically.

iv) What role can MMs play in the management of change and culture of their department/organisation?

MMs can play a key strategic role both horizontally and vertically in the management of change and culture within their department, and this may have an impact on the wider organisation. Providing a steadying influence in times of constant change, they balance operational management on a day-to-day basis, managing the expectations of a number of stakeholders while translating and communicating change to their teams. Building trust relationships with the academic and professional staff they interact with enables MMs to function as 'an authority' in their areas of expertise. However, it is recognised that professional staff are not currently 'the main event' and there is little mention of them within the University Plan.

v) What are the implications of change for professional practice/identity?

In order to operate in the changing environment within which they work, MMs need to speak the 'right' language and have a knowledge and understanding of their organisation and the 'rules of engagement'. This enables them to become facilitators and influencers using negotiation and persuasion. However, their ability to have input into more strategic change within the organisational hierarchy may be limited by the nature of a professional bureaucracy and they may have limited authority unless this

is exercised on behalf of AMs. This does not mean that they cannot act for 'institutional benefit'.

However, it should be remembered that HEIs are not always rational places and that decisions taken may not be deemed rational by all sub-groups within an institution. While managerialist approaches may seem rational to MMs, collegiality remains the model of choice for AS and, by extension, for AMs. As 'third' space is identified, what is a rational model of management for those working within those spaces may take new forms.

University management is a profession in its infancy but there is a growing professionalization of the staff and this is being recognised by AMs who are working in partnership with APM staff in a number of areas. However, the extent to which this is 'third' space at the current time within MU is contested.

In the absence of formal programmes, MMs may need to make the most of/generate their own opportunities to gain knowledge and understanding.

Theoretical Framework, an Emerging Theory of Administrative Middle Management and Original Contribution to Knowledge

Finally in this chapter I would like to return to the theoretical framework suggested by the literature review and the theory of administrative middle management which emerged from the GT approach taken to this research study. The literature review was conducted primarily after data collection and analysis had been started and hypotheses had been seen in an emergent state. The Hypotheses which emerged from this GT approach were analysed and discussed in this chapter of the thesis and my theory of administrative middle management was built from these hypotheses which were then related back to the extant literature.

A number of the findings from my study were predictable from review of existing literature and could have been used as the theoretical framework for this work. By combining hypotheses from these existing theories a theory which could be applied to administrative middle management was identified.

A number of theories were introduced in chapter 2. The hypothesis of Clegg and McAuley (2005)proposed conceptualisation of the role of the academic MM as either 'Buffers', 'Self-interested', 'Agents of Senior Management', or 'Repositories of organisational knowledge', dependent on the organisational role played by the HEI, i.e. 'Corporate', 'Strong Culture', 'Arena', or 'Collegial' HEI. These conceptualisations of middle management could be related to the theory of middle management in an

industrial setting by Floyd and Wooldridge (1997) who considered MMs strategic influence and identified roles as 'Championing', 'Synthesizing', 'Facilitating', and 'Implementing', having upward and downward influence. Currie and Procter (2005) extended this theory into a public service, the NHS, and identified that strategic influence for MMs may be limited in a professional bureaucracy where there is a professional elite. This professional elite and the role of academic MMs was proposed by Hellawell and Hancock (2003) as being between hierarchical control and collegiality, as both interpreters and authors of strategy. Conceptualisation of the organisational role played by the HEI as a dependent variable as proposed by Clegg and McAuley (2005) was related to the earlier writings of Miller (1995), Birnbaum (1989), Mignot-Gérard (2003), and Deem (2007). In the 'corporate' role, institutions could be seen as operating as entrepreneurial institutions whereby they are seen as operating as businesses and managerial forms of management are predominant. In this form, a strong senior steering team guides the business with leadership and management delegated from the top down. In the 'strong culture' role, institutions could be seen as operating either in a rational way whereby the culture is that of the whole organisation or as cybernetic system where subunits exist but work in the interests of the organisation. In the 'arena' role, institutions could be seen as composites where a variety of aims and functions are pursued with groups competing with each other for resource. In the 'Collegial' role, collegiality is the dominant model.

In considering this theory of administrative middle management, the MMs within MU could be seen as taking on a number of roles which were composites of those predicted by individual theories. MU was identified as taking a more 'corporate' approach to management. The roles which were enacted by MMs within MU took many forms. Some of these roles involved operation in new 3rd space and therefore roles could be identified as 'bounded', 'blended', 'cross-boundary' or 'unbounded'. For MMs these roles even where newly created as responses to the challenges facing the institution, were primarily bounded or cross-boundary although it should be remembered that this was a small-scale study and not all middle management roles were represented. The hypotheses which emerged from my GT approach to this study could be related to the hybrid theory of administrative middle management which emerged from review of existing literature.

MMs within MU appear to enact their roles not just between hierarchical control and collegiality. I would suggest that these roles are enacted between the hierarchical control of their administrative SPMs, the collegiality of their academic colleagues, the managerialist approaches of senior AMs, and the political and other agendas of external stakeholders. Elements of organisational anarchy were identified where strategy was either deliberately subverted or ignored, with MMs being complicit and

united with academics within their Schools/Departments in this subversion whether consciously or unconsciously. Elements of a political model of management were identified from a dominant sub-group a powerful central core where administrators as a sub-group, were without power. Elements of managerialism were identified in the budgetary devolution and pursuit of an (initially) externally imposed quality and standards agenda and a diverse portfolio of areas of operation where administrators were seen as bureaucratic and suppressing academic freedom. Elements of collegiality were identified within and across groups in Schools and Departments and there was an acceptance in some areas that Faculty does include APM staff, this predictable from a consideration of 3rd space professionals.

Unpredictable from existing theories was the sheer complexity of the roles enacted by MMs, the different changes they were managing, the constant pace of change within the organisation from internal and external stakeholders, their acceptance of the culture and structure of MU and their position within it, and their predictions of the challenges they would face in the next two to three years (remembering that while MU had entered a period where focus was on economy and efficiency when this study began, the rise in UG tuition fees for Home and EU students was predicted but not known). Also unpredictable was that while the majority of MMs interviewed had career aspirations, these did not extent to senior university management in a PVC role.

The original contribution to knowledge that this research makes is to add to existing knowledge relating to administrative middle management within an English HEI putting into words their experiences of the changes which have taken place within HE in recent years from their perspectives allowing a consideration of implications for future conceptualisation of these roles. Knowledge is a human construct rather than an absolute and infallible truth. What emerges from this research is knowledge which can be used towards the formulation of a theory of administrative middle management in an English HEI. The findings from this study have provided empirical evidence to support existing theories relating to middle management within a new context, that of administrative, rather than academic and/or other public service or industrial middle management. This research extends these theories into the sphere of administrative middle management. The findings also provide empirical evidence supporting the existence of 3rd space although the pace of emergence at MU may be slow.

This chapter has provided an analysis and discussion of the findings reported in chapter four, together with an analysis of each of the proposed hypotheses detailing the process of how each was arrived at, the theory and data generated, how this relates to the literature and further details of the data supporting the hypothesis. I have interpreted and explained findings, distinguishing those which were predictable

had extant literature been consulted before data collection and analysis, and theory been applied to the research at an earlier stage, and those findings which were unpredictable. These findings have been discussed in relation to existing literature and summaries of findings relating to each of the themes identified in chapters two and four have been presented. The chapter ended with the drawing of conclusions and an explicit statement of the contribution to knowledge made by this work.

Chapter six will present a consideration of reflections on the undertaking of this study, the implications of the findings of this research for middle, senior and JMs together with recommendations for future work.

Chapter Six - Implications, Recommendations and Conclusions

Introduction

The reporting of findings, discussion and analysis in chapters four and five clearly identifies that the nature of university administration and management work is changing. From the evidence provided by an analysis of MU and the extant literature, the hypotheses proposed in chapter five appear to have credibility.

MMs are often operating in areas where there is a high risk to reputation and manage the day-to-day business whilst implementing change, often without necessarily understanding the drivers for change or being involved in the decision making at policy level. Often quick responses are needed and there is no time to consider a response or review changes. They may have limited input into more strategic change within the organisational hierarchy and limited authority unless on behalf of AMs working within a professional bureaucracy with a professional elite – AS, where legitimate power and authority may be contested by a professional academic elite in quasi-administrative roles e.g. PVCs, Chairs and members of committees, etc. and a newly professionalising administration.

The growing professionalism of administrative staff is being recognised by AMs in this professional elite, who are working in partnership in a number of areas and by their more junior academic colleagues who benefit from professional administrative support. This is also recognised by APM staff, increasingly taking greater responsibility for their own professional development. However, I consider there is still a long way to go before administrative staff will be fully involved in formal decision-making within MU. In the absence of formal tailored development programmes, MMs may need to generate opportunities to gain knowledge and understanding by for example, taking up secondment opportunities or committee servicing functions. MMs may also be able to generate their own opportunities through the networks of relationships they build in their day-to-day working lives.

Implications

The pace of constant change and feeling of not always being involved in decision-making, which affects working practices, teams, or areas of operation, may lead to feelings of frustration, alienation, stress and/or depression. This is evidenced in interviews by explicit reference to those feelings or observation of negative responses and reactions. This constant pace of change to adapt to the changing environment

and challenges faced may not always be viewed as an opportunity although for some it clearly is.

Failure to communicate change, the drivers for change, and the goals and objectives of the institution further disenfranchises those who would wish to be involved in decision-making and play a positive role in change and the success of the organisation. Moving PS away from the day-to-day lives of academics and other staff makes working relationships more difficult and more formal. The same can be said of a perceived remoteness of the university senior management team and decision-making bodies which may mean that change moves at a slower pace than it might if collaboration and consultation is undertaken with staff at other levels.

The picture is not all gloomy. This research has shown that MMs have an important role to play as key strategic actors if they are allowed to participate, both close to the day-to-day operation and with access to senior management. If this group are able to acquire and develop appropriate behaviours and skills they have an important role to play in maintaining stability and communicating strategy and implementing policy in times of constant change. The significance and uniqueness of position within the organisation of middle management roles needs to be recognised, both by the MMs themselves and their more senior colleagues, in order for this valuable resource with its network of relationships and experience of negotiating and influencing operational and strategic change to be more fully utilized.

In terms of succession planning, an awareness of the institution, its history, and the roles which can be played may be significant and this group, if developed and retained, may eventually be promoted to more senior roles. However, it should also be noted that a prior history may be a barrier in some roles if the applicant demonstrates that they are unable to think objectively when faced with new challenges. As administration becomes more professionalized, the performance of individuals builds credibility and trust and a professional identity. This does not necessarily need to come from academic credentials but academic qualifications may help with understandings of the uniqueness of the HE sector.

Recommendations

For those readers outside of MU, owing to the semi-autonomous nature of UK HEIs and the limitations of this work outlined below, generalisation from this small-scale research may not be possible, other than as hypotheses or 'fuzzy' generalisations (Bassey, 1999) although it is hoped that these may lead to application of these hypotheses in other HEIs. Following are recommendations in relation to further work

which I believe is needed in this area. Based on the findings from this research, I go on to make initial recommendations for MMs, SPMs and JMs within MU.

Further work is needed to identify whether the findings from MU are relatable across the HE sector and whether the theory proposed is supported by other research on the nature of administrative middle management at an English HEI.

Future work should include more research into the daily lives of MMs and their experiences to provide fuller conceptualisation of their roles. Further work could also investigate more fully the strategic input into change by MMs within HEIs as professional bureaucracies and the causal effects of a professional elite also facing new challenges and ways of working. Further work should also be undertaken to investigate whether academic members of staff recognise the picture of university administration which emerges from this research and the impact they feel that changes in the nature of university administration have on their own roles as attitudes change.

For MMs within MU, it is recommended that they actively seek out opportunities to gain the skills and professional behaviours identified as key to their roles and to lead by example, engaging fully with the notion of working for the University. As discussed in chapter 5, the notion of what is 'working for the University' may be contested and care should be taken when declaring that as one is 'working for the University', one is working for the benefit of the University. MMs should also look for and take opportunities to develop potential in their junior staff recognising that opportunities often are only open when a line-manager provides support and actively shows that they are willing to invest time in acting as a mentor or guide. It is important that MMs give time for staff development as the workload continues to grow and new ways of thinking and working are required to meet the challenges faced. JMs in early career are encouraged to embrace opportunities and to seek a broad awareness and understanding of the wider HE sector and their institution.

Both Middle and JMs also need to be aware that, while there is a difference between career development and career progression, when seeking out opportunities, career development can be equally as important as career progression when seeking to gain experience which will help an individual to fulfil future career aspirations. The importance of networking and network relationships cannot be underestimated. While in-house development courses may only teach about the institution in which they are taking place, it is important to speak the right language in order to be effective. However, as identified in chapter five, what counts as the 'right' language can be contested and indeed, anecdotal evidence has shown a dislike for 'management speak' by some groups within MU. Language and terminology can also be used as a way of

excluding individuals from a group or as a way of demonstrating shared understandings.

Professional discourses are needed to allow MMs and others to express their development needs to those who can bring influence to bear on their future careers e.g. line managers, mentors, HR, while recognising that patronage may be an out-moded route to progression. '[T]here is less management development in universities than most other UK organisations, large or small, in the private or the public sectors' (Bone and Bourner, 1998:295). While, this picture is changing and there are courses which can be undertaken in-house as part of staff development MU does not currently have an official training programme or an official programme of offering secondments for professional staff to build skills and experience. For recent MU graduates MU offers a Graduate Training Programme but graduates from other institutions already working within the organisation are unable to apply. Such programmes would benefit the institution greatly and represent a beneficial investment in talent.

Recommendations for senior management include a consideration of a top down management style which may have significant impact on the institution. Whilst accepting the need for change, and that the institution needs to become more efficient to successfully meet the challenges it faces, it is felt, particularly by some AS, that there is an increase in managerialist approaches. This presents as a sense that something important i.e. recognition and acceptance of diversity, is being lost in efficiency moves which introduce uniformity of provision and rigidity. This may result in engagement and creativity being lost. Formal and informal communication channels within the institution should be considered. Consideration should also be given to the resource which MMs represent. More clear articulation of senior management thinking, where appropriate, will enable MMs to be more effective in their roles.

Evaluation

The objectives of this research were set out in chapter one and were:

- To look at an area of practice not previously subject to extensive study, the changing nature of a UK university from the perspective of APM staff, investigating and seeking an understanding of the experiences of MMs within the context of a changing environment within the University;

- To establish the implications of the findings for the professional practice of MMs and make recommendations for future research and practice;

- To contribute to knowledge relating to the theory and practice of MMs' professional lives;

- To develop my own understanding of the HEI sector, my own organisation, and my place within it, and to enhance my own practice as a MM.

In terms of my first objective, this research began with a research *issue*:

How has restructuring administration improved the efficiency and effectiveness of the University. What are the implications of restructuring for MMs?

and a research *hypothesis* of administrative middle management, and implications for MMs, emerged.

This was tested for validity by reference to extant literature and data generated through a GT approach to theory-building. This research therefore builds upon existing theory and literature by adding to knowledge in this under-researched area.

In terms of my second objective *to establish the implications of the findings for the professional practice of MMs and make recommendations for future research and practice*, an analysis of the research findings and a return to the extant literature allowed me to consider implications and make recommendations for future research and practice

My third objective *to contribute to knowledge relating to the theory and practice of MMs professional lives* is related to my second objective. The opportunity to interview both MMs, and other professional and academic staff within my institution has enabled me to look at experiences in a changing environment and to contribute to knowledge in this under-researched area.

In terms of my final objective *to develop my own understanding of the HEI sector, my own organisation and my place within and to enhance my own practice as a MM*, this research has given me an opportunity to both step outside of my professional role within my organisation, to look at changes in the wider HEI sector and within my organisation and to use this opportunity to understand my own role as a MM and to enhance my own practice.

Strengths and Limitations of the Research Design

The strengths of the research design are in the use of an approach which facilitated the study of an underdeveloped area of HE research in depth and breadth at a particular point in time. The limitations of the research relate to the small-scale nature of the research and the small number of participants and the unrepresentative nature of the opportunity sample relative to the number of PS and AS employed at MU.

The reliability of the findings from this work comes from triangulation of findings with that of other participants, observation and documentary evidence available using the constant comparison method.

Validity for this work comes from the generation of hypotheses from data, and findings have been discussed with others both within and outside of MU in informal settings. Those outside the institution informally describe similar experiences and those within MU have indicated that they find the hypotheses credible. These findings were then related back to extant literature. The findings should be treated with care as they may be skewed by the lack of opportunity to collect unbiased, independent views from third parties. The work was qualitative and the bulk of data collected was based on information from others or from published documentation which was written for an external audience. All of the participants were involved in change processes within the University to a greater or lesser degree. It is recognised that participant views may be affected by individual reactions to change although this was mitigated by the number of similar responses.

Conclusions

While individual pieces of qualitative research may be of interest only to the researcher initially, other researchers may seek to explore more generalizable phenomena by reviewing a number of cases raised by such individual researchers. Whilst it may be true that the original question which triggers a piece of research may only be of interest to the researcher, if the research has faced tests of validity, credibility and relevance then while the main concern of the researcher may have been to produce a valid account of a situation, to understand and reflect on their own practice, conclusions and prescriptions may have something to say for other practitioners and researchers.

The nature of qualitative research with its focus on seeking to explain what is going on in an uncertain world, inhabited by humans who exhibit different behaviours and judge the world through their own frameworks, may provide insights not achievable through

quantitative research alone. This research enabled me to undertake an in depth study of my own organisation in relation to the changing face of university administration from the perspectives of APM staff.

It is recognised that generalization from this research may be limited. However, it is hoped that the findings have presented a unique example of a particular context providing analysis of sufficient data to provide insights enabling findings and generated theory to be relatable elsewhere.

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Appendices

Appendix I – University Management Structure (2010)

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Vice-Chancellor

Registrar
- Academic Administration
- Committee Services
- Planning & MI
- Communications & Marketing
- Recruitment & Admissions
- Widening Participation
- Student Administration
- Student Support Services
- Physical Recreation
- Governance Support

Chief Financial Officer
- Finance
- Research Innovation Services
- Procurement
- Internal Audit
- Safety
- Superannuation

Pro-Vice-Chancellors

Deans of Faculties & of Graduate School

Heads of Schools

Chief Estates & Facilities Officer
- Estate Office
- Nottingham Hospitality

Chief Information Officer
- Customer Services
- IT Systems
- Research & Learning Resources

Development Office

International Office

Human Resources
Staff & Educational Development Unit
Lakeside
Active Communities

Appendix II – University Committee Structure (2010)

University Committee Structure organizational chart:

- COMMITTEES 2009-10 (updated March 2010)

Senate

- Research & Knowledge Transfer Board
- Management Board **
  - Environment Committee
  - Space Management Committee
  - Careers & Employability Forum
  - Military Education Committee
  - Postgraduate Strategy Committee
  - Promotions Committee
  - Research Ethics Committee
  - Senate Disciplinary Committee
- Teaching & Learning Board
  - Academic Boards
    - Humanities: Arts, Social Sciences, Education
    - Science & Engineering
    - Medicine & Health Sciences
  - Academic Appeals Committee
  - Quality & Standards Committee
  - Transnational Education Committee
- Equality & Diversity Committee **
  - Staff Equality & Diversity Advisory Group
  - Student Equality & Diversity Advisory Group

** also reports to Council

Honorary Degrees Sifting Committee also reports to Senate as required

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Council

Committee for Special Appointments †

Consultative Committee for Support Staff †

Joint Consultative Committee (UCU) †

Salary Review Committees

Safety Committee
- Statutory Safety Committee

Equality & Diversity Committee **
- Staff Equality & Diversity Advisory Group
- Student Equality & Diversity Advisory Group

Finance Committee

Management Board **
- Environment Committee
- Space Management Committee
- Careers & Employability Forum
- Military Education Committee

Strategy & Planning Committee
- Information Services Strategy Board

Remuneration Committee

Nominations Committee

Honorary Degrees Sifting Committee

Audit Committee

† reports to Council when appropriate
** also reports to Senate

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Administrative, Professional &

Managerial

Job Family

Outline

Roles in this family are engaged in the provision of a range of services in support of the staff, students, systems and resources of the University and of the wider public. The work may involve administrative support, specialist advice, data and information management, project management, or the development and implementation of systems or policy; contacts with internal and external customers, and with external suppliers, are a common feature. All roles require an understanding of the University's systems, processes and procedures. The higher levels often combine professional qualification, managerial experience and a substantial impact on the running and resources of the institution.

Introduction to the use of the Job Family

This job family is a tool of job classification that will be used by a trained job matching panel to match role profile forms to an appropriate level. Roles will be matched into a level of the job family based on a "best fit" approach. The job matching panel will look at the role profile form and compare it with the levels of the job family to determine which level of work activities and skills most closely matches the individual role profile form. Once all the views of the panel members on the "best fit" to the job family have been explored (views must be justified with evidence from the role profile form and supporting information from school/department representatives), the panel must come to a consensus decision on level. If, after careful consideration, a consensus cannot be reached, the role will be referred to a Review panel.

It should therefore be noted that the representative work activities for each level of the job family are generic examples, they are intended to be illustrative not exclusive, and may not describe all of the details specific to your individual role. The activities are not intended to be a comprehensive list, each of which has to be demonstrated, rather guidance to the job matching panel on the level and range of activities undertaken at a particular level of work.

Summary of the Level Descriptors

Level 1
Roles at this level will be engaged in performing a clearly defined range of standard tasks within established routines and procedures. They will have an understanding of the systems and procedures, which directly impact on their own work, and be supervised or work closely with colleagues they can refer to. They will be responding to routine queries/issues/circumstances, and referring any unusual or non-routine situations to other team members. The work is typically to short term deadlines and will require arranging tasks within a daily routine to provide a courteous and effective service to others.

Level 2
Roles at this level will work within established procedures with minimum day-to-day supervision, to provide a range of support services to an agreed quality standard or specification. They will require a thorough understanding of relevant systems/processes or of the working environment, gained through vocational qualification with work experience, or relevant work experience over some years. Role holders will organise their own day-to-day work to meet clear objectives and in some cases may be responsible for the allocation and scheduling of work to others. They will typically have specific responsibility for a clearly defined section or sub-section of work and will be expected to deal with less routine queries/issues/requests, referring conflicts or more complex situations to the relevant person. Independence and initiative will be required to react to changing priorities and work circumstances, with scope to make decisions within clear parameters.

Level 3
Roles at this level will require knowledge of the general principles and standard practices in a technical, financial, professional or similar field and/or require an understanding of the systems, policies, or processes of the University relevant to their section of work. Knowledge will have been gained through formal qualification/acquisition of a certificate and/or considerable relevant work experience. Work will either demand the application of specialist knowledge, or have a mainly planning and co-ordination content and/or be of a supervisory nature. A consistently high degree of personal responsibility and initiative will be required to respond independently to queries and use judgement to deal with daily unforeseen problems and circumstances, with limited guidance. This may also include responding to complaints and escalated issues, and resolving problems involving other schools/departments or external contacts. Role holders will plan and organise their own work activities and if applicable that of a team of people, with discretion to determine and change priorities as required. They will typically set and monitor standards within their own work area, with scope for improving operational effectiveness and quality service through the application of process improvements.

Level 4
Roles at this level will be providing advice and support to schools/departments/work units based upon a combination of practical and theoretical knowledge of a technical, professional or specialised field and/or will be involved in the deployment of resources, including people, for a sub-section of a school/department. Knowledge will typically have been gained through a professional/part professional or academic qualification with work experience, or through a proven track record of relevant work experience. Role holders will be required to receive, understand and convey information, which needs interpretation, analysis and careful explanation. Working within established policy and practices, analysis and judgement will be used to identify the best solution to differing problems and issues, offering recommendations for managing more complex situations. Role holders will be expected to develop operational procedures and make a contribution to school/department policy. There will be a need for liaison and the co-ordination of work activities across a number of sub-sections of a school/department and with external bodies as appropriate.

Level 5
Roles at this level will be providing specialist, professional or technical advice, direction and input across a range of activities and/or be responsible for managing a diverse team(s) and resources in delivering a service or in project activity. They will require a professional

qualification with work experience or specialised/broad knowledge gained through considerable experience in a series of progressively more complex roles. Work will involve using the principles and concepts of their professional field to make decisions, to influence others' thinking and to negotiate with them to achieve an outcome. Role holders will typically be required to resolve problems where the optimal solution may not be immediately apparent and there is a mass of information or diverse, partial and conflicting data, with a range of potential options available. Significant evaluation and independent thought is therefore required to resolve ambiguity and work within grey areas. Wide discretion is permitted provided that activities are broadly consistent with operational policies and precedents within their function. Role holders will be expected to influence policy through advising on the impact of policy change and implementation in their specific area(s) of work. There will be a requirement for role-holders to assess the impact of their work across a school/department, with associated functions and within the broader objectives of the University.

Level 6
Roles at this level will be professional specialists with high-level expertise, exercising within their particular functional area/section a substantial degree of independent professional responsibility and discretion, including the development and implementation of administrative/technical/professional policies and processes. Role holders will typically lead and manage a functional area/section or be a senior individual expert/practitioner with responsibility for managing major projects and initiatives to ensure delivery/improvement of a service. Often roles at this level will have a deputising role for the most senior manger of the area of activity. They will be expected to resolve problems where there is a lack of precedent, requiring innovation and creative thought to develop appropriate options. They will be responsible for setting quality and professional standards and managing service delivery against this, and will have significant influence upon the structure and promotion of their area of activity. Role holders will develop and implement operational plans, which are likely to have a time horizon of more than one year and will typically involve people from several teams. They will also contribute to the longer-term plans for the work area to fit with broader functional and the University strategy.

Level 7
Roles at this level will be the most senior staff in their area of responsibility and will direct a team of managers and/or highly qualified professionals across a major area of activity of strategic importance to the University. They will lead the development, delivery and evaluation of the services provided by their areas of activity. They will be responsible for developing and delivering the strategic plans for their area of activity at the highest level and will be accountable for ensuring that the University meets both internal and external requirements and benefits appropriately from "state of the art" developments in their field of activity. They will initiate and establish policy through appropriate consultation and negotiation, and advise Management Group and other senior colleagues throughout the University. They will influence and shape the available resources as appropriate to meet current and future needs of the University and will have a significant impact on the direction, strategy, objectives and results of the University.

Roles at this level will be engaged in performing a clearly defined range of standard tasks within established routines and procedures. They will have an understanding of the systems and procedures, which directly impact on their own work, and be supervised or work closely with colleagues they can refer to. They will be responding to routine queries/issues/circumstances, and referring any unusual or non-routine situations to other team members. The work is typically to short term deadlines and will require arranging tasks within a daily routine to provide a courteous and effective service to others.

REPRESENTATIVE WORK ACTIVITIES

Analysis, Reporting & Documentation
- Reproduce and prepare clearly defined documents/presentations typically using standard formats or templates.
- Carry out routine record keeping, filing and data entry to ensure accurate records are maintained.
- Run automated or routine reports to support established school/departmental/work unit information requirements.
- Check information/figures against source data and report any anomalies (e.g. balancing money in cash register against till roll).

Customer Service/Support
- Receive and respond to everyday enquiries from/to customers, escalating requests outside their knowledge base to appropriate person/area.
- Solve problems that recur on a regular, routine basis, drawing upon pre-prepared materials or a simple choice of learned solutions/responses for the answers.
- Carry out routine database searches to respond to customer queries.
- Update database and spreadsheets and carry out standard calculations.
- Provide fundamental administrative and/or customer support activities to contribute to the smooth operation of a work unit.

Planning & Organising
- Make clearly defined arrangements and bookings and be involved in the preparation of materials to assist in the effective organisation of internal and external activities.
- Arrange allocated tasks within daily routine to ensure work is completed to time and appropriate standard.
- Follow set ordering procedures to ensure adequate supplies/resources are available (within pre-determined limits) to meet work requirements.
- Process routine forms (e.g. invoices, application forms) following set procedures.

Liaison
- Receive visitors and provide/request information from internal and external contacts in a courteous and correct manner.

Continuous Improvement
- Suggest improvements to current working methods.
- Work with manager and more experienced colleagues to discover and develop abilities and competence through learning and exposure to a range of tasks.

People Management
- Show basic sensitivity and consideration to other people's needs and feelings.
- Co-operate with other colleagues in a team/work unit to contribute to the achievement of work objectives.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & EXPERIENCE - LEVEL 1
ROLES AT THIS LEVEL WILL TYPICALLY REQUIRE

EITHER
- Good standard of education evidenced by GCSEs or equivalent, plus previous work experience.

OR
- Previous work experience in a relevant role/relevant life experience reinforced by work experience.

In both cases may include learning gained from short courses and/or formal training.

PLUS

- Working knowledge of Microsoft Office, e-mail and the web.

- Written and verbal communication skills.

- Numeracy and literacy.

- Awareness of the basic principles or standardised work routines of the field of work.

- Proven ability to work effectively and efficiently both when alone and in a team.

Where relevant

- Proficient typing/word processing/secretarial skills
- Experience of operating common office equipment.
- Customer service experience.

Roles at this level will work within established procedures with minimum day-to-day supervision, to provide a range of support services to an agreed quality standard or specification. They will require a thorough understanding of relevant systems/processes or of the working environment, gained through vocational qualification with work experience, or relevant work experience over some years. Role holders will organise their own day-to-day work to meet clear objectives and in some cases may be responsible for the allocation and scheduling of work to others. They will typically have specific responsibility for a clearly defined section or sub-section of work and will be expected to deal with less routine queries/issues/requests, referring conflicts or more complex situations to the relevant person. Independence and initiative will be required to react to changing priorities and work circumstances, with scope to make decisions within clear parameters.

REPRESENTATIVE WORK ACTIVITIES

Analysis, Reporting & Documentation
- Create documents/presentations from a brief or as work requires, which may involve employing a range of language/terminology over and above that found in everyday usage.
- Develop and maintain relevant databases, spreadsheets and filing systems to ensure accurate, up to date, information is accessible to those that require it.
- Prepare non-standard documentation that may require the use of advanced word processing skills and/or integration of a range of software applications.
- Gather and manipulate routine data so that others can interpret it or incorporate it into their own work.
- Monitor trends and anomalies within source data, reporting findings accurately and appropriately.
- Perform confidential typing, filing or manipulation of confidential data, exercising due care and attention to the transfer and/or storage of such information.

Customer/Service Support
- Receive and respond to enquiries from/to customers, including more complex queries, judging when to forward on to or involve others.
- Use and understand common systems relevant to area of work to enable manipulation of information and initial investigation of customer queries/problems.
- Recognise/understand impact of incidents arising and raise issues of concern where necessary to ensure appropriate resolution of customer enquires/issues.
- Respond to general issues/problems and administrative matters in manager's absence.
- Demonstrate or explain the services available and/or the use of facilities to customers.

Planning & Organising
- Plan and prioritise own work activities, responding to manager's/school/departmental/work unit requirements, in addition to own responsibilities.
- Arrange and/or support internal and external activities/events, collating and recording relevant information/documentation as requested.
- Monitor and take responsibility for small-scale resources/cash, following established procedures.

Liaison
- Develop a network of contacts throughout own area, identifying who key individuals are, to support own work activities.
- Communicate with service users and/or external contacts usually through established/routine connections (e.g. regular suppliers/contractors) as own section of work requires.

Continuous Improvement
- Relay customer feedback and comments and contribute to proposals for improvements to current working methods.
- Keep skills up to date and develop competence through learning from colleagues and/or gaining experience of a range of work.

People Management
Either
- Allocate and prioritise the work/tasks of others, ensuring they are completed correctly and to schedule, and providing feedback when necessary.
- Provide guidance and support to junior colleagues through informal (on-the-job) training/coaching in own area.
And/Or
- Show sensitivity and consideration to other people's customer needs and feelings, which may

include dealing with signs of obvious distress (e.g. individual in tears).
- Co-operate with and offer mutual support to colleagues in a team/work unit, adopting a flexible approach to delivering work objectives.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & EXPERIENCE – LEVEL 2
ROLES AT THIS LEVEL WILL TYPICALLY REQUIRE

EITHER
- Vocational qualifications (NVQ 2-3, City & Guild) or equivalent, plus some experience in a relevant role.

OR
- Considerable work experience in a relevant role/relevant life experience reinforced by work experience.

PLUS

- Proficient in Microsoft Office, e-mail and web (may include web site authoring and maintenance).

- Working knowledge of relevant systems, equipment and procedures to enable investigation of issues/problems.

- Experience of assessing and responding to non-routine work/situations.

- Appreciation of the standards set for the conduct and output of the role.

- Written and verbal communication skills and interpersonal skills.

- Familiarity with the work of the school/department/work unit and of the University.

- Awareness of relevant procedures and legal requirements.

Where relevant

- Advanced typing/secretarial skills - audio/shorthand.
- Competent in routine technical/systems support activities.

Roles at this level will require knowledge of the general principles and standard practices in a technical, financial, professional or similar field and/or require an understanding of the systems, policies, or processes of the University relevant to their section of work. Knowledge will have been gained through formal qualification/acquisition of a certificate and/or considerable relevant work experience. Work will either demand the application of specialist knowledge, or have a mainly planning and co-ordination content and/or be of a supervisory nature. A consistently high degree of personal responsibility and initiative will be required to respond independently to queries and use judgement to deal with daily unforeseen problems and circumstances, with limited guidance. This may also include responding to complaints and escalated issues, and resolving problems involving other schools/departments or external contacts. Role holders will plan and organise their own work activities and if applicable that of a team of people, with discretion to determine and change priorities as required. They will typically set and monitor standards within their own work area, with scope for improving operational effectiveness and quality service through the application of process improvements.

REPRESENTATIVE WORK ACTIVITIES

Analysis, Reporting & Documentation
- Research, collate, organise and edit material for inclusion in reports/documents.
- Identify gaps or shortfalls in information and search for sources of information to fill these.
- Analyse data/statistics, interpreting and reporting patterns and trends and highlighting and prioritising any issues for further investigation to support informed decision making.

Customer/Service Support
- Provide advice to peers and customers to respond and independently resolve a range of standard and unforeseen issues, within pre-determined operational limits.
- Act as an effective deputy in the absence of manager(s), with discretion to make decisions with a short term impact to provide immediate support/problem resolution.
- Advise and/or train service users on specific aspects within own section of work such as design/preparation/use of existing systems, services or processes.
- Diagnose and rectify faults/problems with systems and/or procedures within own area.

Planning & Organising
- Plan and organise own/team activities to ensure that deadlines/customer expectations are met.
- Participate in or co-ordinate work unit based projects or development activities.
- Make recommendations about the use of equipment, facilities, space and physical resources, within defined work area.
- Ensure maintenance of current and future stock requirements for own work area within defined limits/devolved budget responsibility.
- Input into the annual resource planning process to ensure that resource requirements of own work area are recognised.

Liaison
- Communicate and build working relationships with key contacts from other school/departmental/work units as well as external bodies, to support own work activities.
- Advise on pricing and purchasing of equipment/software/materials, following liaison with suppliers.
- Attend meetings, as requested by manager, to support school/departmental/work unit activities and to report back on main discussion points.

Continuous Improvement
- Advise on and propose changes in procedures, plans, priorities and office systems to improve operational efficiency and quality of service in own work area.
- Keep skills up to date and develop depth or breadth of knowledge in a particular area through learning from more senior/experienced colleagues, exposure to a range of activities, and/or formal training/professional qualification.

People Management
Either
- Oversee the day-to-day running of a work area, allocating resources, scheduling work and providing support, advice and encouragement to staff in order to ensure work objectives are met.
- Select or play a significant part in the selection of staff and training of new staff for work area.
- Act as first point of contact for day-to-day staff welfare issues (e.g. sickness), initiating appropriate action by involving or referring to the relevant person.
And/Or
- Show sensitivity and consideration to other people's customer needs and feelings, which may include dealing with signs of obvious distress (e.g. individual in tears).
- Advise and gain the support of other people (e.g. staff, students, contractors, external agents), where there is no line management responsibility, in order to contribute to the delivery of

services/project objectives.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & EXPERIENCE - LEVEL 3
ROLES AT THIS LEVEL WILL TYPICALLY REQUIRE

EITHER
- HNC or HND in a relevant subject, or equivalent qualifications/certification, plus considerable experience in a relevant role(s).

OR
- Broad substantial relevant experience demonstrating general knowledge of a technical, financial or professional practice and development through involvement in a series of progressively more demanding, relevant work.

PLUS

- Experience of working with relevant specialised equipment, software, hardware or procedures.

- Experience of working/responding independently and dealing with unforeseen problems and circumstances

- Comprehensive knowledge of the work practices, processes and procedures relevant to the role.

- Operating knowledge of services/systems/processes in own area that would be required to provide first line advice and guidance, typically of a more technical/specialised nature, to customers.

- Analysis & problem solving capability.

- Well developed written and verbal communication skills and interpersonal skills.

- Planning and organisational skills, particularly workflow management.

- Clear understanding of the standards and regulations set for the conduct and output for the role.

- Working knowledge of the activities of other areas of the University relevant to the school/department/work unit.

Where relevant

- First line supervisory skills – scheduling, monitoring and reviewing work by others.
- Proven experience in area of technical specialism (e.g. programming).

Roles at this level will be providing advice and support to schools/departments/work units based upon a combination of practical and theoretical knowledge of a technical, professional or specialised field and/or will be involved in the deployment of resources, including people, for a sub-section of a school/department. Knowledge will typically have been gained through a professional/part professional or academic qualification with work experience, or through a proven track record of relevant work experience. Role holders will be required to receive, understand and convey information, which needs interpretation, analysis and careful explanation. Working within established policy and practices, analysis and judgement will be used to identify the best solution to differing problems and issues, offering recommendations for managing more complex situations. Role holders will be expected to develop operational procedures and make a contribution to school/department policy. There will be a need for liaison and the co-ordination of work activities across a number of sub-sections of a school/department and with external bodies as appropriate.

REPRESENTATIVE WORK ACTIVITIES

Analysis & Reporting
- Analyse and interpret management data and information and assist in the production of management reports.
- Supply data and information to other schools/departments/work units or external agencies (e.g. funding councils) as required.
- Identify an appropriate existing method of analysis or investigation according to the data and objectives of the work.
- Monitor and maintain records/reports to meet both internal and external (e.g. legislative or national) requirements.
- Manage the use of data and information and identify and assess the information and data needs of the role/ others.

Customer/Service Support
- Provide specialist/professional advice and recommendations within a policy framework/professional guidelines to support informed decision making, learning, teaching and/or research activities.
- Explain and develop an understanding of technical/legal/regulatory/procedural information or other complex issues/solutions to customers.
- Design and/or deliver a variety of service support mechanisms (e.g. training, training/promotional materials, system modifications) to maximise service quality, efficiency and continuity.

Planning & Organising
- Lead assigned school/departmental/work unit projects, usually of a short term nature, or contributes to larger University wide projects as part of a project team, to improve service provision.
- Develop and determine appropriate team or individual workflow and activity scheduling in order to meet targets and/or turnaround times.
- Oversee resources and make recommendations about the allocation and use of resources within defined sub-section/work area.
- Monitor a delegated budget under the direction of more senior role holders.
- Contribute to the school/department/work unit and make recommendations about future resource requirements.

Liaison
- Present own/teams work activities to internal or external meetings as required to ensure that school/departmental/work unit issues are appropriately represented.
- Liaise, communicate and build working relationships across a number of sub-sections of schools/departments/work units and with external contacts and contractors as appropriate.

Continuous Improvement
- Identify and make recommendations for improvements (e.g. in policies and procedures) to contribute to the continuous operational improvement of own school/department/work unit.
- Develop specialist/technical/professional/vocational capability and expertise through professional study and/or practical application and experience.

People Management
Either
- Manage a team of colleagues operating within a sub-section of a department/school, recruiting, monitoring and supporting the development of team members to ensure that individual contributions are maximised.
- Ensure work of team is carried out and performed to the required standard, taking necessary follow-up measures as required.
- Manage common staff welfare issues (e.g. disciplinary or other performance issues) that are covered by documented procedures, recognising when the matter should be referred to someone else or advice on how to respond obtained.
And/Or
- Give formal and particular attention to the well being of others in terms of, for example, formal counselling or undertaking risk assessments.
- Advise and gain the support of others (e.g. staff, contractors, external agents) in order to ensure the delivery of services/project objectives, where there is no line management responsibility.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & EXPERIENCE - LEVEL 4

ROLES AT THIS LEVEL WILL TYPICALLY REQUIRE

EITHER
- Degree qualified in relevant subject/relevant formal training, plus some hands on experience in a similar or related role(s).

OR
- Proven track record of extensive relevant work experience, demonstrating practical and theoretical knowledge of a specific/specialised field of work.

PLUS

- Experience of planning and progressing a series of work within general guidelines, using initiative and judgement without recourse to seniors.

- Thorough knowledge and understanding of the work practices, processes and procedures relevant to the role, which may include broader sector/commercial awareness.

- Detailed operational knowledge of systems relevant to own field of work in terms of functionality and capability and/or detailed knowledge of own service area and products/services available.

- Clear understanding of the regulations and codes of practice set for the conduct and output of the role.

- Proven analytical and problem solving capability.

- Proven communication, presentation and interpersonal skills.

- Proven planning and organising skills.

- Working knowledge of the work and activities of other areas of the University relevant to their school/department/work unit.

- Growing awareness of developments in higher education and external professional environment that impact on the role.

Where relevant

- Management skills – coaching, motivation, managing performance.
- Financial training sufficient to manage budgets.
- Advanced technical expertise in area(s) of IT specialism.

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Roles at this level will be providing specialist, professional or technical advice, direction and input across a range of activities and/or be responsible for managing a diverse team(s) and resources in delivering a service or in project activity. They will require a professional qualification with work experience or specialised/broad knowledge gained through considerable experience in a series of progressively more complex roles. Work will involve using the principles and concepts of their professional field to make decisions, to influence others' thinking and to negotiate with them to achieve an outcome. Role holders will typically be required to resolve problems where the optimal solution may not be immediately apparent and there is a mass of information or diverse, partial and conflicting data, with a range of potential options available. Significant evaluation and independent thought is therefore required to resolve ambiguity and work within grey areas. Wide discretion is permitted provided that activities are broadly consistent with operational policies and precedents within their function. Role holders will be expected to influence policy through advising on the impact of policy change and implementation in their specific area(s) of work. There will be a requirement for role-holders to assess the impact of their work across a school/department, with associated functions and within the broader objectives of the University.

REPRESENTATIVE WORK ACTIVITIES

Analysis & Reporting
- Analyse and interpret data using a range of techniques; identifying trends, testing solutions, sourcing additional related information where appropriate, and reporting on progress through briefings or formal reports.
- Apply initiative to devise varied solutions, approaching problems from different perspectives and "thinking outside the box."
- Develop and manage information systems for a school/department/work unit, making recommendations for improvements in data and information provision (e.g. new hardware and software provision).

Customer/Service Support
- Provide and disseminate specialist/technical advice on issues relating to the service, interpreting or assessing customer needs and exercising judgement to make decisions when solutions are not obvious.
- Interpret policy, legislation, regulations and national codes of practice, advising on the implications of non-compliance, responding to and applying any necessary changes in area of work.
- Identify additional service/system requirements or shortfalls and co-ordinate and/or design the delivery of innovative solutions to maximise service quality, efficiency and continuity.
- Ensure professional and quality service standards are maintained and applied within own area of activity.
- Design and deliver a series of training sessions/workshops within a brief to a sizeable, mixed interest groups or groups with diverse levels of understanding of the subject matter; may have responsibility for a programme of skills based training.

Planning & Organising
- Plan and organise individual or team activity with an appreciation of longer term issues, ensuring plans complement and feed into the broader school/department operational plans.
- Project manage activities to facilitate major service/operational changes of typically a school/departmental/section impact.
- Manage resources/budgets within defined project/area of work, preparing annual budget statements and forecasts and sharing with others decision making that impacts on the level of allocation or efficiency of the resources of the school/department.

Liaison
- Represent and promote the section/service and/or provide specialist input at both internal and external meetings/events, influencing differing opinions and handling questions/objections as required, to ensure that departmental/school/work unit issues are appropriately represented.
- Consult and co-operate with other areas of the University to develop new/improved processes and supporting systems.
- Network with colleagues in other higher education institutions and other sectors to share best practice and facilitate future exchange of information.

Continuous Improvement
- Revise or develop procedure and policy for approval and contribute to their successful implementation in order to deliver appropriate benefits and ensure external (e.g. regulatory or national codes of practice) requirements are met.
- Improve specialist/technical/professional/vocational capability and expertise through work experience and/or professional qualification.

People Management
Either
- Manage a diverse team(s) with responsibility for the deployment, recruitment, development and performance management of staff to ensure the successful delivery of an administrative/professional/technological/operational service.
- Monitor performance and take appropriate corrective action to ensure performance standards are consistently met.
- Manage common staff welfare issues (e.g. disciplinary or other performance issues) that are covered by documented procedures, recognising when the matter should be referred to someone else or advice on how to respond obtained.
And/Or
- Give formal and particular attention to the well being of others in terms of, for example, formal counselling or undertaking risk assessments.
- Advise and gain the support of others (e.g. staff, contractors, external agents) in order to ensure the delivery of services/project objectives, where there is no line management responsibility, but the consequences of the management of people may have a bearing outside of the confines of the role.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & EXPERIENCE - LEVEL 5

ROLES AT THIS LEVEL WILL TYPICALLY REQUIRE

EITHER
- Professionally qualified/relevant degree, plus significant hands-on experience in similar or related roles.
OR
- Proven track record of relevant extensive work experience, demonstrating deep, specialised and or broad knowledge of a field of work gained through experience in a series of progressively more complex roles.

PLUS
- Experience of managing the activities of self and/or others.

- Project and change management skills.

- Authoritative knowledge of the work practices, processes and procedures relevant to the role, including broader sector/commercial awareness.

- Detailed knowledge and understanding of systems/services in own area and their varied applications.

- Sound understanding of the relevant professional, legal and regulatory requirements of own field of work.

- Awareness of the current and future activities of the University/school/department/work unit.

- Working knowledge of the work of others inside and outside the University relevant to own field of work.

- May require knowledge of a network of contacts relevant to the work unit.

- Proven analytical and problem solving capability.

- Proven communication, presentation and interpersonal skills.

- Demonstrated planning and organisation skills.

Where relevant
- Management skills – coaching, motivation, managing performance.
- Financial training sufficient to manage and control budgets.
- Advanced technical expertise in area(s) of IT specialism.

Roles at this level will be professional specialists with high-level expertise, exercising within their particular functional area/section a substantial degree of independent professional responsibility and discretion, including the development and implementation of administrative/technical/professional policies and processes. Role holders will typically lead and manage a functional area/section or be a senior individual expert/practitioner with responsibility for managing major projects and initiatives to ensure delivery/improvement of a service. Often roles at this level will have a deputising role for the most senior manger of the area of activity. They will be expected to resolve problems where there is a lack of precedent, requiring innovation and creative thought to develop appropriate options. They will be responsible for setting quality and professional standards and managing service delivery against this, and will have significant influence upon the structure and promotion of their area of activity. Role holders will develop and implement operational plans, which are likely to have a time horizon of more than one year and will typically involve people from several teams. They will also contribute to the longer-term plans for their work area to fit with broader functional and the University strategy.

REPRESENTATIVE WORK ACTIVITIES

Analysis & Reporting
- Identify and review information/data needs for appropriate teams/sections/projects managed to ensure efficiency, legality and security are maintained.
- Develop new systems and processes for a function/section or for application across the University, taking into account multiple factors, analysing complex data and carrying out design and feasibility testing as required.
- Report on matters relating to functional area/section/project(s) managed using relevant management techniques (e.g. SWOT analysis), to support informed decision making, typically at school/department level.

Customer/Service Support
- Provide high level/expert advice on issues/problems, which are not limited to policy or procedural areas; inaccurate interpretation or advice at this level is likely to have a long term impact for those involved.
- Manage the demand and expectation of customers by setting priorities and service levels, pre-empting customer needs/requests, identifying opportunities and facilitating change management for area of responsibility.
- Evaluate existing service provision, keeping abreast of feedback and broader developments in the external market place, to ensure appropriate developments and innovative solutions are proposed that consistently enhance and maximise service quality, efficiency and continuity.
- Answerable for the service delivery of an area of activity ensuring compliance with service level agreements, regulations and national codes of practice.

Planning & Organising
- Shape strategic direction of own area of activity, initiating and managing change, planning and organising the activities of others now and in the longer term, to support school/department objectives.
- Manage resources and budgets with discretion to make decisions or judgements, which have an impact on the nature or scale of resources across the functional area/section/project(s) managed.
- Interpret recommendations and make decisions about significant items of expenditure on physical resources for function/project(s).
- Act as a main contributor/adviser to school/departmental annual operational and budgetary planning processes;
- Lead and manage projects which are complex and significant in terms of time and financial resources.

Liaison
- Interact at senior levels within the University; network with fellow professionals in the wider community and represent and promote own/school's/department's work activities on internal and external platforms.
- Provide expert input to internal and external meetings, influencing and facilitating different opinions to reach a consensus, negotiating terms and pushing forward new developments and change as required.
- Consult with service users and other institutions/bodies to establish service requirements, standards and priorities for change.

Continuous Improvement
- Implement and be involved in the formulation of university/school/departmental policy to consistently improve quality and effectiveness of service provision and/or take account of legislative changes.
- Keeps up to date with developments in own field, broader university developments and the higher education sector in general.

People Management
Either
- Manage a group of staff across a functional area/section to ensure all relevant annual targets and goals are delivered within allocated budgetary/resource constraints, making judgements and decisions regarding the level of staffing.
- Manage complex and serious staff welfare issues in conjunction with the support networks available to both themselves and the member of staff.
- Develop/improve the capability of staff within work area, motivating and mentoring them to better meet the current and future requirements of functional area/section/project(s) managed.
And/Or
- Provide expert advice and guidance across a number of teams and/or projects, or across the University, managing and leading the work of others, where there is no line management responsibility, to achieve service delivery/project objectives.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & EXPERIENCE - LEVEL 6
ROLES AT THIS LEVEL WILL TYPICALLY REQUIRE

EITHER
- Professional qualification/relevant degree, plus substantial, relevant managerial experience or in-depth experience in a specialist area.
OR
- Proven track record of relevant extensive work experience, demonstrating expertise in a field of work and management experience of projects, people and resources.

PLUS
- Experience of managing and developing a significant team or number of teams and/or a significant project or number of projects.

- Proven people and/or change management skills.

- Strong interpersonal skills including motivational negotiating, influencing and relationship building.

- Experience of working with and influencing senior management.

- Experience of managing and controlling budgets/resources/funding and an understanding of financial management procedures.

- Experience of developing innovative solutions and contributing to strategic planning.

- Highly developed knowledge of the principles, theory and practice of field of work, as well as an awareness of broader developments relevant to own area.

- Well developed knowledge of systems/services for own area and across functions and how they relate to each other.

- Well developed understanding of regulations and legislation and the implications of non-compliance on other staff.

- Widespread awareness and understanding of the activities and objectives of the University, both current and future.

- Proven advanced analytical and problem solving capability.

- Operational planning, management and business process skills.

LEVEL 7

Roles at this level will be the most senior staff in their area of responsibility and will direct a team of managers and/or highly qualified professionals across a major area of activity of strategic importance to the University. They will lead the development, delivery and evaluation of the services provided by their areas of activity. They will be responsible for developing and delivering the strategic plans for their area of activity at the highest level and will be accountable for ensuring that the University meets both internal and external requirements and benefits appropriately from "state of the art" developments in their field of activity. They will initiate and establish policy through appropriate consultation and negotiation, and advise Management Group and other senior colleagues throughout the University. They will influence and shape the available resources as appropriate to meet current and future needs of the University and will have a significant impact on the direction, strategy, objectives and results of the University.

REPRESENTATIVE WORK ACTIVITIES

Analysis & Reporting
- Review performance over time in the area of responsibility and compare it to best practice in the market, identifying areas of improvement in structure, practices, policies and technology.
- Determine information needs across the area of responsibility to improve service efficiency and/or maintain legality.
- Generate original developments and innovative solutions that take into account the strategic implications for the institution and do not limit future choices.
- Report on matters relating to area of responsibility that will have an impact across the University, using relevant management techniques (e.g. SWOT analysis), to support informed decision making at the highest level.

Customer/Service Support
- Set the overall standards of service across area of responsibility with ultimate accountability for such standards being met.
- Review customer needs now and in the future and ensure services are shaped to meet them.
- Ensure customer feedback and quality processes are in place for the area of responsibility.
- Determine and direct major projects undertaken as part of continual service improvement.

Planning & Organising
- Define, construct and implement strategy for area of responsibility that supports and takes forward the University strategy and best practice in the sector.
- Determine annual operational plans and budgets for area of responsibility, delegating budget responsibility to management team where appropriate.
- Make individual decisions about the nature or scale of resources across area of responsibility which will have a long term impact on the provision of the service(s) offered by the area of responsibility as a whole.
- Act as a main contributor to decisions that impact on the nature and scale of resources across the University.
- Co-ordinate multiple factors – staffing, resources, systems and procedures to manage area of responsibility within budgetary constraints.
- Explore ways of improving efficiency and effectiveness and promote improvements in value for money.

Liaison
- Work with senior colleagues from all areas of the University, with committees and external bodies, providing high level professional expertise and advice to support informed decision making.
- Represent the University externally in sector groups and in negotiations, networking with external professionals, agencies and organisations for the benefit of the University.
- Chair strategic decision making panels and committees, exerting influence at the highest level.

Continuous Improvement
- Initiate and develop policy through appropriate consultation and negotiation, and establish effective mechanisms for its implementation and monitoring.
- Advise Management Group and senior staff throughout the University about matters affecting the implementation of policy
- Identify and adopt best practice from other institutions and external benchmarks and maintain a continuous review of service quality, to ensure the best possible service.
- Maintain awareness of changes in education, economic, social, governmental and technological environments and their impact on the University.

Leadership
- Lead and manage staff in a major functional area or service grouping, developing them and raising their performance.
- Develop and communicate a clear vision of what is to be achieved overall by the area of responsibility.
- Set appropriate targets for achievement, professional development and assessment of staff.
- Lead the development and implementation of major projects, policies and initiatives that will have an impact across the University.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & EXPERIENCE - LEVEL 7
ROLES AT THIS LEVEL WILL TYPICALLY REQUIRE

EITHER

■   Professionally qualified/relevant degree, plus extensive relevant managerial experience or in-depth experience in a specialist area.

OR

■   Proven track record of relevant extensive work experience, demonstrating an authoritative understanding of a specialist field, management expertise and wide exposure to complex practices and precedents.

In both cases may have national recognition in their area of expertise.

PLUS

■   Strong interpersonal skills including motivational, negotiating, influencing and networking nationally and internationally.

■   Strategic operational planning, management and business process skills.

■   Proven people and change management skills.

■   Breadth of vision gained from extensive experience in field of expertise.

■   Experience of developing innovative solutions and practical implementations for strategic change.

■   Experience of managing and controlling substantial budgets/resources/funding and an understanding of financial management procedures.

■   Highly developed knowledge of the principles, theory and practice of field of expertise.

■   Aware of changes in education, economic, social, governmental and technological environments and their impact on the University.

■   In-depth knowledge of systems/services for own area and how they relate to national and international developments.

■   In-depth knowledge of relevant regulations and legislation and the implications of non-compliance by the University.

■   National and international awareness and understanding of the activities, objectives and strategic direction of the University, both current and future.

Example Jobs in Each Job Family
Please note that this table shows examples only and some job titles occur at more than one level and/or in more than one job family.

Level	APM	O&F	TS
1	Receptionist Secretary Support Assistant	Building Attendant Catering Assistant Cleaner/Housekeeping Assistant Gardener/Groundsperson Hall Porter Security Officer Sports Centre Assistant Bar Team Leader	Technician Trainee Technician
2	Finance Assistant Information Assistant Personal Assistant Receptionist Secretary Administrative Assistant	Second Chef Tradesperson Retail Co-Ordinator	IT Support Technician Research Technician Technician
3	Accountancy Assistant Team Leader/Supervisor Personal Assistant Senior Information Assistant	Assistant Hall Manager Head Chef Maintenance Craftsperson	IT Support Assistant Medical School Technician Research Technician

Level	APM	R&T	TS
4	Admissions Officer Hall Manager Faculty Team Librarian Business Development Officer School Finance Manager Information Analyst Building Surveyor Marketing Manager Maintenance Foreperson International Officer Team Leader/Manager Learning Support Development Officer Project Manager Programme Co-Ordinator	Research Associate (4A) Research Nurse (4A) Trials Co-Ordinator Health Lecturer Research Fellow University Teacher Language Tutor History Tutor	Team Leader/Supervisor Medical School Technician Senior Experimental Officer Senior Technician
5	Human Resources Adviser Management Accountant Head Of Service/Team Project Manager School Manager Senior Systems Development Officer Safety Officer Counsellor	Lecturer Senior Research Fellow University Teacher Research Manager	Chief Experimental Officer Senior Technician
6	Deputy Director Director Head Of Service/Section School Manager	Associate Professor Principal/Senior Research Fellow	
7	Director Head Of Department	Professor PVC Dean	

Appendix IV – Biographical Details (Interviewees)

Administrative interviewees were employed in either 'traditional' or 'new' posts. This definitions related to whether the post was seen as fulfilling a traditional function of HE administration or whether the post was identified as being a role created in recent years to support new functions or complexity of provision.

JMF01
Is a female junior manager in the age range 31-35. She has worked within HE for 9 years and has spent more than 3 years in her current role in PS. She has held roles both within Academic Schools and PS. Her role is predominantly operational management and she has a supervisory and leadership responsibility within her area of operation. This role is a 'traditional' post.

JMF03
Is a female junior manager in the age range 31-35. She has worked within HE for 10 years and has spent more than 2 years in her current role in PS. She has held roles both within Academic Schools and PS. Her role is predominantly operational management and she has leadership responsibility within her area of operation. This role is a 'traditional' post.

JMF05
Is a female junior manager in the age range 56-60. She has worked within HE for 9 years and has spent those years in her current role which has changed focus during her time in post. Her role encompasses both operational and strategic management and she has leadership and management responsibilities with her area of operation. Previous roles have been held outside of HE. This role is a 'new' post.

JMF06
Is a female junior manager in the age range 46-50. She has worked within HE for more than 25 years and has spent more than 6 years in her current role within an Academic School. She has held roles both within Academic Schools and PS. Her role is predominantly operational and she has supervisory and leadership responsibility within her area of operation. This role is a 'new' post.

JMM07
Is a male junior manager in the age range 31-35. He has worked within HE for more than 6 years and has spent more than 3 years in his current role in PS. He has held previous roles in PS. His role is predominantly a support function and he has leadership responsibility within his area of operation. This role is a 'new' post.

MAF01
Is a female middle AM in the age range 60+. She has worked in HE for more than 15 years and has held a variety of administrative and academic roles. These administrative roles have included those at University level. Previous roles have been held outside of HE.

MAM02
Is a male middle AM in the age range 46-50. He has worked in HE for more than 18 years and has held a variety of administrative and academic roles. These administrative roles have included those at University level.

MAF03
Is a female middle AM in the age range 41-45. She has worked in HE for more than 18 years and has held a variety of administrative and academic roles. These administrative roles have included those at University level. She would describe her role as predominantly providing leadership.

MMM01

Is a male middle manager in the age range 41-45. He has worked in HE for more than 12 years and has been in his current role for more than 6 years. He has held roles in other HEIs, all within PS. His role is predominantly operational and he has management and leadership responsibilities within his area of operation. This role is a 'traditional' post.

MMM02

Is a male middle manager in the age range 31-35. He has worked in HE for more than 13 years and has been in his current role for more than 3 years. He has held roles in other HEIs, in addition to holding more than one role within MU. All roles have been within PS. His role is predominantly operational management and he has management and leadership responsibilities within his area of operation. This role is a 'traditional' post.

MMF03

Is a female middle manager in the age range 31-35. She has worked in HE for more than 10 years and has been in her current role for more than 10 years. She has held roles in other HEIs and her roles have been within Academic Schools and PS. Her current role is within an Academic School. Her role is predominantly operational although she does have involvement in strategic change. She has management and leadership responsibilities within her area of operation. Her current role is a 'new' post.

MMF04

Is a female middle manager in the age range 46-50. She has worked in HE for more than 22 years and has been in her current role in PS for more than 3 years. Her roles have been within Academic Schools and PS. Her role is predominantly operational management and she has leadership and management responsibilities within her area of operation. Previous roles have been held outside of HE. Her current role is a 'traditional' post.

MMF05

Is a female middle manager in the age range 51-55. She has worked in HE for more than 12 years and has been in her current role in PS for more than 7 years. Her previous roles have been within PS. She has leadership and management responsibilities in her area of operation and she has involvement in strategic change. Her current role is a 'traditional' post.

MMF06

Is a female middle manager in the age range 36-40. She has worked in HE for more than 12 years and has been in her current role for more than 2 years. She has held roles in other HEIs within PS. She has leadership and management responsibilities in her area of operation and she has involvement in strategic change. Her current role is a 'new' post.

MMM07

Is a male middle manager in the age range 36-40. He has worked in HE for more than 15 years and has been in his current role for more than 5 years. He has held roles in other HEIs within PS. He has leadership and management responsibilities within his area of operation. His current role is a 'new' post.

MMF08

Is a female middle manager in the age range 31-35. She has worked in HE administration for more than 7 years and has held a number of roles both in Academic Schools and PS. She has also held academic roles at other HEIs. She has leadership and management responsibilities within her area of operation which is predominantly regulatory. Her current role is a 'new' post.

MMF09

Is a female middle manager in the age range 41-45. She has worked in HE for more than 21 years and has held a number of roles both in Academic Schools and PS. She had held her current role in PS for more than 5 years. She has leadership and management responsibilities within her area of operation which is predominantly operational. Her current role is a 'traditional' post.

MMF10
Is a female middle manager in the age range 60+. She has worked in HE for more than 25 years and has held a number of roles in Academic Schools. She has held her current role which has evolved over time, for more than 12 years. Her role is predominantly operational and she has leadership and management responsibilities within her area of operation. Her current role is a 'traditional' post.

MMM11
Is a male middle manager in the age range 56-60. He has worked in HE for more than 18 years. He has held a number of roles in Academic Schools and this has included at other HEIs. He has held his current role for 4 years. His previous roles have included academic roles, before this he had roles outside of HE. He has leadership and management responsibilities within his area of operation and also has involvement in strategic change. His current role is a 'new' post.

MMF13
Is a female middle manager in the age range 36-40. She has worked in HE for more than 16 years. She has held a number of roles in both Academic Schools and PS. Her role is predominantly operational. She has leadership and management responsibilities within her area of operation. Her current role is a 'traditional' post.

MMF16
Is a female middle manager in the age range 36-40. She has worked in HE for more than 15 years. She has held roles at other HEIs which have been within Academic Schools. Her roles at MU have been within PS. Her role is predominantly within a support function and is a 'new' post.

SAM01
Is a male senior AM in the age range 56-60. He has worked in HE for more than 35 years. He has held a number of administrative and academic roles, including senior roles within an Academic School. He has leadership and management responsibilities within his School and Research Group including responsibility for strategy.

SAM02
Is a male senior AM in the age range 51-55. He has worked in HE for more than 30 years. He has held a number of administrative and academic roles, including senior roles within an Academic School. He has strategic leadership responsibilities within his School.

SAM03
Is a male senior AM in the age range 41-45. He has worked in HE for more than 20 years. He has held a number of administrative and academic roles, including senior roles at University level. He has leadership responsibilities and is involved in strategic change.

SMM01
Is a male SPM in the age range 46-50. He has worked in HE for more than 19 years within PS. He has responsibility for a major operational area and this includes strategy. He has held previous roles outside of HE. His current role is a 'new' post.

SMM02
Is a male senior manager in the age range 36-40. He has worked in HE for more than 17 years. He has responsibility for a major operational area and this includes strategy. He has held previous roles at other HEIs. His current role is a 'new' post.

Appendix V – Interview Letter

Sandra Mienczakowski
c/o Academic Services Division
University of Nottingham

«Name»
«Title»
«Address»

August 2008

Dear «Salutation»

I am writing to invite you to participate in a research study I am undertaking for a Professional Doctorate in Education (EdD) with the Open University. My course started in 2007 and is taking three years working on a part-time basis.

The working title for the research is 'Restructuring Administration at an English Civic University: Implications for Middle Managers'.

The research is being undertaken from a leadership and management perspective, looking at individual's experiences of restructuring of university administration, seeking to provide insight into management of change and following from this, implications for middle managers and their professional practice.

I am intending to conduct interviews with a group of participants who fall into categories of staff indentified as stakeholders. Interviews will be taped, transcribed and analysed with the findings being used in my final thesis.

The research will be conducted under ethical guidelines as published by the British Educational Research Association (BERA) and, although it is not foreseen that the work will involve risk to participants, clearance has been sought from, and approved by, the OU Human Participants and Materials Ethics Committee.

My degree is being partially funded by the Academic Service Division and Professional Development (formerly SEDU) but there is no compulsion to take part in my study.

You will be given a consent form and will have an opportunity to view a transcript of the interview and correct factual inaccuracies. Participants will remain anonymous. A pseudonym will be used for the University and pseudonyms will be used for all participants. If it becomes apparent that it might be possible for those with an inside knowledge of the organisation to recognise a participant, you will be made aware of this.

Participation is on a voluntary basis and you would be able to withdraw consent to my use of the transcript/data collected for research purposes by informing me in writing of your wish to withdraw within four weeks of receiving a copy of your transcript. Any data collected would be destroyed following any withdrawal of consent. Data will be stored to comply with the Data Protection Act and will be destroyed once use for the purposes of this research has ended. Data will only by accessed by me.

The research will end with the submission of a thesis. The completed thesis and papers arising from it may result in future publications.

It is hoped that the research will be of interest to those internal to the organisation, particularly at senior, middle and junior management level, and of interest to an external audience by providing an insight into restructuring administration, change management and professional practice in the context of a university setting.

If you would be willing to let me interview you at some point, I would be grateful if you could let me know when would be convenient. I would anticipate needing an hour of your time – if the best time for you is over a lunch hour I will happily provide lunch! Participation at this stage of the project does not commit you to any further involvement in the future.

I hope that you will want to be involved. As I want you to be as informed as possible, if you would like further information to help you make your decision, please let me know.

I can be contacted at: sem362@student.open.ac.uk or Tel: 07774 781489 out of office hours or at: sandra.mienczakowski@nottingham.ac.uk. If you would like to talk to someone else about this research my supervisor Professor David Hellawell can be contacted at: deh33@tutor.open.ac.uk

Best wishes.

Sandra Mienczakowski

CONSENT INFORMATION

NAME:

ADDRESS:

I understand that:

- This research study is related to an EdD Project, by participating in it at this stage I am not making any commitment to involvement in later stages.

- The research project concerns finding out about individual's experiences of restructuring of administration and change management within the University and implications for the professional practice of middle managers and I have been fully informed of the aims and purposes of the study.

- There is no compulsion for me to participate in this research. If I choose not to participate there will be no penalty.

- If I do choose to participate, a four week "cooling off" period following sight of a transcription of the interview will be allowed in which I may withdraw consent to the use of anonymised data in the research. Any data collected will be destroyed following any withdrawal of consent.

- Any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research and may include future publication.

- Interviews will be recorded and I will be given a hard copy of a transcript and will be able to correct factual inaccuracies.

- Confidentiality will be respected with regard to the information which I give, including the use of pseudonyms in order to preserve anonymity to the greatest possible extent.

I have read and understand the nature of my involvement in the project and will take part in the study.

Signed:

Date:

Appendix VI – Pilot Study

Interview Questions
Interviewees were initially asked a series of factual questions.

Initial questions related to the length of time the interviewee had been working in administration and higher education administration in particular, and how they would describe their role (professional identity) important for later considerations of professionalism.

Two roles were described as 'manager', one as 'officer'. One of the participants also had experience of the University as a student although this was not deemed relevant for this research except to suggest a long history of association with the institution.

All of the participants had worked at the research site university for at least six years, although not necessarily in their current role for that length of time.

This was deemed significant as those with more than six years service would have experience of how earlier change (early 2000s) and restructuring (late 2000s) within their area of operation was implemented and how this had affected their role/working practices. It was anticipated that insights from two rounds of change would provide rich data. All of the participants had spent their entire working careers within higher education administration, two having experience of other HEIs than MU.

For the purposes of this research it was felt important that interviewees had a minimum of four years service to be able to comment on experiences of the changing context within which they were working and this was borne out later in the 'main' study.

Participants felt that within their roles they had sufficient authority to do their jobs well although those at middle management level felt that there were barriers to effectiveness:

> 'I think so yes... I think within that role, yes, I am given a certain amount of authority to make certain decisions. Yes.' [FIRMANF01]

> 'Yes, I think given the job that we're asked to do I think I've got sufficient authority. I mean there are barriers that I guess we all come up against at certain times in our jobs ... But on the whole given the task set I think I have sufficient authority to make sure it's a good job, on the whole, yes.' [MIDMANM02]

> 'Yes. I felt I used to have basically full authority to initiate new processes to ensure that the job was done better than it was done then. ... I think there is added bureaucracy now whereas beforehand I was able to say yes, I want to do this and get on with it.' [MIDMANM01]

This issue later became a category in the 'main' research study.

The next set of questions related to participants' experiences of change and the ways in which it was managed, the factors which they felt had influenced change, and barriers to effectiveness in their areas of operation.

> 'If it's a change of you know working strategy within your area ... that seems to work quite well you know we're party to any changes there that are going to affect our job and the service we offer customers so that seems OK. ... As for any change where you're physically moving departments ... I wouldn't say we've been central to the change process or deciding about change and communicating that.' [MIDMANM01]

'I think in terms of involvement over recent years I don't feel as though people at our level have been consulted very much. I think we're in an era particularly recently where it's very much top down... So whilst I don't have an issue with change *per se* I think there could be scope for having more of an involvement from the people who have to deliver it at the front line.' [MIDMANM02]

'In terms of strategic change, no I don't think I would feel that we've had a great deal to say on that.' [MIDMANM02]

'I don't think there is a formal mechanism in place to get people like us informed of change.' [MIDMANM02]

The experience of the first-line manager was different:

'I think we're told as much as we can do. Certainly decisions that are much, much higher up we don't always get to know about which I feel is not always our business. I think anything that impacts on our own job is our business and it is beneficial to know but certain things I don't think we need to know... I think that information is relayed down to us and our opinions are then passed upwards so I don't feel any ... I do feel that's done sufficiently.' [FIRMANF01]

The picture which emerged from the pilot study was that middle managers felt frustrated by the ways in which change was managed and did not always feel that they were involved in decisions at a strategic level or that change was always communicated well.

Participants differed in their responses to whether they were aware of the goals and objectives of the University and department. MIDMANM01 was emphatic in stating that he had no idea. MIDMANM02 had actively sought out information. Both participants felt that there was no formal mechanism for communicating information.

'I think it's that gap between what the expectations are for the organisation and how people like us are meant to sort of deliver it on a day-to-day basis. ... I'm not sure we all feel affiliated with what the University wants to achieve.' [MIDMANM02]

When asked about the factors influencing change, all three respondents referred to changes of personnel, particularly a new Registrar as being the major factor with additional factors including operating within an increasingly competitive market.

In answer to the question relating to barriers to effectiveness, participants identified these as being related to resource allocation; IT systems; and communications with there being no formal mechanisms for receiving feedback. Participants measured their effectiveness by a lack of complaints. This appears to be a negative function of there being no formal feedback mechanism. MIDMANM02 also identified increased specialisation as a barrier to effectiveness and felt 'constrained a lot of the time by what is an academic priority' with the 'ability to exercise our management experience or our administration experience often ... curtailed by what is deemed to be academically good or not so not always a good match up.'

The question arises as to whether if middle managers don't feel included in strategic change this is owing to the senior management team not involving them or whether they are perceived as not being proactive and so are not included. This issue is something which was identified as significant for the main research study.

An important observation was the fact that middle managers may not always be party to senior management decisions or thinking. Sometimes they had to be reliant on others' interpretation of what senior management is thinking and this was seen as an issue.

Communication was seen as an issue for this group of interviewees and was also observed in day-to-day working practice:

> 'Views appear to be that there was no consultation before implementing change which impacted on teams. Managers seemed willing to let team members know that this wasn't their idea and to be seen to side with team against senior management when an unpopular policy was to be implemented.' [Research Diary observation, 22/2/08]

> 'MM didn't see it as her role to communicate change to her team when she was opposed to that change. She felt that this should be communicated from a senior level.' [A female middle manager not included in the pilot study, Research Diary observation 6/3/08]

This identification with the team could be seen as an issue of where loyalty lies and has implications for the professionalism of middle managers as it suggests that when unpleasant decisions are to be communicated, middle managers may prefer to 'side' with their teams against senior management, particularly if they feel excluded from decision-making.

The next set of questions focussed on relationships with academic and APM staff and accountability.

Participants felt that relationships with AS had changed in recent years and that the changes had been positive:

> 'I think academic staff are ... it's become I find a little bit easier over the years.' [FIRMANF01]

> 'We've got a very clear role to do and on the whole academics see us as being a support mechanism.' [MIDMANM02]

> 'They understand what we're trying to do.' [MIDMANM01]

MIDMANM01 also identified a change in culture from a perceived blame culture between academic and non-academic staff to one where there was more team-working.

It was interesting to note that FIRMANF01 referred to younger professors and academics as being more flexible in her experience. An anecdote from a senior (professorial) academic related to how as a relatively junior member of staff, he had made the lives of another senior academic and administrative staff difficult in his 'younger days' by being unco-operative and 'precious' about being an academic and his professional identity – he had been asked to teach on a foundation programme and had refused.

This raises the question as to whether positive responses to change are identified where experiences have been positive and have been seen as improvements in areas where academics have an interest, but whether negative responses would be identified were change to be unpopular and not deemed in the academic interest.

Experiences of working with non-academic staff had also changed with a feeling that relationships within the Division had deteriorated but that good relationships were being maintained with non-academic staff in Schools even if there was still a perceived barrier between Schools and 'the Centre'.

Participants identified a wide range of accountability relationships extending from the broadest to narrowest sense:

> 'Ultimately ... to the Registrar, to Management Board.' [MIDMANM01]

'... my manager ... Ultimately the Registrar within the University.' [FIRMANF01]

'I guess in the widest sense I'm accountable to everyone really because we're all funded through one means or another from the public purse... I'm accountable to my line manager and to the rest of the division to whom I work.' [MIDMANM02]

Participants were invited to consider whether they felt that their experiences would change over the next two to three years and were given an opportunity to comment on anything in relation to the topics being discussed that they had not had an opportunity to talk about.

Participants all felt that their experiences would change over the next few years, in the main owing to increases in student numbers but also owing to the introduction of a new student management system which would have implications for the work of themselves and their staff.

Finally, participants were asked whether there was anyone else who they thought it might be beneficial for the researcher to interview in line with taking a grounded theory approach to the research.

This produced interesting responses and, indeed, in two cases MIDMANM02 and FIRMANF01 resulted in useful discussion relating to the researchers work, methodology and sampling.

Participants did not name individuals but all felt that it would be useful to find some way of gathering the opinions of those below them: for middle managers, those at Level Four and below, and for the front-line manager other members of teams within the Registrar's department (typically Levels Three and Two).

This was revisited after more interviews had been undertaken. While it appeared sensible to attempt to collect the views of those at Level Three and below perhaps by the setting up of a focus group it was felt that the line-management or working relationship with a number of these staff could lead to bias of response and so this was not pursued further. I had already decided that those at Level Four (first-line managers) should be included in the groups of staff to be sampled.

Although care was taken to ensure that these questions were not leading but allowed the interviewee to express their views, I felt that on reflection, perhaps too much empathy had been shown with interviewees and that not enough development of emerging themes took place.

'Evident from first interview that I didn't pick up and develop themes. Missed opportunity to get really under the surface.' [Research Diary observation, 2/3/08]

'Important to ask interviewees for examples of something they describe so that I can understand their understanding of context. To see what they are seeing as opposed to what I see.' [Research Diary observation, 2/3/08]

'Good interview – tried to extend questions although still think too familiar and too near to participants. Didn't really dig under the initial answers' [Research Diary observation, 5/3/08]

Another failing within this pilot study was the non-inclusion of a question designed to test the understanding of key terms. However, the participants answers suggested that their understanding of 'academic' and 'APM' staff was the same as my own and that those perceived as middle managers, also saw their roles as such. This failing was recognised as a function of my relative inexperience as an interviewer at this stage of the project.

In all interviews, interviewees continued the discussion after the recorder had been turned off. What was said outside of the 'formal' interview was noted in the observation diary as it presented interesting additional data. This raised issues surrounding the use of data not given during the formal interview. I took the decision to use these insights given to follow up with this set of interviewees informally in the future and also to test reliability of evidence through triangulation in future interviews with other participants.

Coding Categories

I transcribed all interviews myself and for the purposes of the pilot study the interviews were manually coded to enable me to stay close to the data. Following transcription, responses were initially coded line by line. This led to a number of categories being identified: collegiality, academic/administration divide, culture, change management, authority, leadership/management, efficiency/effectiveness, barriers to effectiveness, accountability, relationships, work intensification, customer service, business, strategic change, communication, professionalism, beliefs and values and scarce resource. These were then colour-coded to broader categories relating to leadership and management as follows: accountability, effectiveness/barriers to effectiveness, professional identity, relationships, leadership/management styles, culture, communication, resource allocation and work intensification.

Notes were also made indicating points of interest and ambiguity in response.

Initial coding was used as a test of whether the semi-structured approach and questions asked enabled data to be classified in this way. Data produced was able to be coded under the categories and relationships between categories of data began to emerge.

It was clear from coding that some categories are particularly complex e.g. relationships, communication and effectiveness/barriers to effectiveness, all considered important when considering the management of change and the implications for middle managers.

Grouping and sub-grouping within these categories is produced in the table below.

Memos – Pilot Study

I then considered emergent categories and began to draft memos to look at theoretical possibilities. The memos took the form of free-writing on a category and at this embryonic stage of analysis represented initial thoughts.

Group	Sub-groups
Communication	Transparency
	Points of contact
	Direct communication
	Indirect communication
	Formal chains of command/mechanisms (old?)
	Two-way
	Circular
	Dissemination
	Clarity
Relationships	Accountability relationships (customers (staff/students); stakeholders; business (or not?); senior management; chain of command)
	Personal relationships
	Working relationships
	Loyalty

	Authority
	Identity
	MM and MM
	SPM and MM
	JPM and MM
	Centre and School
	School and School
	School and academic/non-academic/students
Barriers to effectiveness	Negative perceptions
	Bureaucracy
	IT systems
	Underutilisation of resource/expertise/experience
	Relationships
	Culture (positive/negative)
	Resource availability/lack of
	Organisational structure
	Communication
	Opportunity
	Involvement in decision-making
	Environment
	Authority
	Empowerment
	Work intensification (increase/change)

Table: Grouping and sub-grouping – pilot study

The pilot research enabled me to examine issues of effectiveness and the management of change and also touched on issues of accountability.

Increased accountability to a number of both external and internal stakeholders and the need for more effective working practices to deal with increased numbers of students and complexity of role have implications for professional identity, organisational culture and work intensification.

Intensification in the breadth of work undertaken by staff in both central administration and academic schools may be driven by the allocation of scarce resources and how these can be used more effectively in the context of doing more with less was of importance.

[Re]distribution of responsibility to Schools adds to work intensification and issues are raised as to where administrative functions should lie.

It is important for future success of organisations that individual leaders and managers become better leaders and managers. Good communication and involvement in policy-making is essential to ensure that those who have to implement and enact policy are aware of what they have to do but are not constrained by an over-bureaucratic senior management restricting individual involvement and/or ownership of policy.

Undertaking small-scale research in an educational organisation, particularly an organisation that the researcher is a member of, is complex. The researcher comes to the work with their own set of values and beliefs and view of 'what is being done'. This has to be set aside to look at what is really going on and to relate theory and practice.

In order to draw conclusions from the research findings, the context and situation within which the work was being undertaken needs to be understood.

The interviewees who took part in the initial study were interested in the project, could see benefits from participation and were very supportive of my role as a researcher.

The availability of participants was raised as an issue in the planning of the initial study and problems with availability did threaten the pilot. My workload had increased considerably prior to the planned initial study data collection phase and those to be interviewed had experienced similar issues relating to workload. However, all interviewees approached were keen to be involved irrespective of workload and so a schedule was able to be negotiated which allowed me a clear day between interviews for reflection and adjustment of the research questions.

The choice of venue was left to those being interviewed to ensure that they were comfortable with their surroundings but, as the interviewees were well known to the researcher, discussion did take place as to the best location. One interview took place in the researcher's office over a cup of coffee (being the larger of the two participants' offices) and two interviews took place in a room set aside for interviews located within the Division.

Issues to be explored at interview were identified as follows:

- Title and context of interviewees
- Views on how change is managed and implemented locally
- Have recent changes increased efficiency and effectiveness; how these may be measure and whether there are any barriers to effectiveness?
- Relationships with academic and non-academic staff
- What are the implications and what role can middle managers play in the management of change and culture of the department/organisation?

These can be linked back to the substantive research issues and also issues which appeared to arise from an review of the literature e.g. changing experiences of academic and APM staff; professional identity; management of change.

Therefore, the first interview was scheduled to take place before a weekend to enable this reflection to occur.

The first interview was with a middle manager based within the Registrar's department (MIDMANM01) and took place in the researcher's office. The interview flowed and I was able to keep to the set of questions intended.

Level of staff was deemed important as a test of the definition of a middle manager, but also as it became clear that implications for middle managers do not come solely from above (senior management) but may also come from below (those middle managers manage).

Had the interviews been scheduled for earlier in the research process, there would have been opportunities to rearrange for dates earlier than the actual interviews took place.

Given that each interview took between 20 minutes and 50 minutes to undertake and that each 20 minutes of interview took typically an hour to transcribe *before* any analysis could be undertaken, earlier interviewing would have made analysis less stressful. This also owing to the time taken to ensure that the transcript was as complete as possible before forwarding to the interviewee and also that sufficient time was devoted to analysis and coding. This required that the interview be listened to several times. Time was allocated to make any amendments necessary and to 'fill in gaps'. This was not necessary as none of the interviewees wanted to correct factual inaccuracies and the use of digital recording equipment ensured clarity such that there were no gaps in the transcripts.

However, transcribing recordings myself allowed first thoughts and initial notes to be made at the time of transcription and this was usefully continued in the 'main' study.

Another important lesson learned was that the researcher should have got going earlier and developed as a researcher as the interviews went on, rather than hoping to read everything necessary, write perfect questions, have clear coding categories and have a final view of how the data would be presented before interviews could start.

Also important was the mind set of the interviewer on the day. The interview with FIRMANF01 was short and I had come straight from another meeting. For future interviews time was scheduled before the interview to get into researcher mode making the distinction between researcher role and professional role.

Appendix VII – Interview Questions

Purpose: to gain an understanding of participants experiences in relation to the management of change (restructuring) and the implications for the professional practice of middle managers.

Areas for questions:

1) title and context of interviewees

2) views on how change is managed and how implemented locally

3) have recent changes increased efficiency & effectiveness – how are these measured

4) what are the implications and what role can middle managers play in the management of change and culture of dept/organisation

Brief introduction to the research, ensure participant is fully aware of aims and objectives and has consented and has consented to interview.

1. What is your job title?

2. How long have you been in your current role?

3. Can you briefly describe your current role and areas of responsibility?
   Do you have leadership/management responsibility?
   Do you have sufficient authority to do your job well?
   How does your area contribute to the Registrar's department?

4. Can you briefly outline the work you have done previous to your current work?

5. Can you tell me about your experiences of change and the way in which it is managed over the past two/three years?
   How is change communicated?
   Do you have input into strategic change?
   Do you understand what the drivers for change are?

6. Can you tell me about your experience of being involved in planned change in your area of operation?
   How do you manage implementation of external change locally?
   Do you have a clear idea of goals and objectives of the University/Department/Division?

7. What external and/or internal factors do you think have influenced/influence change?

8. Can you describe effectiveness/measure effectiveness in your area?
   How do you feel you contribute to the effectiveness of the department/university?

Are there any barriers to effectiveness in your area of operation?
   If there are any barriers, what strategies do you use to address them?

9. Can you tell me about your experiences of working with academic staff?
   Has the relationship changed in recent years?
   If so how? Why do you think it has changed? What are the consequences?

10. Can you tell me about your experiences of working with non-academic staff?

Has the relationship changed in recent years?
If so how? Why do you think it has changed? What are the consequences?

11. Who are you accountable to?

12. Looking forward over the next two/three years do you feel what you do or your experience of work will change?
Why? With what consequences for who?

We've discussed the aims and purpose of my research. Is there anything else which is relevant which you haven't had an opportunity to tell me about?

Is there anyone else who you think it might be beneficial for me to interview?

Once I've transcribed the interview I'll let you have a hard and disk copy and you'll be able to correct any inaccuracies or fill in gaps.

Thank you for your time – are you prepared to be interviewed again at a later stage?

Appendix VIII – Example of Transcript (redacted)
R = Researcher
I = Interviewee

R: OK so straightforward questions first of all. Do you mind telling me how old you are?

I: 37

R: And how long you've been working in University administration?

I: For about 15 years now. So that's 7 years here, ███████████████████
███████████████████

R: And what is your current job title?

████████████████████████████

R: And how long have you been in the current role?

I: Well I suppose since I've been here for the last seven years so even though my title has changed and my role has varied a little bit I presume you could say for the last seven years I have broadly undertaken a similar responsibilities and position within the University.

R: OK and can you briefly describe your current role and areas of responsibility.

████████████████████████████████████ This is done through consultation with the University, formalised through the committee structure and then obviously put down in the Quality Manual. I also undertake quite a lot of development work ███ So looking to improve the student experience so that's once again working across the University, working with PVCs, working with Senior Management, and then going down to Schools and engaging with them and ████████████████████████

R: OK and do you think you have sufficient authority to do your job well?

I: Yes I think so. I think I'm given sufficient authority by my manager. I think I've appropriate authority within the institution but quite often it's you're working on behalf of someone else. So I'm working say on behalf of █████████████████ and that is quite often used as … I use that as … not a stick necessarily but it's a … you know one of those persuasion methods so to speak. Because there are certain instances when I can kind of go into the School, go in and talk to someone and say well actually it's a University regulation in terms of the Quality Manual and you know that is why you have to do it. Obviously taking steps to try and explain how we go to that position and so on. And I think there is authority there and I think there is an acceptance in my job role across the University. But then there are other times when I actually have to go in on the behest of say ██████████████████████
███ and do stuff and those occasions sometimes go in and say actually I'm doing it behalf of x, y and z because it sort of depends on the actual group I deal with at a certain time, so sometimes … and down to personalities of people. So sometimes Heads of Schools are quite acceptable, amenable, sometimes they're not. So it's kind

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of weighting the situation up about you know how much leverage I need to give but I don't feel undermined at all. I don't think there's any structures within my workplace within the University which undermine what I do. So I think, you know, from my perspective the authority is there. Obviously the difficult thing is people not doing things which you know even with the best will in the world and the most persuasive techniques people will not necessarily do everything you require of them or ask them to do. But that's another matter.

R: How to get them to comply. And can you tell me a bit about experiences of change in administrative ... administrations and structures and the way that they have been managed in the last two or three years or perhaps longer.

I: Yes. It seems since I've been at ███████ things have changed on quite a regular basis and I think it's partly been because personnel have changed so you've naturally got to change structures, partly because the environment is changing in terms of priorities of the University and then partly because I think there is a temptation just to tinker with systems. And I don't think it's necessarily because systems are failing or falling apart but there's always I think a natural tendency for managers to try and think how they can try and improve things and just ... I don't know ... necessary to spice things up or whatever but there is a temptation I think just to fiddle things when they've been in place for a certain amount of time. So for me personally, my role, even though I have a very similar remit, my job title has changed. I've probably had about five or six job titles over the last year ... last three or four years and that's reflected things like you know changing structure within our department, within Academic Services Division but also just kind of how the University moves. So for example, I used to have ██████ in my title and that was moved out of the title because it was felt ████████████████████████████████████

██

██

██ So I think there's a combination of things why things have changed, why things have moved round and it seems to be a state of flux. But I think that's always been the case for me the last fifteen years. Every University I've worked at, everything has always moved around, always moved on. And I must admit I haven't got a problem with that but I know some people do, some people like their comfort areas and they want to do the same old jobs day in day out and stuff. I mean the interesting thing is about the ability to actually rail against any changes and you know there have been certain changes which I have felt that aren't appropriate and I've been sort of successful in you know battling against them. But sometimes you almost ... I don't think resignation exactly but sometimes the feeling is that you know there's not point in making a big ...

R: Change is going to happen?

I: Change is going to happen, don't be in the way of change and you know to see it as an opportunity rather than a threat. Because I don't that when change happens ... I don't necessarily think that the immediate management are doing it in a threatening kind of way. It's adaptation because I think they do recognise that you know there are individuals, there are human beings involved and stuff. I think it's at the high level of the University when they dictate a change, when they don't really have any realisation of the consequence for them. But I think that's a decision ... distinction between strategic and your kind of more immediate operational issues.

R: Yes. So do you think you have input into strategic change?

I: Yes and no. So I think when it comes ... are we talking about administrative changes? Right OK. Probably less. So I think I have input to strategic change when it comes to learning and teaching, learning and teaching strategy but I think on the

admin level, I think less and I think because there's not really an appetite among senior management for consultation with staff. So I feel that it's almost you're sort of given a fait accompli. You know here's a change, adapt to it rather than a genuine consultation, what do you think about change, where do you think we should be going, we're thinking of x, y and z, what do you think about it. And I think there's a kind of major trick that's being lost there. I think there's a risk of alienating people, loss of good will and so on. You know there's a fear of top down imposition of change and stuff so em that does concern me a little bit and as I say I have been able to battle against some changes but you just wonder if some really big change which really did affect me majorly you know how much influence I would have. Yes. But obviously the battles you face when they come I suppose.

R: And do you think you always understand what the drivers for change are, that they're communicated and you understand?

I: Yes but I think it's only because I've kind of asked relevant questions of the relevant people. I don't think necessarily changes are communicated extremely well across what we do and I think it's only when I question line managers that it is communicated. And quite often there's a difference between the actual ... the official version and the actual ... you know the private version of changes and stuff and I think people are very good at giving an official version about why things should happen but then underlying it is another reason why things do. And ...

R: Change by rumour?

I: Yes and it's a difficult one because if you're a manager you know you ... you sort of need to protect yourself, the reason for making a change and you can understand why it's easy to fall into a safeguard ... a linguistic safeguard about you know couching things in terms of managerial speak about you know the rationale for doing it and the impact on service all those kind of things whereas sometimes I don't think ... I think you know personalities influence things and personal preferences influence things and so on.

R: So you get a new person in post like a new Registrar and ...

I: Yes that's it. And they'll obviously bring along their own agendas really and to a certain extent that's fine because I think you're looking at senior people to be really strategic and you know they're appointed hopefully to have a ...

R: A vision?

I: A vision and a breadth of knowledge outside of the immediate environment you know a sector wide vision. Say for example, Student Service Centre that we've had here over the last few years. You know that is a national way of going about things you know the expansion of the Student Operations and Support Division, that is a national kind of thing, it's a trend, it's a way things are going. So you sort of expect that kind of thing to you know come from senior management.

R: To drive those things. OK and can you tell me a bit about being involved in planned changes in your area. Have there been any planned changes that you've been involved in?

I: Planned ... so you mean the actual ...

R: It's difficult to think of an example ...

I: Implementation of planned change and about success? Well I'll give you one example, I suppose it's sort of in my area. I was responsible

suppose there's two things about this. A) there was an issue for me with the actual process that ... the review they undertook and the actual decision they made because I felt that I was a key process owner but I was never ... they never engaged with me during the actual consultation which I thought was either an amazing oversight or the fact that you know it was a conscious decision not to talk to the people who were actually doing things on ground, the process owners. And it might have been they talked to my line manager and others but I don't think that they did. And I think there's an amazing amount of intelligence they would maybe have been able to glean from myself and others who were responsible for those kind of processes. And in a way I think ... it was a rather amateur way about instigating change, an amateur way of them consulting about you know reviewing what happens. Because for example I know that the team just went to one University where someone said oh they have a good method of reviewing. They went to this one University, came back and said yeah fantastic we'll do that. And from my point of view it's down to knee jerk preferences, knee jerk reactions and oh we don't need to do that because x, y and z for whatever reason. So they decided to discontinue the reviews we were doing,

so they were really sort of flabbergasted and I was thinking it's sort of they're naïve in their outlook really. So the other interesting point was then OK they made the decision they were going to do, they decided another Unit was actually going to implement it and then the actual kind of whole process of the implementing was once again very amateurish to a certain extent so there was no real plan, no one was really assigned to lead the process, I ended up being partially seconded to actual design the process and so on and then you know, the other unit's taken it on and I ... you know from feedback I've received, it's not gone down well just because the actually planning stage of it they haven't actually considered the actual requirement. Well they considered the requirements of the University but they haven't actually considered you know what actually goes on within the academic units. They haven't considered the actual impact of their audit method and what they do and so on. And it's a sort of mess which is surprising because I think if they'd talked to people like me who had been running ███████████ ███████████ for many years they would have ... I could have pointed them in the right direction on many aspects. But they ...

R: Built on the good practice that existed even if there was going to be change implemented?

I: That's it because I think I was able in the end to you know to kind of stop them reinventing the wheel on many things. But you know I am divorced from that process now and they are asking questions and doing things which you know just appear really ... they seem to have no knowledge of the business of the University and the problem I've you know found with things like that ... or you're imposing on Schools and academic units you know you need to retain their good will and so you need to know the business, you need to know how to interact with people at the University and those people haven't got that experience, they don't seem to be building all that knowledge and they actually don't see it their role to actually build up that knowledge. And whilst I'm on a roll I suppose the other thing that I've noticed is that whenever I have a process to implement and stuff I sort of see it as a ... part of my role to do ... an integral part of my role to do but ███████████████████ and with other processes people see to take it as a project management role so they treat it as a separate and distinct project from anything else within the University and I think ... in terms of OK you've got a task to do and a certain amount of time say to develop a new process, to a certain extent project management skills are useful because they help you plan, they help you to do timescale, to work out who needs to be involved in it and help you in your reporting and evaluation. But the other problem is that these people treat project management ... distinct projects to be done in a specific time

period and then just to drop and for someone else to pick up the pieces. There seems to be no planning for you know the afterlife of the project.

R: That's it we've done that there's the process now go away and run it rather than bedding it in with the Schools or ...

I: I think that's the thing and you know I see that quite often across the University these kind of things you know we need to do x OK we'll get a project team, we'll do it and then there's no thought to the afterlife so ... you know certain projects you can do that but certain projects, quite a lot of projects you need to continue.

R: They're ongoing?

I: Yes and part of the actual planning process should be actually what is the financial impact of the ongoing.

R: Yes and like you say when you lose the School's goodwill on things then you do start to have problems with them. OK, do you think you have clear idea of the goals and objectives first of all of the Division and then sort of wider of the University.

I: Yes. ██████████ is a difficult one because I know several years ago for a number of years we used to have a look at the Registrar's plan, annual plan and be able to comment on it and whatever and you know I don't think any of our comments were taken into consideration or whatever. I've got no illusion there but I think it was useful in effect informing us of where the Registrar at the time thought ██████████ should go and responsibilities. And I haven't seen anything like that for the last few years and so it's sort of guessing what senior management wants to a certain extent. So ... and then when I look down to the actual ██████ itself, once again I'm sort of guessing what ██████████ aims are because even though I'm part of the management team within ██████████, sort of I don't think there's any grand vision. Well not that there necessarily needs to be but there's no feeling of coherence to ██ ██████ about what we should be doing, what we should be providing to people. You know are we just kind of servicing things? Are we trying to be a little bit more entrepreneurial? Are we trying to be kind of a bit more efficient and effective? I'm never quite sure. Then when you look at the University, I think it's made a little bit easier because you've got the University Plan. And I see it through for example committees I service ██████████, also very involved with say learning and teaching strategy as well. So from that perspective I think I've got a good view about what the University wants to do, it's mission, and where it wants to go and stuff. I mean there are obviously issues about what a mission statement is and actually how useful it is and ...

R: what is actually in it?

I: That's it and whether people respond to it and stuff. I mean I used to be responsible for programme approval and it was interesting then that some people would sometimes refer to the University plan as a justification for the types of provision that they were trying to develop. But I was never sure whether it was because they genuinely believed in that and they were genuinely keen on you know meeting the aims of the University plan or it was just a convenient tool to you know try and persuade the panel and say look actually what we're doing is in line with the University Plan. So yes. So as I say, I'm relatively well informed about what the University's mission is but less so about the Registrar's.

R: OK and what external and/or internal factors do you think have most influenced change?

I: What within administration in general and what we do? I think ... I mean it's interesting. I think the major change that I have witnessed ... it comes down to students really and ... because we are in a sense delivering a service to the University that you know facilitates students progression you know admission and progression

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through University. And I think from this University, I think student numbers have affected how we do things and I think the growth in student numbers over the last decade has changed the way that the University operates but at the same time I think there are greater expectations that we will provide a better service to students and it's resulting in things like the use of more technology and the way that we record student information and so on so ... I see for example there are government requirements to monitor attendance. That's requiring quite a lot of work in development of systems, appointment of people and so on. At the same time the University wants more useful management information about it's students so that's quite a few changes there. On the programme approval side of things there were changes that way. Just the kinds of data we hold. In terms of quality assurance, that hasn't actually changed a great deal over the last few years, we've had a pretty steady state audit process. I think the way we've changed our quality assurance procedures has tried to sort of be reactive to the environment we're in and within the University rather than externally so you know there are changes to the QAA academic infrastructure in particular so the Codes of Practice or it's Framework for Higher Education Qualifications and we will adapt according to that but they are sort of I suppose meta-level changes ...

R: They're not major things that are actually coming in and have to be implemented because they're in and ...

I: That's it so we ... they've already got a Framework for Higher Education Qualifications but last year because there were some changes to do with Doctoral qualifications and to our Foundation Qualifications we made subtle changes to our overall structure which resulted in minor changes to things within Schools and stuff but it's not that we had a major change that resulted in things. But I think the biggest change in the last few years has been the National Student Survey because I think University ... most universities have been very reactive now to that and the expectation is that somehow we're going to be providing a better student experience so to speak so I've seen specially in terms of learning and teaching strategy a major shift in direction there. A lot of work on assessment and feedback within the University and that's affecting ███████████████████████████████████ ████████████████████████ and so on and so ... I think that externally has been probably the major change over the last couple of years that we have had to adapt our business to respond to this.

R: Yes. We're in a competitive marketplace.

I: Yes. Yes. And ... and then as I suggested earlier the way that you know the whole Registrar's type activities and focus on students has changed as well so we've got you know operations centres so those kind of things I see and I think that's just a national trend but once it's responding to students, what they want and so on but it always seems to be student driven to a certain extent be it student numbers, be it kind of student expectations, we haven't had so many changes driven by the academic requirements. That seems to be in a relatively steady state centrally.

R: OK. How would you measure effectiveness in your area do you think?

I: It's a difficult one because I suppose there's two things. There's the quality assurance and there's quality enhancement. So in the quality assurance you almost measure it by how many times things go wrong to a certain extent. So we have you know high level measurements so every five years the Quality Assurance Agency comes in and audits the institution and how it works and it gives a judgement about how we are managing quality and standards. So that is an explicit external measure and we've been through that and we came out with confidence which is the highest level confidence. So there is that immediate ... but I mean that's once every five years. The other measure really is a more subtle measure, there are say statistics ██ ████ through Learning and Teaching Committee and the Academic Boards so there is the quantitative data set. It looks at things like student retention, progression, number of good degrees and stuff and that gives you a general feeling about the standards of provision at the University. Then there are indicators such as student

complaints and appeals and once again it gives you a general indicator. But it's difficult to draw any wide conclusions but if for example the number of appeals went up you know ten fold then you'd have an issue then and sometimes you might have a block in a certain School so that makes you think that there's something going wrong. From the quality of provision I suppose the National Student Survey is a good indicator. I mean there are issues about actually whether it is indicating quality because it is student perceptions over the course and stuff but I think we use it as an indicator of the quality of the teaching at the University and so I think that's ... you know it's a measure ... it's quantifiable and I think it affects how we do things. And then the work I do on ███████████████████████████████████████

██████ and even though the overall intention is that OK we're going to fund █ ███████████████████████████████████████

███████ it's quite difficult to measure that kind of thing and I think you sort of have to take it almost as if OK we're not going to be able to measure it but there's a feeling that if we do something it will ... there is a chance that it will have a positive effect really and I think the thing is the feeling is to try to do something rather than not to do something and I think somehow that's got to change some things.

R: Even if it's enhancing for a small number of students it's still ...

I: Absolutely. Yes. It's a bit like the widening participation work that universities do across the UK. So you know we'll go to many Schools round the local area trying to get students interested in Higher Education but you know that if they do there's a good chance that they might not come to Nottingham but it's that kind of knock on effect that's a social impact you know of being a University and trying to improve people's aspirations without actual direct OK we can measure, we went to that School, talked to these students and so many have come through. And I think that's probably why people have struggled with the whole quality enhancement agenda. So for many ... for the last five or six years the Quality Assurance Agency has tried to have this two tracks, QA and QE and people have really struggled with what exactly does QE mean because we can't measure it, it's so difficult.

R: OK. And what do you think are the barriers to effectiveness, are there any barriers to effectiveness?

I: Of being an administrator? I think ... there's personal barriers. I think ... because I think you need to be quite aware of the actual ... what's the word for it ... your client group so to speak. The people you're dealing ... so for example dealing with administrate ... with academics within Schools. You know you've got to be aware about the way that you kind of interact with people and the way that it is appropriate for your role and stuff and I think that it's that ... those communication abilities ... you know married with a certain amount of common sense I think. You know I suppose some people pick it up intrinsically, some people it's harder to work out and stuff and I see this quite often when I'm dealing with people that just don't seem to have the people skills so I think you know personally there's a people skill. It could be barrier and I think that's just naturally across the piece so it doesn't help. Within this institution I think the fact that ... Schools are quite autonomous so they have a lot of power, a lot of responsibility, they're almost like mini fiefdoms in certain aspects. A lot of budget responsibility. So I think when you're coming from, a central administration there is a perception that the power balance is within the School to a certain extent. So we cannot just turn round to people and say do x because we want you to. I think there's a lot more negotiation required and a lot more persuasion and stuff but there still is the potential for Schools still not to do certain things or if they do them to do them in such a way that they kind of undermine the kind of process. So I think within this institution, similar to many ████████ institutions the actual kind of locus of power is outside of central administration and I think that is quite a big barrier to be overcome to a certain extent. Yes a couple of barriers.

R: OK and can you tell me a bit about experiences of working with academic staff in recent years. Do you think the relationship has changed?

I: From what I've seen I wouldn't say so because the people I deal with are usually senior people within Schools or within the management here. Those people who sort of are in a position of responsibility and they know the score to a certain extent so they know what the University requires of them. So a Head of School will know that something might be unpalatable to their staff within the School but it is for the good of their School that they do something and the same with the PVC and so whatever. So I think my relationship with them has been a pretty steady state really and you know hopefully it's one of mutual respect but obviously there's a certain amount of subservience I think still and I think ... I don't think ... my own perception the view of administrators hasn't really changed even though maybe we like to think maybe more . professional than we have been in the past and I think maybe it might have changed ... it will be quite different from say maybe twenty years ago when administrators were very much supportive staff but I think now we are you know very much providing a professional service and are respected for the advice that we give and the guidance we give but I think in the last few years I haven't noticed any difference in that.

R: You think it lies with individuals rather than ...

I: Yes that's it. Yes. So I think that relationship is just the same I think. And then the relationship with academic members of staff on the whole ... the other members of staff I deal with are people who've kind of put themselves forward to be on committees to do working group and those people are naturally interested in the area and stuff. You know Vice-deans for example, you know they put themselves forward so those people as well there is a respect there as well and I suppose the only kind of difficult area is those who you know you deal with infrequently who reluctantly engage with the Centre because their focus on the subject and the discipline, their loyalties ...

R: Research and the teaching and ...

I: Yes and we are an imposition on them. We as central administration but we also as the University because their loyalty will be to the discipline rather than the institution itself.

R: OK. We've probably touched on this anyway but do you think there is a fellow-feeling amongst academic managers with you know administration, central services, professional services?

I: I think there is to a certain extent. I think yes there's an understanding, a common aim or whatever. I still feel though that they ... naturally they will want to kind of protect their own staff in certain areas and stuff. So if you look at you know a Head of School or a School Manager whatever they will understand where we're coming from and they will accept it and stuff but at the same time they are having to respond to the expectation of staff within their School and sometimes they're caught in a hard place because they can understand the reason for something at the same time all their staff are against it. How do you manage it and it probably puts them in a trickier position I think. Yes.

R: And what about experiences of working with non-academic staff in Schools or in other departments in the centre? Do you think that relationship has changed in recent years?

I: I'm not sure necessarily. So ... the administrative staff within Schools ... I think they are becoming a little bit more professionalized. I think when I turned up here there was very much a throw back to the good old days where you had a School Secretary who wouldn't necessarily have much responsibility in terms of admin and I think that has changed a little bit with the taking on of more admin roles from academic staff and then when you look at other services like say Information Services

... I think they're very similar. I can't necessarily notice much of a change over the last few years. You know they have always had their own furrow to a certain extent and their own agenda so to speak. I mean the interesting thing I've found here working at ██████████████████████████████ is the relative power of some central units ████████████████ and you know their expectation that they can dictate how the University operates to a certain extent. You know I think partly it's down to the actual size of this institution that you are going to end up with large departments like that and they will be quite powerful whereas at the other institutions were significantly smaller, less resources so there was more central direction. Not necessarily from the Registrar's area but say from the Management Board level.

R: And do you think administrative and academic staff are managed in the same or in different ways?

I: Absolutely different ways to be honest. Absolutely different ways. My argument would be we are a lot more professional but ... yes. Because I mean for a start you have a complete and utter difference about the actual work you're expected to do so I think on the whole administrative staff ... you know you have a group of responsibilities, that's your area and this what you work in and you know it is relatively easy to define what people will do from a day-to-day basis. But I think then on the actual academic side of things completely different. You know the old identity of academics is based around whole different conceptions so you know we are essentially nine to five where they are ... you know it's their life doing their job so it's so many things involved. There's teaching, research, administration and stuff. Their whole ... how they conceptualise their work is completely different to how we do it. And as I say I think their loyalties lie elsewhere whereas our loyalty is maybe to our department but to the institution as a whole. Their loyalty will be ... I think they're quite insular. Their loyalty is to themselves and then to their subject area and then the institution that they work in. Not everyone like that but I think that's the different way of doing it. So then it comes to how you manage those and it is quite different because you've got your administrative staff it's almost like a process so you learn how to manage those whereas your academic staff I think is a lot more complicated beast how to manage and organise.

R: Complex individuals?

I: Yes that's it and it's sort of ... I wouldn't say the complaining majority but there is always the argument that they are special because you know we are academics and we are the life blood of the University, we are different, citing academic freedom and so on but when you get down to it ... what they do ... the arguments about academic freedom on highly questionable. You know by law basically I think you should be free to do things as long as it's not illegal or you know a threat to anyone else and so on. But people take it almost to the furthest extent you know I have freedom to do whatever I do when I want to do. You know not to come to work, to come to work and so on and I think there is a reluctance amongst many other academics to engage with you know the twenty first century in terms of the HE sector's expectations of them in terms of contact with students for example.

R: Student expectations.

I: Student expectations, students to an extent are expecting you know a certain service in return from the academic members of staff and whilst they'll get it from administration the biggest difficulty is getting it from the academics.

R: Particularly from a School background where there is all of the contact with teachers and ...

I: That's it and I think it's a big shock. The work we're trying to do at the moment is to deal with the transition you know from School to University. You know just simple things that you know you're in the class of 30 at School and then you come here and you could be in with a class of 300 and that's a real shock to people how you actually

deal with that. And then it's down to things like the actual ... with a class of 30 you have a lot of contact with your tutor, you get immediate feedback on a lot of your work and ... you know you're helped along whereas here ... who is your tutor? Is it that person standing at the front of your lecture who you see once a week, once a month? Is that postgraduate research student? You know students very much feel ... a lot of them do feel quite alone and disenfranchised at the University.

R: Quite a lonely place for them.

I: Yes.

R: OK and do you take it for granted that the VC and PVCs will be academics?

I: I think at this institution yes and I think it's once against down to the relative power of the academic power of the academic units, of the Schools and stuff because I think an important part of the leadership in terms of learning and teaching is that you know it is an academic leading them. It was notable when the VC came in he was quite clear making statements like I am ██████████, I work within ██████████ ██████████, I do x, y and z, this is my published research. You know he published his CV and you know explained how he got into academia and stuff which was quite interesting. Kind of ... rather than saying I've got these management skills, I've got these academic skills and stuff. And so I think to a certain extent there's an expectation that they will be academics and that is the way that somehow they are accepted and that they ... you know the Schools will respond to them because you know it's fellow academics talking to each other. Whether that's right or not, that's questionable because you know even though ... even if you are fantastic researcher and you've got to the top of the professorial ladder doesn't mean that you've got any common sense when it turns to running a business ... managing a business. I mean an economist yes but you know a Geographer, a Classicist for example what do the necessarily know about running a big business.

R: Staffing ...

I: Staff ... yes all those kind of issues and I think you do see it occasionally, some PVCs struggle with their portfolio because there's not necessarily that leadership structure within the University. So some will come up by Departmental Head roles, School Head roles, maybe a Dean and whatever and go to PVC. There's a natural transition and learning route. Some will just come straight in. So I think in this institution it's perceived as a natural thing but I think if you looked at it from an external environment you'd be quite surprised. And I think especially at post-92 institutions there's this acceptance now of more professional managers but even someone like Richard Sykes I think it is at UCL or Imperial you know he was ... he was a businessman so to speak and came in with a certain remit. And you know he was accepted. So ... I mean it would be interesting ... because I thought you know here when our VC went I wondered if they would appoint someone from industry for example because we are a great big multi-national company so to speak.

R: Yes. With international campuses and international business arms as well.

I: Absolutely. You know and there's a lot of money going through, we have a product, we have clients and you know why is that necessarily so different from just a normal business. The answer of course is because it is to do with academia and education but then when you look within the compulsory School sector you're getting a lot of professional managers coming in managing Schools but yes ... it's a whole acceptance thing here I think which is ... I don't know it would be interesting to see what happens over the next ten years whether that culture does change across the sector.

R: Or whether ██████ will be more of the same.

I: Yeah. Yes. And I mean it's interesting the appointment panel's are all appointing their own vision. And it's a natural thing as well. And I suppose as well you know the

perception from within the academic body is that if we have academics leading us they are going to protect us. Right or wrong I don't know.

R: We'll see. A bit of ... in the same way that Heads of School are ... not elected but they sort of rule by consensus in their School you know obviously it's sort of signed off at higher level but a Head of School can't be Head of School if he hasn't got consensus from the School and that sort of thing and you know the VC is a role ... OK not the VC so much but PVCs where it is consensus amongst the academic staff and things. So do you think administrative roles should be you know decided on in the same way?

I: Well it's an interesting ... I've just discussed the issues with consensus approach and you know yes it goes back to the old collegiate affair and stuff and ... administrative ... I mean it's a difficult thing because you are considering different beasts and I think you know administrators have maybe more professionalism in what we do so within industry you don't necessarily consult because ... one issue with the consensus approach is that you're not necessarily appointing the correct person to do the job. If you're just appointing someone like the people who are already in the job you know are you necessarily doing it to the best interest of the institution because you know managers have to take tough decisions and so essentially you need someone ... to a certain extent who is ... sort of divorced and separate from the rest of the working body to a certain extent but I mean ...

R: Sometimes doesn't mind being disliked?

I: No that's it I think so. But at the same time has to not be a likeable person but be someone who is able to fit in with the rest of the body and in that respect then I think it is useful in sort of getting some consensus in the appointment but I think the thing I prefer is that whenever an administrator is appointed that you do give other staff the opportunity to meet that person and maybe at a certain level just people going round, being introduced to the department and just asking a few questions of someone and at a another level perhaps a presentation as to a wider group and ... because especially through presentations they can get across their philosophy and their aims and it doesn't necessarily have to be in agreement with the rest of the people there but it's ... it is useful to see whether this person could to a certain extent fit in with the University so ... yes ... it's a combination of the two but I wouldn't have any problem with administrators not being appointed with the consensus of the rest of the body.

R: OK and who are you accountable to?

I: Interesting. Immediately my line manager. But I've always argued that if I do ███████████ work I'm accountable to the institution. So I always ... I'm looking after the best interests of the institution and the way that I look after the best interests of the institution is by being accountable to students. So I suppose I've got a manager at an immediate level but then it's the institution's best interests and then to students and probably academics below that because I think that's the important way of categorising it and I think being responsible to the institution is the main thing. It means that you know tough decisions have to be made that affect students. Tough decisions that affect academics and I suppose the administrators too. But I always you know ... because it's difficult sometimes when in ███████████ you have to say no to people and people don't like it and I never like just saying no and just leave it I try to justify what I do and why I do it. And a lot of quality assurance processes are put in there to safeguard the institution itself.

R: Yes and it's reputation and ... how it's perceived.

I: Yes so to a certain extent that's where I feel my primary loyalty. And in certain instances with my line manager is doing something where I don't believe it's to the benefit of the institution, it's not safeguarding risk you know I would take the step of actually you know maybe side-stepping my line manager to get something done. So I suppose ultimate accountability is to the institution.

R: OK and looking forward over the next two or three years do you think your experiences will change, experiences of work, things will change?

I: I don't know. I think that if I looked back in say three years ... if I looked back things will be quite different. Because I think there's a big change in the ██████ ████████ environment going to be happening externally and the expectation that we'll be more responsive to students. That we're going to kind of give more information on our courses and we might have bit more heavy QA environment. But I think the way things work it's quite incremental and quite slowly so you don't necessarily notice a major change happening so to speak. And I think in the way that we deal with our students ... I think you know we will deal with them in quite a different way. We will be more technically savvy at providing a lot more information. But in some respects we will probably still not move on a great deal so I think you know changes are afoot but I think it will be slow but if you know you look back will think things are quite different. And the way that we do administration ... I would hope that technology would assist us in what we do, working smarter and more efficient. But I'm very sceptical about whether that would actually happen so I should imagine we're going to waste a lot of energy trying new ways of doing things and where there's actually no actual substitution for picking up the phone and talking to someone or having a meeting with a group of people and coming to an agreement. And it's quite interesting that ... sorry going off at a tangent here but ... there was an exhibition about Raleigh at the Arts Centre ... Lakeside Arts Centre maybe about six months ago and they had some copies of minute books from the turn of the century ... the turn of the twentieth century in 1903 or 4 and I looked at the minutes and they are extremely similar style to the minutes I do now. They way that they conducted their business was just the same. I was sort of expecting this archaic rather discursive way of doing it but no very similar to what we do. You know very much ... you could tell that there was some difficult decisions that they were making but it was couched in such a way that it couldn't be misinterpreted to any extent and we do that with our minutes you know very difficult decisions that need recording but you do really carefully a turn or phrase. The way that they discuss things and yes actually even their turns of phrase. Because I use the words in regard to and they were using in regard to and I just was absolutely amazed so in that regard, the way that business operates doesn't necessarily change over time.

R: Yes and the business of the University is teaching, research, learning?

I: Absolutely and you know things will change, knowledge will change and we will change how we actually teach students. You know we will hopefully be a little bit more aware about how they learn and how to enhance the way they learn and stuff but it will be quite slow I should imagine and you know knowledge is knowledge how ... the core thing actually will probably be quite similar.

R: OK well that's the end of my questions for today. So is there anything else that you think is relevant that you haven't had an opportunity to tell me about?

I: No. I mean because we were talking about general management change aren't we. It's quite ... I've always come up with a thing where I've always said oh this would never work in the private sector, I can't believe that we're wasting so much time doing x, y and z, I can't believe that we spend so long making a decision and I get really frustrated sometimes when you think the decision needs to be made quite promptly and it doesn't because it goes through committee after committee and so on and I always think the private sector you know they just make decisions quite snappily but then I've talked to people recently who just say if you go to a big company like Boots, Rolls Royce it's just the same you know bureaucracy gets in the way and I think bureaucracy is bred by being such a large institution and suddenly the expectation that you've got to tick so many different constituencies into consideration ... so we all want to make a change here and you've got international campuses to consider and how it's going to affect them and ... you know before you know it three years down the line nothing has changed at all. So I did think that there was a

change between the private sector ... a difference but perhaps I'm coming to the consideration that perhaps there isn't necessarily.

R: Yes well it's a long time since I worked in a company but yes.   It's probably as bad everywhere or as good everywhere. People are involved in the decision making.

I: Yes. My expectation was that because money is the bottom line in the private sector that they would make those decision and I presume there is still more chance that they will make decisions that will affect people in terms of their personal histories, human resources they will be a little bit more decisive than here but who knows.

R: OK thank you.

I: You're welcome.

Appendix IX – Example of Extract from Coded Transcript

Baseline - academic critique a challenge

Influences

341 conditions up you probably don't find change come to you and you probably
342 do you probably have to ... put perhaps an overly positive spin on things or *manipulate*
343 manipulate things a little bit or force them because naturally you're not going *or force*
344 to find yourself in a position where you're getting lots of positive feedback or *create*
345 lots of really useful suggestions for change. You have to create some of *conditions*
346 those conditions for yourself I think. Am I making any sense? I've only just
347 started to think about it but ... but I think you have to. I think it's going
348 nowhere sort of constant negative thing and undervalued, underappreciated *negative*
349 sort of sense can only lead to a negative spiral as well. *spirals*
350

351 R: Giving out negative vibes to everybody else as well.
352

353 I: You have to accept ... as an administrative in the University you have to *accept will*
354 accept that you will be under scrutiny, you will be challenged. I mean the *be challenged*
355 whole nature of what you do is that you are surrounded by a collective of *collective*
356 individual thinkers who critique every moment of their day. That's their ... *thinkers*
357 that's the way they act, the way they operate. That's what you get working *critique*
358 in a university so that's the baseline if you can't handle that then you're in *challenge!*
359 the wrong place. Not necessarily the wrong job, you're in the wrong place.
360 But saying that it's perfectly possible to be an administrator here and
361 perhaps not to have to instigate change that's foist upon you by
362 governments and regulations. There are pockets of administration in the *positive if*
363 university that are very creative and are all about you know, maximising *generating*
364 income and any inroads that they can make are seen in a very positive light *income*
365 because they have a direct correlation with income generation. In the
366 Registrar's department generally speaking we're not like that so you don't *no instant*
367 get that instant satisfaction and ... you don't ... you shouldn't expect it really. *satisfaction*
368 You get your buzz out of different things. Out of putting things in place ...
369 yes I suppose in the Registrar's Department if you don't enjoy trying to make *need to*
370 changes and improvements then again you're probably in the wrong job *enjoy*
371 because you're going to have to. There's no such thing as static here and *change &*
372 there's no such thing as one goal or one theme. It's a hugely complicated *improvement*
373 set of conditions that we're working under really you know. I don't ... I'm not *complicated*
374 oversimplifying other things but you know in a sales market you know what *conditions*
375 your job is, you repeat the same thing over and over and over again. You
376 know exactly how to do it and what to do and it's perhaps just quantities and
377 customers that change. With us, you know everything could be turned *prof behavic*
378 upside down and the ... the intelligence of all the people around both help to *needs*
379 stimulate and help to make it more of a challenging environment. I don't *intelligence*
380 think it's an easy environment to work in is what I'm coming to. *stimulating*
381 *env*

382 R: Kind of leads on to the next question. Are there any barriers to *could be*
383 effectiveness, what do you think are the barriers to effectiveness? *turned upside*
384 *down .*

385 I: This is where you should play some music on your tape while the thought
386 process goes on. Well you know ... that's interesting. Most people ask about
387 barriers to change so barriers to effectiveness. Maybe some of them are the *lazy answers*
388 same things. It's kind of the lazy answer to say oh we don't have enough *time*
389 time, we don't have enough money, we don't have enough resource. I don't *money*
390 always think that's true. Some of the barriers to effectiveness I think *resource*
391 are genuinely down to people's satisfaction or people ... people disengaging. *people*
392 So there's a difference between doing your job ... and wanting to do your job *disengaging*
393 well I suppose. There's ... if you're not satisfied or stimulated then I think
394 you're never going to be very effective. So I think there's all sorts of ...
395 communications issues that ... perhaps two or three steps removed ultimately
396 to things not being effective or people being ... not being effective. But again
397 I think there's lots of human issues as to why that happens. Because when I

difference between doing job and
wanting to do it well
need to be satisfied & stimulated

223

398 think about our area, and I think about myself personally, am I effective at
399 what I do, I'm most effective when ... I suppose for me I'm most effective
400 when I feel I'm in a crisis or in a major challenge. That's just me personally.
401 I think I respond very well to challenge and crises and not everybody does.
402 And you know you would hope that nine days out of ten you're not having a
403 crisis anyway but where I get my stimulation from is changing things. Is
404 seeing things through. So I think ... your approach and your attitude to
405 things has a lot to do with how effective you are. Some of the time it's also
406 knowing the rules. You know, there's absolutely no point ... trying to force
407 something through when, you know, there are lots of reasons why it's not
408 going to happen. You would then feel ineffective but you know there are
409 conditions beyond your control so I think you've got to understand the
410 organisation in which you are in and other people's perspectives when you're
411 bringing something to the table. So I think, it's probably amateur
412 psychology but I just think you've got to empathise and you've got to
413 understand what the other positions around the table might be to give you
414 much of a chance of getting what you want. So going into a meeting ...
415 that's a perfect example ... going into a meeting, try and imagine what the
416 other stakeholders views might be going in to that meeting to then try and
417 decide, you know, the chances of you being successful in what you're doing.
418 And I would suggest that if you don't know them, if you're not prepared and
419 you don't know what those other stakeholders might think or do think or the
420 history around it then you're not being effective because you're about to sit
421 in a meeting where you're not likely to get the result that you want. You
422 haven't prepared properly for it. And it's a bit of a waste ... all that will
423 happen is you will come away feeling that ... you know that nobody
424 understand and that you haven't got what you wanted. Well you kind of
425 brought that on yourself a little bit. I mean sometimes it doesn't go your
426 way anyway no matter what your point of view because you just don't have
427 the majority view but I think there's a lot more to getting things through
428 than turning up the day the decision is being made. So I ... call it
429 manipulative ... I suppose it is manipulative but I think you've got to be
430 really, really knowledgeable about your organisation and about the people
431 you are dealing with if you think you're going to be effective.
432
433 R: OK. Moving on we've touched on academics and the sort of management
434 structure or whatever but can you tell me about experiences of working with
435 academic staff. Do you think the relationship has changed in recent years?
436
437 I: Yes. I think it probably has changed. It depends what you're working on
438 I suppose but generally speaking if it's changed it's because ... I still think
439 there is a them and us. I still think that you accept that most of time your
440 role isn't ... I don't think academics are very good at all at doing the thing
441 that I just said about trying to imagine yourself in the position of other
442 people around the table. I don't think they feel the need to do it, I don't
443 think they do it, and so empathy is a missing art. So if you accept that
444 they ... that they will provide their point of view but not necessarily take the
445 time to understand your point of view ... that's ... that's how relations break
446 down a little bit but you know I think we go out of our way and probably too
447 sensitive and maybe sort of expect to have difficulties with academics. We
448 don't always. And you'll always get academics ... the more that they perhaps
449 play a part in a joint process that you're doing, the more empathy you'll get
450 and more shared understanding you'll get. Where ... more often than not
451 where they ... what something you do filters into something they do or they
452 do yours but they're not joint in the same way they're just elements of a
453 larger process I think that often there isn't either the time or the inclination
454 to understand the other bits of the process going on. I think academics are

Margin handwritten notes:
- most effective response to challenge
- approach & attitude
- 'knowing the rules'
- understanding
- 'awareness'
- know other views
- preparation, historical knowledge
- more to getting things through than turning up on one day, know your organisation, people
- still them and us
- acos. don't imagine other positions
- no empathy
- more play part in process more empathy share meaning

Bottom handwritten notes:
expect to have difficulties
accept won't understood as part of view
link to W.M - don't get out of School

455 ... it's not longer a world of ivory towers. You know you're a twenty
456 something academic, you're under huge amounts of pressure to make your
457 mark and again you may have loyalty to your department, you may feel
458 yourself as a lone individual, you may have loyalty to your research group or
459 even nationally to your research area of interest. You don't really have
460 loyalty to the institution and you can't afford to have time to have loyalty to
461 the institution because to get to a position where you can have any influence
462 in your institution or make your mark you need to get up that scale. So you
463 need to publishing like mad, researching like mad, trying to hold down a
464 contract because you probably haven't got a permanent one. So I think as a
465 twentysomething academic it's a hugely different world then it was twenty,
466 thirty years ago and I think certainly the teaching only academic was never a
467 big thing here but it is a real dying breed and it's considered a loss of kudos
468 to be just teaching academic and a lot of the authority of academics comes
469 from their research. So yes I think things have changed for academics and
470 the pressures they're under in a great way which probably changed their
471 relationship with us. Put more pressure on their relationship with us even
472 further and especially in that environment where as I say they probably
473 haven't got a permanent contract, they're probably researching every hour
474 that there is to try and make their mark. We, more often than not, aren't
475 seen to be under the same pressures because it's a ... but we see ourselves
476 very much as ... we've got much more of an identity of working for the good
477 of the institution. Working for institutional goals. That's quite often where
478 misunderstanding arises that you know, when I used to work in quality
479 assurance, it was processes that were for the good of the institution and it's
480 reputation but very much foisted upon academics as extra work. We needed
481 their input, we had to try and get it but you know there was nothing in it for
482 them. It was all for the institution. I think we accept the concept of
483 institutional benefit much more than individual academics do because that's
484 not part of how they get success.

486 R: No their loyalty potentially is to the research group because their kudos
487 comes from their research output and the name that they have within that
488 world.
489

490 I: Yes and as I say, I think generally speaking people don't look beyond
491 what's around them so if you're an academic in a School you can very, very
492 easily see the contribution that your administrative colleagues in the School
493 make and especially perhaps somebody at Director level or School Manager
494 level you can see that what they actually probably do is make your life easier
495 and take work off you. You're one step ... unless you've got involved in
496 University processes you're one step further removed from central
497 administrators and as I say your whole ... you can't understand necessarily
498 what they do and you don't share the same institutional benefit concept.
499 Whereas, I think probably, I don't know, you may or may not find this, an
500 administrator in a School ... I've never been an administrator in a School, and
501 I know you have, probably has a very different view about where their
502 loyalties lie and whether they are somewhere in between that sense of
503 institutional ... you know they work for the institution, for institutional benefit
504 and they work for the benefit of their School within the bigger fish pond of
505 the institution.
506

507 R: I think there is a feeling when you're in a School that you are sort of ...
508 you are really ... yes you work for the institution but really you're there to
509 benefit your School because you're trying to make things for ... like you say
510 for your academics. You're sort of fighting the corner for your academics

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Appendix X – Example of Memo

Universities are changing places and middle managers are managers of 'business' at an operational level; projects; staff management (leading teams); implement operational change; input into strategic change; historical perspective but this may colour what they do; keeping in synch with other Universities.

Self-perception – what do they think the role is for? Grow into roles and gain experience and confidence. Build respect and become an authority. Manage change by building trust. Trust relationships.

The pace of constant change and feeling of not always being involved in decision making which affects working practices, teams, operations etc. may lead to feelings of frustration and alienation stress and depression. This is evidenced in interviews by explicit reference or observation of negative responses and reactions. Not everyone is able to view change as an opportunity.

Professional behaviours enable middle managers to operate between operation and strategy in School/Centre between senior management and colleagues 'below' them. A number of skills appear necessary and are evidenced – negotiating skills (working towards solutions negotiating between diverse interests), influencing skills (linked with persuasion of a course of action), facilitating (using operational or experiential knowledge to facilitate work or solutions, interpreting (senior management policy in operation; data; interpreting upwards to senior management); knowledge (tacit knowledge gained through experience of the organisation or function facilitates operational and strategic change); experience leads to 'awareness' (necessary skill – awareness of own area but also wider – division/school, university and sector) not necessarily 'helicopter vision' but wider than 'localised' knowledge.
Successful middle managers speak the 'right' language and 'know the rules' of the game. Exposure to Committees, senior management 'thinking', self-motivation – socialisation? Concept of 'institutional benefit'.

Middle managers ability to be involved in strategic change appears to be limited by their role and management structure plus the management structure of the wider Uni – hierarchical bureaucracy with a professional 'elite' academics who have the major deciding roles in strategic decisions. Example given of MM who says is majorly involved in strategic decision making and then describes behaviours which are influencing, prompting, interpreting for senior management team but own role is not to make the decision. Difference between involvements in decision taking – how much influence?

Appendix XI – Examples of 'thinking' diagrams

CHALLENGES — PRESSURES — INTERNAL
— EXTERNAL

↓

CHANGE

Types — Planned
unplanned
Strategic
operational
Reactive
Proactive
Big Bang
Incremental
CONSTANT

REACTIONS — Restructuring
— Personal → Proj Mgl.
— Implementing

GOALS/
OBJECTIVES — DRIVERS
OF
CHANGE

ACTUAL
DRIVERS

PERCEPTIONS
OF
CHANGE

MANAGEMENT
OF
CHANGE

RELATIONSHIPS — PARTNERSHIP
— HIERARCHY
— PERSONAL
TRUST
AUTHORITY

CHANGING NATURE OF: WORK
ROLE

COMMUNICATION   AUTHORITY   BARRIERS

CULTURE   STRUCTURE

228

Appendix XII – Historical Management and Committee Structures

1986 Structures

COURT

COUNCIL

SENATE

Non-teaching staff and establishments

Estates and Buildings — Finance

- Car Parking
- Safety
- Physical Recreation

- Investments
- Finance Sub-Cttee
- Catering

Advisory Committees

Careers
Agricultural
Law
Military Educ.

Departmental Maintenance & Equip. Grant

Boards of PG & UG Studies

Research Funds Allocations

Faculty Boards

Dept. Staff

Dept. Staff/Student Consultative

Staffing Committee

Delegacy for Extra-Mural Studies

Disciplinary Panels

Standing Committee

Staff/Student Consultative Committee

- Library
- Computing
- Publications
- Bookshop
- Educ. Tech.
- Info. Tech.
- Biol. Hazards
- Radiation Protection
- Shell Centre
- Committee of Privileges
- Shell Centre Mang.
- Chair Promotions

Welfare Advisory

General Planning

Industrial & Business Liaison

Joint Appointments

Halls   Lodgings & Flats   Health Centre   Disabled Students

Gardens

VICE-CHANCELLOR

PRO-VICE-CHANCELLORS

DEANS

VICE DEANS

HEADS OF DEPTS.

WARDENS

DIRECTOR OF HEALTH CENTRE

BURSAR

DIRECTOR OF WORKS

CATERING MANAGER

DIRECTOR OF PHYSICAL REC.

REGISTRAR

HEAD OF CAREERS ADVISORY

ACCOMMODATION OFFICER

LIBRARIAN

DIRECTOR OF UNIV. ART GALLERY

CURATOR OF UNIV. MUSEUM

CHAIRMAN OF SAFETY CTTEE

SAFETY AND RAD. PROTC. OFFICER

CHAIRMAN OF TRAINING OF UNIV. TEACHERS SUB-CTTEE

READER IN TEACHING METHDS. AND EDUC. TECH.

CHAIRMAN OF IND. AND BUS. LIAISON OFFICE

IND. AND BUS. LIAISON OFFICER

CHAIRMAN OF COMPUTING CENTRE CTTEE

DIRECTOR OF COMPUTING CENTRE

2004/05 Structures

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Vice-Chancellor

Registrar
- Academic Administration
- Human Resources
- Staff & Educational Development
- Committee Services
- Planning
- Student Administration
- Student Support Services
- Governance Support

Chief Financial Officer
- Finance
- Research & Business Services
- Physical Recreation
- Procurement
- Internal Audit
- Safety
- Superannuation

Director of Information Services
- Customer Services
- IT Systems
- Research & Learning Resources
- Planning & Quality

Pro-Vice-Chancellors

External Relations Group
- Marketing Unit
- Public Affairs Office
- Development Office
- Lakeside Arts

Estate Office

Catering & Residential Services

Deans of Faculties & of Graduate School

Heads of Schools

COUNCIL

Strategy & Planning Committee
- Management Group
- International Committee
- Strategy Group for Information Services
- Reach-Out & Regional Strategy Group

Finance & General Purposes Committee
- Catering & Residential Services Committee*
- Space Management Committee
- Environment Committee

Equality & Diversity Committee *
- Advisory Group on Disability
- Advisory Group on Gender
- Advisory Group on Race Equality

Safety Committee
- Statutory Safety Committee

Staff Policy Committee †
- Academic & Academic-Related Salary Review Committee
- Support Staff Salary Review Committee
- Research Promotions Committee
- Consultative Committee for Support Staff
- Joint Consultative Committee (AUT)
- Staff Development Advisory Group

- Audit Committee
- Careers Advisory Board
- Council Membership Committee
- Honorary Degrees Sifting Committee
- Military Education Committee
- Remuneration Committee

*   Halls Advisory Committee reports to this Committee when appropriate
†   Committee for Special Appointments reports to Staff Policy Committee when appropriate
**   Equality & Diversity Committee also reports to Senate

SENATE

- **Research Committee**
  - **Strategy Groups**
    - Main Strategy Groups:
      - Humanities & Social Sciences
      - Engineering & Physical Sciences
      - Biological & Medical Sciences
      - Graduate Strategy Group

- **Teaching Committee**
  - Access & Participation Committee
  - Collaborative Courses Committee
  - Educational Development Advisory Group (EDAG)
  - Research Degrees Committee (RDC)
  - Taught Courses Committee (TCC)
  - Academic Appeals Committee (joint committee of TCC & RDC)
  - **Academic Boards**
    These Boards report to TCC and RDC on teaching quality and academic standards matters.
    - Humanities: Arts, Social Sciences, Education
    - Science & Engineering
    - Board of the Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences

- **Promotions Committee**

- **Senate Disciplinary Committee**

- **Student Services Committee***
  - Student Support Funds Committee

- **Equality & Diversity Committee****
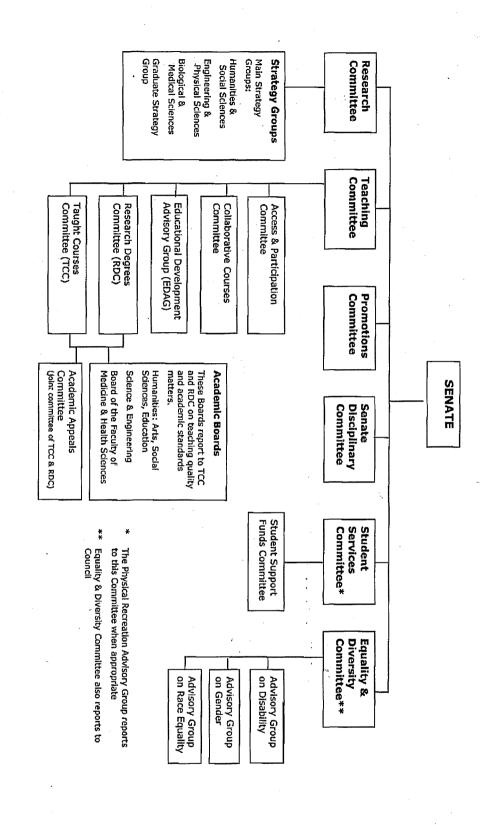 - Advisory Group on Disability
  - Advisory Group on Gender
  - Advisory Group on Race Equality

* The Physical Recreation Advisory Group reports to this Committee when appropriate

** Equality & Diversity Committee also reports to Council

Vice-Chancellor

Pro-Vice-Chancellors

Deans of Faculties
and of Graduate School

Heads of Schools

Chief Financial Officer

- Finance
- Research Innovation Services
- Procurement
- Internal Audit
- Safety
- Superannuation

Registrar

- Academic Administration
- Committee Services
- Planning & MI
- Student Administration
- Student Support Services
- Governance Support
- Physical Recreation
- Marketing
- Communications

Chief Information Officer

- Customer Services
- IT Systems
- Research &
  Learning Resources

Estate Office

Development Office

Nottingham Hospitality

International Office

Human Resources

Professional Development

Lakeside

Widening Participation

Active Communities

Research and Knowledge Transfer Board

Learning & Teaching Committee

Research Ethics Committee

Senate

Student Affairs Committee

Management Board

Equality & Diversity Committee

Academic Boards:
- Humanities
- Science & Engineering
- Medicine & Health Sciences

- Academic Appeals Committee

- Transnational Education Committee

- e-Learning/e-Knowledge Committee

Postgraduate Strategy Committee

Promotions Committee

Senate Disciplinary Committee

- Environment Committee

- Space Management Committee

- Careers Advisory Board

- Military Education Committee

- Staff Equality & Diversity Advisory Group

- Student Equality & Diversity Advisory Group

Appendix XIII – GT Categories and Codes (Example)

Category	Sub-categories	Codes
Change	'sorts' of change	Planned (reactive, proactive, external, internal) unplanned operational strategic reactive (external/internal imposition) proactive (maintain position, stay ahead of the game) 'Big bang' Incremental Constant (pressures, reactions, responses) Process (maintaining position, maintaining service, improving position/service, streamlining, dealing with increased numbers) Structural (realignment, reorganising) Systems change (IT systems)
	Drivers of change	External environment (NSS, Economy, QAA, RAE, Bologna, Community) Internal environment (efficiency, effectiveness, staffing, surveys, UQA, buildings, increases in numbers, work intensification) Goals and objectives (Uni, Division, School, Department, Team)
	Challenges/Barriers	Challenges student satisfaction student experience staff satisfaction staff expectations administration burden complexity of provision delivering what is required Barriers environment people relationships culture involvement professional elite how decisions are taken negative perceptions structural systems communication
	Reactions to change	Feelings negative reactions (stress,

		depression, frustration) positive reactions (embracing, wanting to get on with it) perceptions of change
	Efficiency/Effectiveness	Formal measures of effectiveness (KPIs, external audit, formal feedback, service level agreements, performance review, 'success', NSS) Informal measures (perceptions, informal feedback, students come, reputation, feel we're doing a good job, nothing goes wrong, lack of negative feedback) Efficiency (savings, streamlining, 'doing more with less', economies of scale)
	Culture/Structure	Academic culture Institutional culture Community Decision making (Committee, consultation, takes time, collegiality, involvement in e.g. reviews, outcomes of decision-making) Bureaucracy Hierarchy
	Structure	Different cultures

Appendix XIV – GT Coding (Example)

Change

Planned 01/01/01	MMM01,134 MMM07,179 MAM02,220 JMF05,160 MAF03,148,393 MMF04,158,161 SMM01,130 MMF13,638 SAM01,1125 MMF10,209 SAM03,220 MMF16,227	
Unplanned 01/01/02	SAM01,215 SAM02,75 MMM07,80 JMF05	
Operational 01/01/03	MMM02,154,188,548 MAF01,97 MMF08,47 MMF16,82,313,329 MMM07,114 MAF03,83 SAM02,370 MMF04,26,33 MMF10,552 JMF03,373 JMF06,375,496 MMF05,756 MMF13,75 SAM03,192 MMF06,446	
Strategic 01/01/04	MMM02,545 MAM02,176,251 JMF06,152 MMF03,133,144,155 MMF08,52 SAM01,194,1095 SMM02,86,430 MMM07,119 SAM02,115,139,273,621,632 MMF10,212 JMF05,124 MMM01,84,144,160 MMF04,123 MMF03,110,243 SAM03,185,258 MMF05,140 MMF13,67,240 JMM07,170 MMM11,1394	

Change

Reactive 01/01/05	SAM02,77 MMF16,372 MAF03,70 JMF06,364 MMF08,60 MMF05,613
Proactive 01/01/06	MMM02,535 JMF06,105 MMF03,125 MAM02,50
Big Bang 01/01/07	MMF16,286 JMF06,130
Incremental 01/01/08	JMF01,165 SAM03,857 MMM07,340,705,749 MMF03,284 MAF01,85,746,754,780,791 JMM07,252 MMF10,586
Constant 01/01/09	JMF05,58, 169, 212,347 MMF16,99 MAF01,263 MAF03,195,199,287 JMF06,118,127,503 MMF16,WW MMF08,44 MAF03,72 MMM07,71 SAM01,279,287 MMF04,476 MMM01,285,292 JMF03,587 MMF06,88,104 MMF03,487 MMF13,79 MMF05,645 JMJM07,474
Process 01/01/10	MMM01,584 MMM11,678,945 JMF05,184 JMF03,298 MMF03,247 MMM11,1442 MAM02,47 MMF13,69 JMM07,545 MMF10,377 MMF13,85,243,778

Change

	Structural 01/01/11 01/04/09	MMM01,40,63,222 MMF16, 284,514,770,778 MAF03,330 JMF06,95,110 MMF03,140,198 MMF04,58,486 MAM02,321,623,625 SMM02,59,284 JMF03,363 JMF01,248 SMM01,41 MMF13,819 MMM11,266,552 SAM03,200,207,665 MMF13,789 MMF06,68,149,674 MMM01,327 SAM02,351,383,403 MMF16,167 MMF08,102 MAF01,279,397 SMM02,204 JMF05,436 SAM01,125,357 MMF05,216 MMF10,338 JMM07,318 JMF06,442,743 MMM11,401
	Systems 01/01/12	MMM02,460,465 MAF01,151 JMF05,290 MMF16, 253,366,381 MMF04,184 MAF03,283 JMF03,775,800,805 MMM07,714 MMF10,56 MMF05,165,662 MMM01,578 MMM11,380 MMF13, 252,780,871,886,898 SAM03,850
	Staffing 01/01/13	SAM03,177,181,647 SAM01,400 MMF05,667 MAM02,328 SAM02,217 MAF03,80,94,295,410,420 MMM11,1409 SMM01,47 MMF13,771 MMF10,40 MMF06,108,131

External 01/02/01	MMM01,203 SAM02,255,259,277 SAM01,110,369 JMF06,298 MAF03,114 MM07,314,320,702 SMM02,55 JMF05,251,264,283 MMF10,236,473 JMF01,141 MMF04,178 JMF03,283,250 MMF03,177 MMF06,183,196,223,249,272 MMF05,150,209,238,650,655 MMM11,370 SAM03,274,302 MMF13,179,461,507,513
Internal 01/02/02	MMM02,198,247 MMM07,354 MAF01,129 JMF06,317,3234 SMM01,91,374 JMF05,311 MAM02,88 JMF03,255,289 MMF10,140 MMF04,250 MMF13,472,487 JMF01,244 MMF06,208,264 SAM03,279
Goals/Objectives 01/02/03	MMM02,168 JMF06,346,398 SAM01,229,435 MMM07,273 MAF01,324 JMF03,311,325,338 SAM02,236 MMM01,129 MMF10,613 MMF03,210,250,353 MMF08,67 JMM07,219 MMF06,593,623 SAM03,325,332
Student Satisfaction/Student Experience 01/03/01 01/03/02	MMM07,46,318 SAM01,585,1287,1299,1310,1335,1352 MAF01,212,245,331,437,471 MAF03,156 SAM02,323 SMM02,415,421,449 JMF06,385,387,408 MAM02,643 MMF10,238,256,262,298,331 MMM02,426 SMM01,177 MMM01,40,600 JMF01,257 MMF03,280,287,299,359,389

	MMF13,836 MMF05,295 MMF06,231 JMM07,341 SAM03,288,831 MMM11,572,592 MMM11,582 SAM01,1292,1306,1327,1380 MMF04,46 MAM02,224 MMM07,409,557,563 SMM02,126 MAF01,502 MMF03,303,314 MMF10,281,285 MMF05,669 JMF01,269 MMF13,293,306 MMF06,94 SAM03,292
Staff Satisfaction/Staff Expectations 01/03/03 01/03/04	MMM02,390,407 MAF01,159, 288 MMF16, 640, 797 SAM02,676 MAF03,291 JMF06,408 MAM02,324 SAM01,66 MMM07,102,738 JMF05,508,516 MAF01,199 MMM02,603 MMM02,209,410 MMF16,45,589,784 SAM01,645 MAF03,258,264 SMM01,123 SAM02,659 SMM02,135 JMF06,356 MAM02,640 JMM07,350 MMF06,787 SAM03,411
Admin Burden 01/03/05	MMF05,727 MMF08,109 MMF13,280 MAF03,182,189,192,303,423 JMF05,164,181 MMF06,792 MMF10,51,65,126,241,568
Complexity 01/03/06	JMF05,611 MMF16,118,580,837 SAM01,283 MAF03,119,279 MAF01,401 SMM02,137,202 SAM02,638 MMF10,352,382

	MMF08,125,360 SMM01,119 MMM07,615 MAM02,259,473,536 MMF04,455 SAM03,837 MMM03,39,44 MMF05,732,738,765,779 MMM11,791 MMF13,262,651
Delivery 01/03/07	MMM07,325,349 MMF16,408,571 SAM01,515,1105 MAF03,125,396 MAF01,274,340 SMM01,132,369 MMF08,367 MMF10,47,290 JMF05,97 MAM02,206,632,650 MMM02,486,497,514 MMM01,613 MMF04,458 MMF13,269,320,331,774,807 MMF03,477 MMM11,558,784,1089 MMF05,752 SAM03,845
Environment 01/04/01	MMF05,385 MMF16,426 MAM02,179,292 SAM02,670 MAF03,190,407 JMF0S6,210 SAM01,324 MMF10,355,440 MMF08,340 SMM01,156,209 MMM06,74 JMM07,298,314,322 MMM11,1034

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