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Introduction

Changing career structures, award and recognition systems, and work patterns

Toward a comprehensive cross-national comparative view of European academics

European academics have been at the very center of ongoing higher education reforms across the continent. Changes in university governance and funding, as widely reported (Musselin and Teixeira, 2014; Jongbloed and Lepori 2015; de Boer et al. 2017; Bleiklie, Enders, and Lepori 2017), have inevitably led to changes in academic work and life. Traditional theories of social stratification in science, penetrating as they are, appear to be only partially useful in analyzing the directions of ongoing changes as viewed from a cross-European empirical perspective. New academic realities seem to require a closer look at the micro-level data and, by extension, traditional theories. Today, academics are in the eye of the storm, and this book examines the drivers of the aforementioned changes and their current and expected results.

Only in the last decade has it become possible to study the academic profession—that is, academics' attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions, with the individual academic as a unit of analysis—from a quantitative comparative European perspective. A decade ago, it was difficult, if not impossible, to undertake a comprehensive cross-national examination of ongoing transformations. Most studies were single-nation, and most published research was country-specific, with individual chapters devoted to academics in the context of various aspects of changing university governance and funding.

This book provides a panoramic view of the academic profession—specifically, from the university sector—across Europe in 11 national systems (Austria, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom). Until recently, gaining such a perspective was possible at only a very general level, and it was based predominantly on aggregated national higher education statistics. In contrast, this book adopts a quantitative approach based on 17,211 returned questionnaires that were distributed across Europe (and the accompanying qualitative background, which is based on 480 semi-structured in-depth interviews).

This book confronts misconceptions about academic work and life and provides compelling results of detailed analyses performed on large-scale primary

empirical material. It asks traditional research questions that are rooted in new comparative empirical contexts, as well as entirely new questions that are pertinent to the changing conditions of academic work. It also confronts academics across Europe who are facing new dilemmas that are inherent in the changing social and economic environments of higher education. Academics from major European systems and beyond can view their own academic trajectories within the context of a larger, cross-national story.

Reputation-and-resource model of scientific careers

Research interest in social stratification in academic science was accelerated with Robert K. Merton's claim that science has an ethos and is organized by the four norms of universalism, communism (or communalism), disinterestedness, and organized skepticism. The four norms govern academic behaviors and form a theory of the normative structure of science (Merton 1973; Hermanowicz 2012). Academics follow the norms because 'like other institutions, the institution of science has developed an elaborate system for allocating rewards to those who variously live up to its norms' (Merton 1973: 297). Universalism is contrasted with particularism, which refers to factors such as age, race, gender, religion, and political or sexual orientation, which are said to be functionally irrelevant to institutional operation but are used in the evaluation of people and their work. Discussion of the extent to which science is governed by universalism, as well as by particularism, has been ongoing ever since Merton formulated this basic contrast. The norm of communism holds that knowledge must be shared, not kept secret, and this is where academic knowledge has often been contrasted with industry knowledge (especially before commercialization came to academe, modifying academic behaviors). The norm of disinterestedness holds that the motives and conduct of science should not be influenced by personal bias; neither personal gains nor issues related to prestige or money should be relevant. Finally, the norm of organized skepticism holds that scientific judgments are to be held until all necessary evidence is on hand to make evaluations of scholarship (Hermanowicz 2012: 211).

Merton developed a reputation-and-resource model of scientific careers starting with three premises: Resources in the scientific world are limited, scientific talent is difficult to observe directly, and the allocation of resources in science is governed by the norms of universalism and communism (DiPrete and Eirich 2006). In the process of accumulative advantage, exceptional research performance early in a young scientist's career attracts new resources, as well as rewards that facilitate continued high performance. Scientific resources are not simply rewards for past productivity; they are allocated to stimulate future productivity:

> With limited ability to evaluate the great mass of ongoing scientific work, and with limited ability to measure future productivity beforehand, the

> scientific community favours those who have been most successful in the past, given their additional resources and attention.
>
> (DiPrete and Eirich 2006: 281–282)

Three consequences of this mechanism are reported at the individual level: The gap in the rewards between a more able and less able scientist may grow over time; chance events may produce a relative advantage for scientists of identical talent, and this relative advantage may increase over time; and the so-called 'Matthew effect', according to which scientists with greater reputations may gain greater rewards from work of the same quantity and quality than scientists with lesser reputations, may result (DiPrete and Eirich 2006: 281–282).

In his theory of the normative structure of science, Merton pointed out that the institution of science has developed a reward system that is designed to give recognition and esteem to those scientists who have best fulfilled their roles:

> On every side the scientist is reminded that it is his role to advance knowledge and his happiest fulfilment of that role, to advance knowledge greatly …. When the institution of science works efficiently … recognition and esteem accrue to those who have best fulfilled their roles, to those who have made genuinely original contributions to the common stock of knowledge.
>
> (Merton 1973: 293)

'Recognition for originality' in science is a 'socially validated testimony' to successfully fulfilling the requirements of the role of scientist (Merton 1973: 293). Academic rewards constitute academic recognition, which is centrally situated in the occupation of science and the lives and minds of scientists (Hermanowicz 2009: 12). Consequently, what is believed to motivate most scientists is 'the desire for peer recognition' (Cole and Cole 1973: 10).

Prestige, success, status, and recognition in academic science

In the last half century, Merton's institutional norms of science as a major mechanism governing higher education and academic research have been tested from various angles; however, they seem to have become systematically threatened within the last two decades or so.

The major attack on the traditional academic rules of conduct governed by the above overarching academic norms does not seem to be coming directly from outside the university sector: It seems to be coming from the inside, and only indirectly from the outside, powered by what has been termed 'academic capitalism' (Slaughter and Leslie 1997; Slaughter and Rhoades 2004), and specifically from the ever more widespread ideology of commercialism. While the impact of academic capitalism is much more powerful in American higher education, the implications of the growing policy emphasis on universities' 'third mission'

across Europe should not be underestimated. In an American context, David R. Johnson (2017) explores qualitatively the 'conflict in academic science' between traditionalists and commercialists, and what emerges from this is a fractured profession that operates according to two contrasting academic ideologies: the traditional academic ideology, which reflects the Mertonian institutional norms of science, and the new ideology of commercialism. The focus of this book, which is driven by European data and their interpretation within the European context, will be on the former.

Knowledge produced in universities is increasingly converted into products or services that can be sold; this dramatically changes the nature of work in academic science and the social organization of higher education wherever the process is discernible. In the American case, this is at the elite research universities. As Johnson explains, American academic scientists are now exposed to two main reward systems, which are characterized by two different conceptions of the academic role and its corresponding occupational norms:

> Scholars once conceived of the scientific reward system as singular, referring to the *traditionalist*, or priority-recognition reward system, which mandates that scientists advance knowledge by sharing their discoveries with their scientific community through peer evaluation in exchange for recognition of priority in discovery. This honorary system of rewards now exists alongside a new *commercialist* reward system, which gives scientists a mandate to contribute to economic development through the dissemination of their discoveries in the market in exchange for profits. These are not simply different approaches to scientific work. They are career paths tied to competing visions of the role of the university in society that raise questions with broad implications.
>
> (Johnson 2017: 2, emphasis in the original)

Consequently, in the American elite university sector, the traditional role of universities exists alongside a new institutional role of science that emphasizes the creation of technologies that can be sold. Commercialism, which is defined by Johnson (2017) as a professional ideology that asserts that scientists should create technologies that control societal uncertainties, functions as a second competing reward system, and in academe, such systems 'engender intraprofessional conflict' (Johnson 2017: 3). What academics are supposed to do becomes increasingly unclear, especially as unequal rewards, as well as unequal conditions of work that are accompanied by the devaluing of commitment to traditional goals of science and higher education in the form of basic research, emerge in the system. In the specific American context, a new tension appears in the academic profession, which, in turn, becomes fractured.

However, in the specific European context that is studied in this book, the phenomenon of academic research commercialization is not equally widespread, although its importance as one of the items on the European Union's major

policy agenda has been increasing systematically. Parallel processes affecting reward systems in European science can be explored in the context of the emergence of 'third stream' or 'third mission' activities. The commercialist–traditionalist divide explored in the case of the United States does not yet emerge as critically important to European universities. Although 'academic capitalism' has been studied in reference to a number of European systems, following the pioneering work of Sheila Slaughter, Larry L. Leslie, and Gary Rhoades, neither financial implications for individuals and institutions nor for the dominant academic norms (specifically, Merton's 'normative structure of science') seem to be as powerful in European as in North American universities (Cantwell 2016; Cantwell and Kauppinnen 2014).

Academic norms are of critical importance because they provide stability to the functioning of the academic profession. Academic norms demonstrate how academics should behave; they reflect common beliefs about how higher education systems and academic science systems should operate. However, in vertically stratified systems, they seem to be far more applicable to the upper and elite research-focused segments of national higher education systems than to the lower teaching-focused segments. While system segmentation grows, the appeal of the normative structure of science diminishes to the system as a whole. One of the consequences of this systemic segmentation and normative differentiation in this book is that we are focused entirely on the European *university* sector in terms of both theoretical underpinning and empirical data. Traditionally, common academic beliefs converge with common public beliefs to enable the institution of science to benefit from the power of public support, including the power of public subsidization. Finally, professional academic ideologies are formed by academic norms and are promoted in society, providing widely shared visions of how research universities should function. Moreover, professional academic ideologies define which academic roles are most highly valued and which are less valued or not valued at all, and they define success and professional status in science at the levels of individuals, institutions, and national systems.

Based on a traditional account of academic careers, research achievements mattered most, with all other achievements (in teaching, service, or administration) lagging far behind. The academic men and women are represented by their publications, as the traditional story goes:

> In a community of scholars, scholarly performance is the only legitimate claim to recognition … the academic marketplace as a system rests on the assumption that the worth of the academic man can be measured by the quality of his published work.
>
> (Caplow and McGee 1958: 225)

In the specific European context explored in this book, publications are still key regardless of how much the so-called 'third mission activities' are being promoted internally and externally by the academic community and policy

makers alike. Assessment of the research output of individual academics and their departments and institutions—compared with the research output of other individual academics in the same specialty, as well as their departments and institutions—is at the core of individual academic recognition and international university rankings (research-based being more informative and less subjective than reputation-based). As emphasized in the sociology of science, 'The working of a reward system in science testifies that the research role is the most highly valued. The heroes of science are acclaimed in their capacity as scientific investigators, seldom as teachers, administrators or referees and editors' (Merton 1973: 520). In other words, 'Contribution to scientific knowledge is the underpinning of the stratification system' (Cole and Cole 1973: 45). The various types of stratification discussed in this book will refer predominantly to research: the inequality in its production (Chapter 1), its links to high academic incomes (Chapter 2), its links to academic roles played within institutions (Chapter 3), its relationships with international collaboration (Chapter 4), the role of patterns of time investments in it and the role of patterns of orientation to it across academic generations (Chapter 5), and its role in enabling academics to climb up the academic ladder (Chapter 6). Research is the core issue in academic careers from the perspective of social stratification in academic science, and it is, therefore, the core of this book. For this particular reason, teaching and students are discussed only marginally.

In academic science, in a specific form of publications, prestige, success, status, and recognition are inseparable from research. Non-publishers or silent scientists do not traditionally belong to the academic community, even though they do work across European universities (see Chapter 5). No publications basically means no research, which, in turn, means no academic success and no academic recognition. Moreover, in the specific context of the increasing role of competitive research funding in most European systems, it also means no research funding. The existence of lower-ranked and, therefore, only indirectly competing reward systems in teaching, service, and administration may be explained as an institutional mechanism that allows higher education organizations to accommodate failures in the core mission of research. Recognition in research was traditionally found to maintain 'high motivation to advance knowledge, and high motivation resulted in the scientist's devoting more of his own time to research; this, in turn, resulted in the high-quality scientific performance, as judged by the researcher's closest professional colleagues' (Glaser 1964: 1012).

There are certainly 'comparative failures in science' (Glaser 1964) and, certainly, some scientists realize early in their careers that they will not be successful in achieving national or international recognition: They are prone to adopt their local colleagues as reference groups and to drop the national or international scientific elite as meaningful reference groups, spending their time teaching and doing administrative work instead. Put bluntly, 'Local prestige probably goes a long way to make up for failure to achieve national recognition' (Cole and Cole 1973: 260–261). In the context of this book, 'internationalists' in research differ

sharply from 'locals' in research both in terms of reference groups for their research and their collaborators in research, with far-reaching consequences for access to prestige, status, and resources for further research, as shown in Chapter 4.

Thus, in the tradition of the sociology of science, recognition comes from scientific output rather than anything else inside or outside the science system (Cole and Cole 1967; Hermanowicz 2012; Johnson 2017). The reward system is designed to give recognition and esteem to the scientists who have best fulfilled their research roles with the use of an elaborate system for allocating rewards. Consequently, the reward system reinforces research activities, rather than any other academic activities, and few scientists are believed to continue to engage in research if they are not rewarded for it (Cole and Cole 1967). Consequently, in this traditional account, academics publish their work in exchange for scientific recognition. As Warren O. Hagstrom (1965: 168) stated in his theory of social control in science, and before the massive advent of lower-ranking journals, 'Recognition is given for information, and the scientist who contributes much information to his colleagues is rewarded by them with high prestige.' In this sense, only high-performance research leads to recognition in science, and reward systems function to identify research excellence:

> A substantial part of the efficient operation of science depends upon the way in which it allocates positions to individuals, divides up the rewards and prizes it offers for outstanding performance, and structures opportunities for those who hold the extraordinary talent …. In science, as in most other institutions, prestigious position, honorific awards, and peer recognition, as well as monetary rewards, combine to form an integrated reward structure. The pattern of stratification in science is determined in large measure by the way rewards are distributed among scientists and by the social mechanisms through which the reward system of science operates to identify excellence.
>
> (Cole and Cole 1973: 15)

The accumulative advantage hypothesis generalizes the 'Matthew effect' to include productivity and recognition: The process consists of two feedback loops in which recognition and resources are intervening variables (Allison and Stewart 1974). However, there is also the darker side of the accumulation of rewards: It is 'the accumulation of failures—the process of "accumulative disadvantage"' (Cole and Cole 1973: 146), leading to the stratification in science between the 'haves' and 'have-nots.' As scientific productivity is heavily influenced by the recognition of early work, the skewed distribution of productivity and the skewed distribution of subsequent rewards result not only in the rich getting richer but also in the poor getting (comparatively) poorer. The 'relative Matthew effect' occurs when both the rich and the poor get richer, 'but the rich get richer by a larger margin, creating a widening gap between themselves and the poor' (Rigney 2010: 8). In summary, the scientific community 'favors those who have been most successful in the past' (DiPrete and Eirich 2006: 282). Prestige in

science is, in a way, a system of social control that celebrates 'heroes.' As William J. Goode argues in wider social rather than strictly academic contexts,

> To perform and be ranked at the highest levels … demands both talent and dedication which only a few can muster. Such 'heroes' are given more prestige or admiration because both the level and type of performance are rare and evaluated highly within the relevant group. Most admirers recognize that such performances are possible for only a few people. The supply is and remains low.
>
> (Goode 1978: 67)

Science is highly stratified, the academic profession is highly stratified, and, like other professions, the latter is heavily status-based. While the intense research-related stratification of the academic profession—the major theme of this book—is not easily seen from the outside, it is enormously powerful inside. Science is dominated by 'a small, talented elite [and] [a]ll major forms of recognition—awards, prestigious appointments, and visibility—are monopolised by a small proportion of scientists' (Cole and Cole 1973: 254). The majority of scientists contribute little to scientific advancement, are low or very moderate publishers, and are still necessary to keep national higher education and science systems going, as we shall discuss in detail in Chapter 1. Prestige allocation in science makes some academics work much harder and some only moderately harder, while, on some, it exerts no pressure at all: The pressure or control through prestige allocation is 'fundamental in understanding why some people will try harder or not' (Goode 1978: 81). Certainly, this traditional elitist, exclusive, and hierarchical function of research in universities—differentiating and rank-ordering the academic profession (Marginson 2014)—has been strengthened in the era of new public management, as Marginson suggests, and it is merely one of six social functions of research, among which the balances and relations are constantly changing. However, as he argues, it has deep roots in academic cultures in elite research universities:

> The one unambiguous driver of career advancement in research universities is success at the highest level of research. 'Highest' means both the most prestigious and the most competitive level of performance, as in research grants, and academic publishing status is assigned on the basis of ranked performance …. A persistent pattern in intellectual fields is that a small number of people made a high proportion of the recognized major contributions.
>
> (Marginson 2014: 107)

In a sense, this book is about who gets what, why, and how in science—it is about its inherent inequality. Social stratification in science is not viewed as 'the patterning of inequality and its enduring consequences on the lives of those who

experience it' (as is social stratification in general in sociological studies) and this book is not about 'how inequalities persist and endure—over lifetimes and between generations' (Bottero 2005). Stratification processes studied here are confined to the social institution of science; science being 'a communal social enterprise' (Cole and Cole 1973: 14).

Intraprofessional and extraprofessional status

Individual status within the academic community has traditionally been defined by original contributions to fundamental research. In the theory of professions (Abbott 1981; Abbott 1988; Carvalho 2017), which is useful for conceptualizing the organization and stratification of the academic profession, the most highly valued pursuits are 'professionally pure' pursuits—that is, those without nonprofessional considerations. Abbott (1981) draws a very useful distinction between the intraprofessional and extraprofessional status of professions, which explains the internal functioning of status conferment in European universities to outsiders. Intraprofessional status is a function of 'professional purity,' which is 'the ability to exclude nonprofessional issues or irrelevant professional issues from practice. Within a given profession, the highest status professionals are those who deal with issues predigested and predefined by a number of colleagues' (Abbott 1981: 823).

Over time, the academic profession, like all other professions, has developed an internal system of relative judgments of the purity or impurity of academic activities, with the resultant status hierarchy governing academic science. According to this hierarchy, purer considerations in science are more highly valued than less pure considerations; extraprofessional status (gained through nonprofessional channels of knowledge distribution) is less important in the academic world than intraprofessional status, which is traditionally gained through the visibility of research publications in the area of fundamental research. In the same vein, curiosity-driven research is more highly valued than application-driven research because, in the theoretical context of professional purity and impurity, leading to intraprofessional stratification in science, it is more professionally pure. Based on this account, visible science is transmitted through highly valued professional channels, such as top academic journals; much less visible science is transmitted through other channels (such as nonacademic journals, television, and social media). Most importantly, with the exception of humanities, parts of social science, and professional disciplines, scientific research is published primarily in English. As Marginson (2016c: 19) points out in his study of global stratification in higher education, 'Academic publications form a single world library. English-language science is the single global conversation: the claims of French, German and Russian have faded.'

In Merton's account of science and scientists and Abbott's account of professions and professionals, academic recognition comes exclusively from a single set of intraprofessional activities—that is, research activities converted into publications (as well as from their impact on the scientific community or from citations). All

academic generations are being socialized to this widely accepted set of academic norms, and any deviance from this is being punished by the academic community.

Academic scientists need clear professional identities: They need to know how they should function to be among the top layers of the academic enterprise, should they choose to want this. In terms of their own academic careers, they need to know what is important, what is not important, and especially why this is the case. They also need to have clear images of a successful scientist and successful science, both in general terms and within their specific national contexts. The career stages of successful scientists need to be clearly defined in advance in terms of research achievements if the academic science enterprise is to continue successfully (see 'the Anna Karenina Principle' which links success to journal space, funds, reception and recognition in Bornmann and Marx 2012). Regarding promotion in the university sector, and especially within its upper layers, what matters and what does not matter need to be clearly stated, and this is exactly where ideologies of academic work and academic careers become useful. Stable professions tend to have clear definitions of high and low status and clear images of success and failure; therefore, they are not troubled by unnecessary tensions, feelings of undeserved inequality, or undue deprivation of access to opportunities, rewards, and resources. Status hierarchies in stable professions need to change slowly over time, if at all, especially as, in some of them, including the academic profession, careers are long term and clear guidance on how to function is needed throughout their lives. Intraprofessional conflicts about well-defined status and success do not serve the long-term goals of science. As Abbott stated, there is tension between what the public expects from professions and what professions expect from themselves:

> Intraprofessional status rests on the exclusion of nonprofessional issues or of professional issues irrelevant in a particular case …. In the pursuit of intraprofessional status, professions and professionals tend to withdraw from precisely those problems for which the public gives them status.
>
> (Abbott 1981: 819)

The changing stratification in science in the current massified higher education systems is related to the diversified external public and internal institutional expectations from the diversified academic profession. While (Abbott's) intraprofessional status rests on prestigious research results, prestigious research is increasingly publicly funded and is increasingly expected to be performed (by the public and by the university administration) only in the upper, elite layers of national systems. Consequently, the traditional rules of individual and institutional competition, academic recognition, and professional status seem to be ever more applicable to the upper university subsectors of national systems only. As evidenced by the European trend of strengthening national research councils as major bodies allocating research funding (with the European Research Council as a transnational manifestation of this trend)—with regard to academics and institutions, the minority garner the majority of competitive research funding.

The pertinence of academic profession studies

The academic profession across Europe is being exposed to similar external pressures despite national variations. The major global forces responsible for the actual changes in academic work and life, as well as those that prevail in international discourses, especially policy discourses on academic work and life, are as follows: economic globalization and its European responses (Europeanization), changing social and economic priorities in emergent generationally divided societies, intergenerational conflicts over the use of scarce public resources, changes in public services along the lines suggested in new public management, the increasing economic relevance of two major products of higher education systems: graduates and academic knowledge, and the transnationalization and internationalization of higher education policies combined with global policy convergence, especially through policies promoted by supranational institutions and organizations.

Simultaneously, the massification of higher education also means the massification of the academic profession, resulting in ongoing global struggles on the part of academics to maintain their traditionally stable (upper) middle-class social and economic status. Globally, huge numbers of students in national systems are accompanied by huge numbers of academics. As massification progresses, stratification follows. At the same time, as massification progresses, higher education research becomes a more attractive field that is gaining increasing scholarly and policy attention and mobilizing research funds (see Jung, Horta, and Yonezawa 2018; Kwiek 2013b). Massified and increasingly stratified higher education systems lead to a massified and increasingly stratified academic profession along dimensions such as institutional location within the system, access to human and material resources, productivity, and connections to global science networks. As Jürgen Enders noted,

> Privileges that were characteristic for members of the academic profession in an elite higher education system came increasingly under pressure in a massified and more diversifying system … 'the gold standards' that were once characteristic for the few are not to be taken for granted for the many. (Enders 2006: 7)

Thus, the zero-sum logic of positional competition among universities derived from the high-participation system theory, which argues that there is little room at the top (Marginson 2016c), can be extended to include the level of individual scientists. Stratification guarantees competition and an endless struggle to move up the academic hierarchy at both the institutional and individual levels.

From a global perspective, higher education 'is no longer an elite enterprise, and this new reality has had dramatic implications for the academic profession' (Altbach et al. 2012: 4). However, new large-scale developments in university governance and funding lead to new challenges and require traditional stratification

theories to be revisited. Tensions emerge between the traditional theories governing the social and academic imaginations and the reality on the ground, especially if examined through cross-national, large-scale empirical material.

To some extent, there is an element of 'business as usual' in the academic game; however, in many ways, European academics are facing harsh new realities that are not consistently understood across European systems. In some of these systems, changes are believed to be related to globalization; in others, to financial austerity or new public management; and, finally, in others, to the massification of higher education (Enders, de Boer, and Leišyté 2009; Enders and de Weert 2009a; Carvalho and Santiago 2015; Antonowicz 2016; Nixon 2017; Kwiek 2017c). New academic behaviors (how academics actually work) and new academic attitudes (what academics actually think about their work), combined with emergent teaching/research patterns across academic cohorts and emergent productivity patterns across genders and academic disciplines both intra-nationally and cross-nationally, call into question the traditional theories produced in (Martin Trow's) 'elite' systems. The academic profession is working in emergent 'high-participation systems' (Marginson 2016b; Cantwell, Marginson, and Smolentseva 2018; Cantwell, Pinheiro, and Kwiek 2018) across all European countries, including the 11 studied here.

This book attempts to show which elements of the theoretical tradition of higher education research may hold and which may need to be conceptually revisited. For instance, the book's findings clearly indicate that the performance stratification of the academic profession not only continues but also seems to intensify. Originally, the idea was formulated with reference to individual academics as follows:

> The scientific community is not the company of equals. It is sharply stratified; a small number of scientists contribute disproportionately to the advancement of science and receive a disproportionately large share of rewards and the resources needed for research.
>
> (Zuckerman 1988: 526)

For academics, the recognition of their work by the collectivity of competent peers is 'the only unambiguous demonstration that what they have done matters to science' (Zuckerman 1988: 526). In addition, as previously noted, recognition in science is converted into resources for further research. Highly recognized scientists (and their research institutions) are clearly more successful than less recognized scientists (and their less recognized research institutions) in obtaining resources for further research. The distribution of academic rewards, including research funding, is sharply graded. There is enormous inequality in research performance, accompanied by enormous inequality in recognition and rewards in science, and both are highly stratified. Both academics and institutions are also stratified, and the processes of stratification seem to have intensified rather than weakened in the last two decades.

Prime significance is given to symbolic recognition by colleagues rather than by any outside individual or collective body. Members of the scientific community are considered the only competent judges of the merits and significance of one's research. This is part of the socialization of young scientists into the academic profession: 'Differentials in recognition are not only fundamental to differential ranking in science but also provide the base from which scientists may acquire new facilities either in the form of resources for research or in increased influence' (Zuckerman 1970: 236). The viability of modern science depends on the existence of a substantial consensus on the quality of scientific work and the occupational status of academics, who are its producers; therefore, evaluations are constantly made. The current evaluations of academics that are conducted within their institutions and by funding bodies, as well as the evaluations of institutions in rankings (including their international rankings), are merely more sophisticated and data-driven, with growing importance given to bibliometrics and research assessment exercises in various forms for resource allocation (see Kulczycki, Korzeń, and Korytkowski 2017 on Poland). However, these are not new institutionally nor individually. The picture that is half a century old does not seem to differ much from the one presented in Chapter 1 on the inequality in academic knowledge production and the role of top research performers:

> Stratification and ranking are not, however, limited to individual investigators. Disciplines, publication in particular journals, types of research, organisations, and rewards are also ranked. Individual scientists can be located in each of these dimensions and their final rank is the sum or product of these evaluations of their research.
>
> (Zuckerman 1970: 237)

However, research—and even more so, publicly funded research—cannot be conducted across whole national systems, in all of their segments, and with equal intensity. Vertical differentiation, which expects different contributions to knowledge from academics representing diverse segments of the system, with upward mobility guaranteed, may be the only way to protect the academic profession from widespread dissatisfaction if not despair:

> Increased emphases on research will likely be accompanied by increased probabilities of dissatisfaction throughout the system of higher education. As research is more greatly stressed, by institutions as well as by individuals, career expectations rise, in accord with attempting to satisfy external reference groups that are consistent with fulfilling the institutional goals of academe. As expectations rise, the likelihood of satisfying them decreases.
>
> (Hermanowicz 2012: 238)

The attractiveness of academic careers is questioned for a number of interrelated reasons, and the stakes involved in the ongoing changes, including the overall

functioning of the academic profession, are high. As discussed in the American context, which is applicable to the European one,

> On many objective criteria, chances of success in academia across many fields are low and, where won, are hard-fought: obtaining regular employment, obtaining tenure, obtaining promotion through standard ranks, publication, citation of work, competitive salary, and competitive salary growth. These basic rewards are also arguably more difficult to obtain across institutional types than in any other historical time in the profession.
>
> (Hermanowicz 2012: 238)

Inequality in academic knowledge production is combined with inequality in academic remuneration. New teaching-only or teaching-mostly segments of the academic profession emerge (in our sample, this is especially the case in the United Kingdom) with new tasks and new responsibilities, thereby contributing to the disintegration of traditional (research-focused) academic norms. There are new 'haves' and 'have-nots' in academia due to the growing role of competitive, project-based research funding distributed by new national research councils and other bodies with a similar function. Institutional governance structures change, and there is a growing cross-generational gap between younger and older academic cohorts: Increasingly, academic job portfolios differ cross-generationally, contributing to the redefinition of what academics do based on their age groups (see Chapter 5). The internationalization of research and international academic mobility change the traditional national prestige structures and exert a powerful influence on national research funding distribution.

A data-rich research context

Despite continuity at the level of ideas governing higher education research—the social stratification in science being a prime example—there has been a rupture in a single dimension: that of the available data, including self-produced primary data collected through international surveys. International comparative higher education has entered a 'data-rich' research context. Four decades ago, Paul L. Dressel and Lewis B. Mayhew analyzed the emergence of the academic profession and of higher education as a specific 'field of study,' and they complained that, with a few exceptions, 'The literature is virtually silent about how faculty members enter the profession, what kinds of people they are, how they proceed in their careers and how they succeed in their professional tasks' (Dressel and Mayhew 1974: 89). Similarly, three decades ago, Burton R. Clark opened his exploration of 'The Academic Life' by stressing that

> relatively little is known about what goes on in the profession's many quarters. What is the quality of the workaday life for its varied members? How do they conceive of themselves and their lives? What, if anything, holds them together?
>
> (Clark 1987a: xxi)

Since the 1990s, both from single-nation perspectives (especially regarding the American one, see quantitatively informed studies by Blackburn and Lawrence 1995; Finkelstein, Seal, and Schuster 1998; and Schuster and Finkelstein 2008) and from a global perspective (Boyer, Altbach, and Whitelaw 1994; Altbach and Lewis 1996; Forest 2002), numerous studies have been published. In contrast, it is only in the last few years that European comparative academic profession studies have, for the first time, become truly 'data-rich,' following collaborative research efforts in the global 'Changing Academic Profession' (CAP) and the European 'Academic Profession in Europe: Responses to Societal Challenges' (EUROAC) research projects. In the last few years, both projects have given rise to a long list of studies.[1] Both also used the same survey questionnaire, based on the 1991–1993 Carnegie Foundation global survey of the academic profession, which provided a benchmark for comparative studies (Altbach and Lewis 1996: xxii). Consequently, in this book, we follow the 'gold standard' in social sciences (and in higher education studies): The research presented here is based on primary data. In the 2000s, there were at least three global and European (see Altbach 2000; Altbach 2003; Enders 2000; Enders and de Weert 2004) large-scale comparative projects on the changing academic profession and changing academic workplace that were relevant to this book. However, none of the three projects was driven by systematically collected primary quantitative data; therefore, they should be categorized as exploratory studies with some inconsistent or problematic data sources.

Academics' work situations change substantially, and this change is central to the academic profession as a whole, as prior analyses underscore. Enders and de Weert (2009b: 252–253) identified five 'drivers' that were central to changing the nature of the academic profession: the massification of higher education, expansion of research, growing emphasis on the societal relevance of higher education and research, processes of globalization and internationalization, and policies and practices geared toward marketization and managerialism. Similarly, Kogan and Teichler (2007: 10–11) identified three recent trends that were pervasive in higher education: relevance, internationalization, and management. Some other analyses refer specifically to financial constraints, the differentiation of higher education systems, competitive forces, and, moreover, the growing uncertainty of the academic profession: 'We live in times of uncertainty about the future development of higher education and its place in society and it is therefore not surprising to note that the future of the academic profession seems uncertain, too' (Enders and Musselin 2008: 145).

This book discusses a long list of uncertainties related to academic work and life, comparing academics' attitudes, behaviors, and productivity across countries, clusters of academic disciplines, age cohorts, and genders. It is structured around the notion of social stratification in science. It explores various manifestations of stratification in the academic profession across Europe and seeks to understand the extent to which ongoing governance and funding changes are consequential with respect to the work and life of academics.

Several approaches to social stratification in science are used, depending on the context, with research as the core university-sector activity figuring prominently in all of them: The idea of *academic performance stratification* is used in Chapter 1 (discussing research performance differentials across Europe, with specifically defined top research performers contrasted with their lower-performing colleagues); the idea of *academic salary stratification* is used in Chapter 2 (discussing links between income differentials and research performance differentials across Europe, with specifically defined academic top earners contrasted with their lower-earning colleagues); the idea of *academic power stratification* is used in Chapter 3 (analyzing the extent to which European systems are still collegial and the role of academic power distribution across layers of academic positions in European systems); the idea of *international research stratification* is used in Chapter 4 (exploring the links between research productivity differentials and international collaboration differentials, with clearly defined 'internationalists' in research contrasted with 'locals' in research, as well as the role of research internationalization in national award systems and resources distribution in science across Europe); the idea of *academic role stratification* is used in Chapter 5 (exploring intergenerational patterns of academic behaviors, attitudes, and productivity, with 'academics under 40' or 'young academics' contrasted with their older colleagues and with 'academic generations' in academic knowledge production at the forefront); and, finally, the idea of *academic cohort (or age) stratification* is used in Chapter 6 (analyzing changing academic careers with the use of qualitative rather than quantitative material, unique in this book, with a special emphasis on young cohorts of academics seeking stability in academic employment in volatile institutional environments).

The notion of social stratification in science allows for a better understanding of the changing academic profession than a number of competing notions used in the research literature, such as globalization, managerialism, financial austerity, or commodification. This is because the notion of social stratification refers directly to academics and their work and lives. In contrast to the four notions outlined above, our guiding notion in this book is internal rather than external to the academic profession. The issues of persistent inequality in research achievements and in academic knowledge production, the systematic inequality in academic incomes and their (disappearing) link to research productivity, the decreasing role of collegiality in university governance for all, not only the lower layers of academics but, the increasing correlation between internationalization in research and productivity (together with the increasing role of international publications in national reward systems, including access to competitive research funding), and the unexplored role of academic generations—and especially of different types of young academics employed in different countries—go to the very heart of the academic profession. And the above dimensions can be rigorously measured and compared cross-nationally with a unique data set.

Some themes in this book have previously been mentioned in higher education research (in a combination of theoretical and empirical contexts). 'Top research

performers,' 'internationalists,' and 'academics under 40' have been studied under different rubrics; however, 'academic top earners' has not been present in the research literature, and none of these prototypical figures in higher education have been studied from a comparative quantitative European perspective using large-scale empirical material. The four faculty categories investigated above, as well as predictors of membership of these categories, have not been studied in cross-national comparative detail thus far. This book links new themes to existing themes and to the extant research literature.

Rare scholarly themes are examined in this book using rare prototypical figures, and our intention is to embed them in a larger scholarly conversation about higher education research (including traditional accounts of the academic profession over the last half century) between the previous generations of scholars. The themes studied indicate new differentiations of the academic profession (with a strong dividing line between the 'haves' and 'have-nots' in terms of publication-derived prestige and research-related resources) along under-researched dimensions from a European cross-national comparative perspective: internationalization in research, academic cohorts, academic incomes, and/or academic teaching/research role orientations. The book's findings have implications for theories of academic productivity, theories of university organization, traditional models of university governance, the economics of science, and policy reform theories.

Higher education research tends to view European academics (and European universities more generally) through the theoretical lenses provided by Anglo–Saxon, predominantly American, ideas about what universities are for and what academics should do; these ideas have been developed over the last half century, including by Logan Wilson, Paul Goodman, John D. Millett, Harold Perkin, Paul Lazarsfeld, Wagner Thielens, Clark Kerr, Martin Trow, Burton R. Clark, and Philip G. Altbach. The type of social imagination and academic imagination applied to universities as institutions and the academic profession as a 'key profession' (Perkin 1969) seems not to have changed much. However, in the meantime, academic realities in Europe have been changing. Consequently, there have been interesting tensions between some traditional ideas in higher education research and some academic realities emerging from the data (as Chapter 2 on high academic incomes indicates).

Transformations of European higher education systems in the last two decades have been substantial and have had a significant impact on the academic profession. The growing complexity of the academic enterprise has led to growing uncertainty about its future. Higher education as a whole has already changed substantially in most European economies, but it is expected to change even more (de Boer et al. 2017; Hüther and Krücken 2018). Perhaps the least susceptible to fundamental changes in the next decade will be the traditional research university, with its taste for research, as it is viewed as crucial for the economic prosperity of regions and nations. All other subsectors of national systems are more susceptible to further changes, heavily affecting the academic profession.

As a recent study of 11 reform processes across Europe emphasizes,

> in higher education, we live in an age of reform. All over Europe, state authorities frequently adapt their policies and introduce new ones to encourage public higher education institutions to deliver high-quality services in an effective and effiocient way. They take forceful initiatives and introduce reforms to change the higher education landscape.
>
> (de Boer et al. 2017: 1)

However, governance and funding reforms in Europe have had different timing, implementation results, and intensities in different systems (Paradeise et al. 2009; Maassen and Olsen 2007), as shown in empirical details through the governance equalizer model, which captured and graphically presented changes in governance in England, the Netherlands, Austria, and Germany between 1980 and 2006 (de Boer, Enders, and Schimank 2007) and in the 16 Germany states in the 2000s (Hüther and Krücken 2018: 119–122). Even though national processes of reform implementation shared rationales and tools—with the New Public Management (NPM) ideas in the forefront (Musselin and Teixeira 2014; Bleiklie et al. 2017)—reforms remain 'path dependent and most often incremental' and European higher education systems are reported to 'remain far from converging toward a unified pattern that would progressively erase borders' (Paradeise, Reale, and Goastellec 2009: 197, 198). Domestic institutional contexts matter and historical institutions have a 'filtering effect' on international reform pressures (Dobbins and Knill 2014: 188–189).

Reforms of funding systems were inspired by the NPM doctrine and driven by the assumption that introducing competition and performance-based funding would increase the performance of systems and institutions; however, every country uses in practice a combination of different funding options 'having its own mix, reflecting historical and political developments' (Jongbloed and Lepori 2015: 443). Funding arrangements are reported to be undergoing 'dramatic changes' (Gläser and Velarde 2018: 1), with the increasing role of project-based research funding and performance-based funding (Gläser and Laudel 2016). Across Europe, a convergence toward a funding mode is reported: 'about three quarters of the budget is provided by the state as core funds, which is complemented by third-party funds and student fees' (Jongbloed and Lepori 2015: 449). While the intended scope of governance and funding reforms differs across Europe, as do real effects of implemented reforms, academics are exposed to permanent reform attempts. The reforms increasingly compel them to function in the state of permanent adaptation to changing realities (Krücken, Kosmützky, and Torka 2007). Academics are exposed to both actual reform implementation and reform debates with their peers and with policymakers, being reminded by organization studies that reforming universities leads to further waves of reforms as 'reforms generate reforms' (Brunsson and Olsen 1998: 42–44).

The academic profession has already been fractured into many different academic professions (in the plural), and it is expected to be even more diversified, especially in more vertically stratified systems, with clearly defined top and bottom system layers (see Kwiek 2018a). The increasingly heterogeneous nature of the profession results from

> transformations in employment and working conditions; in their engagement with different activities; in the increased diversification of academic roles; in their different involvement in internationalization processes; and in their participation in decision-making.
>
> (Carvalho 2017: 72–73)

Different directions of academic restructuring in different countries and within particular national systems add to the complexity of the picture, which certainly leads to an overall more stressful working environment. Academics, the core of the academic enterprise, are working in turbulent times. In the last two decades, universities and other higher education institutions, as well as their social and economic environments, have been changing faster than ever before. Today, the academic profession is in the eye of the storm globally, and this book goes beyond change processes in any single European country. It discusses the academic profession and its increasing stratification across Europe, assuming that a theoretically coherent and empirically driven overview of ongoing changes is needed for academics and the general public alike. Examining the national variations of ongoing change through a study of empirical material at the micro level of the individual academic (rather than at institutional or national levels, with their corresponding aggregated data) leads to a better understanding of current realities. Moreover, understanding change is of primal importance to the future shape of the academic profession. Change cannot be effectively opposed nor promoted without such a clear understanding of its drivers and their results.

Not only higher education in Europe (with gross enrollment rates often exceeding 50 percent) but also the academic profession itself are becoming massified, with unclear consequences for individual academics. The end result of this double-massification process is its ever more detailed public scrutiny and ever more sophisticated policy interest. Higher education in general and, by extension, the academic profession are in the public spotlight. Academics are at the core of a multibillion-euro enterprise, but they are also the single most important cost in almost all academic institutions. Therefore, changing realities in which academics function need to be analyzed and understood to enable academics to see more clearly the somehow unexpected context of the large-scale, long-term systemic transformations to which they have been exposed. The general assumption of this book is that the changes directly affecting the life and work of academics will intensify, thereby undermining most principles of traditional academic visions and ideologies or undermining them in most segments of national systems. The drivers of change in higher education across Europe are

structurally similar. Before we (the academic profession) decide where we would collectively prefer to be, it would be useful to examine where we are and to see whether and how this goal can be achieved.

Finally, the changes in academic work today are intensive, but, for the first time, they can be assessed in much more detail through large-scale European quantitative research, which adds a refined empirical dimension to the growing research literature on the academic profession. There are ongoing changes in academic work, as well as attempts to measure them and draw valid conclusions from the available empirical material. However, it is also possible that the sheer scale and speed of the changes make it difficult for the community of higher education researchers to interpret them. The inevitable time gaps between data collection and analysis, interpretation, and publication may be more crippling in times of change, as today, than in times of relative stability. It is also possible that we in academic profession studies are actually measuring only the changes of which we are aware; consequently, we may not be measuring the changes of which we are *not* aware and those that are beyond our current analytical frameworks. There may be many reasons why this occurs, the most obvious being the conceptual invisibility of some aspects of change and the resultant lack of proper indicators of change. Consequently, we know much less than we would like to, and we could know, about the changing academic profession in Europe. In academic profession studies, as in any other social research, there are some known knowns and some known unknowns; however, there are also some unknown unknowns of which we are conceptually unaware. This makes social research, including international comparative academic profession studies, extremely exciting and exceedingly rewarding.

Acknowledgements

This book is a product of a journey in my professional life that started in 2009 when Ulrich Teichler of the University of Kassel kindly agreed to Poland's entry to an extant European Science Foundation (ESF) project. For me, it was a highly consequential event in scholarly terms. In the early 2000s, I had been studying the academic profession in two international collaborative research projects coordinated by Philip G. Altbach of Boston College and Jürgen Enders—then of the Center for Higher Education Policy Studies (CHEPS), University of Twente —but there were no follow-up projects. Ulrich Teichler's decision to incorporate me in the ESF project refocused my research interests on international comparative academic profession studies.

I gratefully acknowledge all the friends and colleagues who have made this book possible. First of all, thanks to my colleagues from the EUROAC and CAP projects ('Changing Academic Profession' and 'Academic Profession in Europe: Responses to Societal Challenges') who were responsible for data collection across Europe; without their work, this book would never have been written. My colleagues on the EUROAC national teams included Dominik Antonowicz,

Marie Clarke, Abbey Hyde, Jonathan Drennan, Yurgos Politis, Ester Eva Höhle, Christian Schneijderberg, Nadine Merkator, Gaële Goastellec, Elke Parke, Gülay Ates, Kevin Toffel, Carole Probst, Luminita Moraru, Marko Turk, Bojana Ćulum, Nena Roncević, Jasminka Ledić, Tatiana Fumasoli, Nicolas Pekari, Angelika Brechelmacher, David F. J. Campbell, Timo Aarrevaara, Ian R. Dobson, and Janne Wikström. The EUROAC project was co-funded by the European Science Foundation (ESF) and coordinated by Barbara M. Kehm and Ulrich Teichler.

I gratefully acknowledge all the opportunities to discuss the various chapters of the book as they first versions emerged. Apart from numerous EUROAC seminars across Europe (Kassel, Lausanne, Dublin, Berlin, Vienna, Helsinki, and Poznan), I want to acknowledge the opportunity to prepare (if not always to deliver) keynote speeches and regular conference presentations across Europe and beyond. I am grateful for all the constructive input I received from all of those audiences, both nationally and internationally.

I want to warmly thank my Routledge publishing team, who have been very supportive since this project's inception. My deep gratitude to Jeroen Huisman and Jennifer M. Case, the series editors, who have been waiting for the final manuscript for much longer than originally promised. My special thanks to Helen Perkins, director of SRHE, for her ongoing encouragement and support; and my sincere appreciation to the editors at Routledge, Lucy Stewart and then Sarah Tuckwell, Lisa Font and Natalie Larkin.

I am grateful for all support I have received in the last few years for the Center for Public Policy Studies from all levels of my home university—from rectors and vice-rectors for research, former and current (Bronisław Marciniak, Andrzej Lesicki, Jacek Witkoś, and Ryszard Naskręcki), from former and current deans (Zbigniew Drozdowicz and Jacek Sójka), and from the director of the Institute of Philosophy, Roman Kubicki. Without their unstinting support, writing this book while fulfilling other research commitments would not have been possible.

I want to express my special gratitude to my junior colleagues from the Center for Public Policy Studies: Dr. Wojciec Roszka from the Poznan University of Economics, whose assistance in statistical analysis was absolutely crucial for the success of this research undertaking; Professor Dominik Antonowicz, who was part of the original EUROAC team and conducted 60 semi-structured interviews with Polish academics, as well as participating in all of the EUROAC international seminars; Dr. Krystian Szadkowski, whose day-to-day assistance with ongoing projects was crucial to the completion of this book, and whose Polish translations of several chapters helped me to improve the theoretical frameworks; and the three newcomers to the Center: Professor Emanuel Kulczycki, Dr. Krzysztof Czarnecki, and Jakub Krzeski, who introduced new perspectives from scientometrics, welfare state studies, and political philosophy, respectively, to our seminars. Finally, I gratefully acknowledge the assistance of Marek Holowiecki in the Center's financial operations and in solving numerous technical problems.

I also wish to acknowledge the academics—more than 17,000 of them—from 11 European countries who gave up time from their own research or with

friends and families to complete a dull academic profession questionnaire in the belief that their individual contributions to this research would be meaningful.

Finally, I want to dedicate this book to Natalia and Krystyna—my beloved daughter and wife. I wish Natalia limitless opportunities to develop her talents, to achieve her goals, to live the way she wants. Krystyna and I met 30 years ago, and it was the most important day of my life; living together was never easy, and became even more difficult each time I was finishing a book project. It was no different this time—please accept my apologies for this. Thank you for your unreserved love and powerful support day by day, and year by year![2]

Notes

1 A list of international comparative books includes Locke, Cummings, and Fischer (2011) on governance and management; Teichler and Höhle (2013) on working conditions; Bentley, Coates, Dobson, Goedegebuure, and Meek (2013) on job satisfaction; Kehm and Teichler (2013) on new tasks and new challenges; Teichler, Arimoto, and Cummings (2013) on major findings from the CAP survey; Huang, Finkelstein, and Rostan (2014) on internationalization; Shin et al. (2014b) on teaching and research; Cummings and Teichler (2015) on the relevance of academic work; Galaz-Fontes, Arimoto, Teichler, and Brennan (2016) on biographies and careers; Teichler and Cummings (2015) on recruitment and management; and Fumasoli, Goastellec, and Kehm (2015) on academic work and careers. A list of country-focused books includes Cummings and Finkelstein (2012) on the United States; Arimoto, Cummings, Huang, and Shin (2015) on Japan; and Postiglione and Jung (2017) on Hong Kong. For an overview of papers published in international journals, see Carvalho (2017).

2 The work on this book would not be possible without the support received from the Ministry of Science and Higher Education through its Dialogue grant 0021/DLG/2016/10 (EXCELLENCE).

Chapter 9

People and change

Academic work and leadership

Paul Blackmore and Camille B. Kandiko

Curriculum change is often dealt with from a relatively narrow perspective, asking what it is that students should know, understand and be able to do. This raises the question of what should be provided by the institution to ensure the best possible student learning experience. This is only a small part of the picture. As discussed in Chapter 2, as relationships between teachers, learners and what is to be learnt shift, new roles emerge and existing ones are adjusted for academic and support staff. A more student-centred approach may require academic staff to take greater account of individual students' interests. An emphasis on skills development, as noted in Chapter 4, may prompt the establishment of support posts with such a focus.

However, the current trend towards major curriculum review and change is part of a more fundamental shift in universities, and is taking place at a time when the nature and purpose of the university as well as of higher education are very much open to question. We have already noted trends towards mass higher education and its treatment as a commodity, the impact of globalisation and of growing pressures for research. This has signifi cant implications for staff, their sense of identity and their roles, particularly for those in research-intensive institutions. The epistemological boundaries that are represented by academic disciplines may be breached by moves towards greater multidisciplinarity and interdisciplinarity. An increased emphasis on the economic usefulness of a graduate may be in tension with the idea of learning for its own sake. Prompted by the fundamental questioning of universities' purposes, the identities of those who undertake and support academic work are brought into question. Thus curriculum change is much more than a structural and technical activity, and involves a great deal more than the reorganisation of what students learn and how they are supported.

Therefore, we can see a very complex situation that has profound implications for those who work in higher education. Traditional, small-scale teaching based on an implicit set of assumed shared values is increasingly hard to sustain, challenged by what are often seen as externally imposed concerns about economic utility and employability. The ways in which academic staff have traditionally spent their time are increasingly in question and the pattern of staffi ng in academic work is much more complex. Who are the people who are being asked to

deliver curriculum change, and how does their sense of who they are and what they value influence the nature of change and the likelihood of its success? An understanding of academic motivation is central in enabling successful change, particularly in institutions that recognise and reward their staff principally for research rather than teaching. All major curriculum changes have required effective leadership, but this begs the question of what it is to lead in an academic environment, especially where identities and interests are so much at issue. Who leads? How do they lead, on what do they focus and which behaviours are effective? This chapter explores how change is led and managed through networks of individuals, and how curriculum change affects the roles and identities of those involved.

Academic cultures and identities

Those who do academic work are under pressure to be increasingly productive. At the same time the nature of that work, and the relationships that academic staff have with students and others working in the institution, are in flux. Changing approaches to teaching require alterations in existing roles and the introduction of new roles. This is not simple to achieve, for a number of reasons. First, the culture within which academic work takes place has a significant influence on the ways in which people characteristically work. Second, and particularly in research-intensive institutions, academic staff remain strongly socialised into disciplinary and professional groupings. These affiliations not only influence how people see themselves but also the nature and extent of permissions that they perceive themselves to have. Third, it could be argued that in a situation where change depends on loose networks of largely autonomous academic and support staff, the reality of organisational life cannot readily be pinned down in conventional role descriptions. Change strategies have to take into account the culture in which they are working. Finally, and importantly, any proposed change must enlist the help of key staff and to do this it must appear to be in their interests or at least work to produce a change that key stakeholders can agree is desirable.

Organisational culture

There has been a clear tendency in recent years for institutions to develop an explicit view of the desired nature and purposes of teaching across an institution, expressed through mission statements and initiatives such as major curriculum reviews. It is one example of how universities are increasingly taking a strategic view of issues that were previously left implicit and considered to be the domain of the individual academic. Major change has a cultural component. It could be argued that such a change cannot come about unless there is a significant cultural shift. Organisational culture has been defined in many ways. Here we take Schein's broad definition of 'a pattern of basic assumptions that a given group has invented, discovered or developed in learning to cope with its problems of

external adaptation and internal integration' (1985:9). The relationship between cultures and boundaries is usefully emphasised by Barnett, who defines organisational culture as: 'a taken-for granted way of life, in which there is a reasonably clear difference between those on the inside and those on the outside of the community' (1990:97).

There are several widely known models of academic cultures, all of which share the position that no institution has a single unified culture. McNay's (1995) influential four-part model consists of collegial, bureaucratic, enterprise and corporate approaches. However, as McNay points out, the model is not intended to imply a single uniform direction for an institution. At any time there may be differing dominant cultures in different parts of an institution. Berquist (1992), writing principally about the US system, offers four cultures, each of which has a distinctive way of finding meaning. A collegial culture is rooted in the disciplines, valuing academic research and scholarship. A managerial culture finds its meaning in the organisation, implementation and evaluation of work that is directed towards specified goals and purposes. A developmental culture is focused on furthering the personal and professional growth of all members of the university community. A negotiating culture recognises the need to distribute resources and opportunities equitably. Birnbaum (1988) also writes of the multiplicity of cultures in an institution.

A number of features of higher education appear to require a move towards more active management or, as some would claim, managerialism (Deem 2010). These include increasing student numbers; the need to contain costs; pressures for the maintenance, enhancement and demonstration of quality; and the sheer speed of externally imposed regulation, often aimed at changing the purposes as well as the practices of universities. McNay (1995) argues that a strongly collegial academic tradition has tended to give way in recent years to a more enterprising and corporate culture. In Berquist's (1992) terms too, the shift is towards a more managerial and less collegial culture, which will be accompanied to a greater or lesser extent by a developmental and a negotiating culture. Collegiality can be seen not only as having a concern for academic disciplines, but also a belief in a particular way of debating and arriving at decisions.

A more corporate approach, in McNay's (1995) terms, is strongly in tension with the allegiances that many academic staff hold. For example, it has been claimed that a first academic allegiance is to the discipline, then to the department and finally, perhaps, to the institution (Jenkins 1996). In visiting institutions we found that at a departmental level, academic staff spoke very little about the institution and its strategic intentions or major initiatives. Reference points were almost entirely to the discipline, the department and the programmes on offer. Analyses of academic staff orientations have suggested that there is a tendency to cosmopolitanism rather than localism (Merton 1968). It may be that many academic staff are orientated outward to the discipline, principally through engagement in research communities, and inward to the local, prompted by the day-to-day concerns of the department, but rarely to the institution as a whole.

Thus, although culture matters at an institutional level, it also has to be considered at faculty and departmental levels, where teaching is actually organised and delivered and where there may be marked differences among disciplines, an issue we turn to next.

Disciplinary and departmental cultures

Despite the growth of interdisciplinary research centres, most academic staff are strongly socialised into disciplines, with academic department boundaries following those of disciplines, especially in research-intensive institutions. Often analysis of the natures of disciplines has drawn on Biglan's matrix of four terms (1973a, b). Hard fields such as Physics and Mathematics have a strong theoretical structure and take a positivist position, while in 'soft' areas (Schon 1983), typically the social sciences and humanities, boundaries of knowledge are less clear and are open to interpretation. This marks the classic quantitative and qualitative divide in universities and also C. P. Snow's 'two cultures' (1961). Biglan also differentiates between pure and applied fields. Finally, less well used distinctions are proposed between urban and rural research (Becher 1989). The first of these refers to concentrations of research teams in a small knowledge area, contrasted with lone researchers scattered over a large intellectual terrain.

As noted earlier, there has been a tendency to move away from essentialist accounts of the power of disciplines. It might be argued that the culture of a discipline-based department may be markedly different from one institution to another; plainly other factors are at work too. However, disciplinary difference in academic leadership and management can be seen in a number of aspects (Blackmore 2007). It has been claimed that clear disciplinary differences can be found in relation to styles of leadership, patterns of interaction and decision-making, and conceptions of quality (Kekäle 2006). Other studies note academics' claims that they draw on their disciplinary knowledge when engaging in management activity (Deem *et al.* 2001). Significantly, in relation to change, conceptions of risk are claimed to vary among disciplines (Deem and Johnson 2000), with scientists, engineers, computer scientists and business school academics claimed to be more inclined to take economic risks although not necessarily cultural risks. A more nuanced view of departmental cultures and of their nature, questioning the strength of disciplinary influence, has been suggested by Lovitts (2001), who claims that departments have cultures that are not dependent on the parent discipline, consisting of patterns of norms that are passed down through written and informal rules, exemplified in practices and particular cultural forms that shape relationships in the department.

There are several implications for strategic curriculum change. The less permeable nature of some disciplinary boundaries may make interdisciplinary work harder to organise. If attitudes to change vary among disciplines, then it may be necessary to use different approaches according to the context. In practice, it was clear that some disciplines tended to be more resistant to change than others.

Often requirements from professional bodies were cited as constraints. However, it is interesting to note that some of the most radical curriculum changes have occurred in those disciplines and professions with a high level of regulation, such as Medicine. The medical curriculum has changed radically across the globe. There has been a general shift from two years of content followed by two years of practice to a much more integrated theme-based curriculum. Owing to these changes, the Medical faculty was often able to take a lead in university-wide curriculum change, as seen in the University of Utrecht and the University of the Witwatersrand. This shift has also been seen in many other health professions, leading to school and department reorganisations, such as the interdisciplinary approach taken in Health and Rehabilitation Sciences in the Faculty of Health at the University of Cape Town. In contrast, those disciplines that have least external control, such as in the humanities, are often less inclined to engage in major change. In the humanities, more incremental, local change (a bricolage approach) tends to be preferred.

Academic identity

An exploration of change at a departmental level can benefit greatly from an examination of the idea of academic identity. This includes the sense that individuals have of themselves, of their rights and responsibilities and of the affordances and constraints of their situation, all of which affect how change is viewed and whether and how it takes place. Broadly speaking, the department may be viewed as the most significant site for exploring academic identity because of the importance of disciplines, not only as epistemological entities with their own subject matter and truth practices that have to be mastered, but also as the principal way in which recognition and reward are gained. Further, identity is developed, sustained and revised through human interaction, and it is at the departmental level that close working relationships tend to reside.

Since identity sits at the intersection between the individual and the social, definitions tend to have a range of emphases. Giddens (1991) refers to the need to make personal sense of a life, describing self identity as 'a reflexively organized endeavour … which consists in the sustaining of coherent, yet continuously revised, biographical narratives' (5). It is that need for coherence that is in question when radical change is proposed that is not consistent with existing self-identity. The social aspect of identity was strongly emphasised by Bourdieu (1988) who, in his explorations of academic life, introduced the concept of '*habitus*', which he described as 'a system of shared social dispositions and cognitive structures which generates perceptions, appreciations and actions' (279). In academic life, academic *habitus* is of course strongly linked with disciplines. The strength, separateness and potential power of a discipline is emphasised in Nissani's (1997) description of it as 'any comparatively self-contained and isolated domain of human experience which possesses its own community of experts' (203). Although disciplines have been claimed in some areas to be weakening in

influence, they nevertheless are strongly formative in shaping academic *habitus*, providing 'the language in which individuals understand themselves and interpret their world' (Henkel 2000: 15).

Bourdieu (1988) also proposed that much of academic life could be understood in terms of the generation, valuing and exchange of a range of forms of capital. Alongside economic capital he cited cultural capital, which might consist of writing and other cultural artefacts, and social capital, referring to membership of networks and the possession of social standing. These can be very useful terms in examining what it is that is valued in academic life as a whole and by particular groups. However, Bourdieu has been criticised for omitting an account of pleasure that can be derived from discovery and from human interaction (Lamont 2009: 36).

Curriculum change requires not only changed practices but often changed values too. No matter how insistent those requesting change are, the motivation of academic staff is significant. This is a complex question. Attitudes to academic roles and therefore to change are likely to vary not only by discipline but also by career stage. It seems likely therefore that initiatives will find favour to the extent that they support rather than act against the preferred career paths of significant people who are affected by the change. Motivation may seem to be a phenomenon that is best understood at an individual level. However, recent research into the motivation of staff who do or do not engage in interdisciplinary work suggests that the dominant culture of the department is likely to be very significant (Blackmore and Kandiko 2011).

Networks and change

An awareness of networks is important in understanding the process of change. Universities contain many groups of people who function together as networks – and many disciplinary networks transcend the institution, as our earlier comment on cosmopolitanism acknowledges. Equally, there are many potential networks that might be brought into existence to facilitate change. As noted in the case studies, the curriculum committees that formed often functioned as networks leading change and innovation across the universities. In many institutions, there is no forum for staff undertaking similar roles, for example meetings of heads of departmental teaching committees. The deliberate encouragement of such networks can build into the institution a capacity to learn informally.

Changing ideas about the purposes of a higher education may be challenging to some academics' sense of identity. In particular Barnett *et al.* (2001) have pointed out the shift in curriculum from a concern for truth to one of usefulness, to 'doing, rather than knowing, and performance rather than understanding … there is a mistrust of all things that cannot easily be quantified and measured' (436). The strong disciplinary focus of many academic staff may be challenged by conceptions of curriculum that are founded on different notions of coherence, that may be based on students making a programme that makes personal sense to them, or else a curriculum that is structured around the development of skills or capabilities

rather than subject understanding. The relationship between teacher and learner is also a point of contention. Increasingly, students are seen as the consumers of an educational service. Inadequate and unhelpful though the metaphor might be, it is a powerful one, challenging the more traditional relationship between teacher and student. The development of a network of colleagues with a shared view of the purposes of a change can be a powerful way of enabling a change.

Academic roles

There has been a strong trend in recent years to define work roles formally in universities, partly through detailed job descriptions. Major strategic change in universities may involve the formal alteration of existing roles and the designation of new ones, whether permanently in the staffing structure or on a short-term basis. Additional or different expectations may be asked of those who are currently in posts. This normative view of role masks its interactionist nature. That is to say, roles are continually negotiated as part of a social process. Changes may be made in formal job descriptions and titles, which may seem to define roles, but there may be a considerable gap between formal and actual roles. The implication is that an organisation cannot fully control the ways in which roles are enacted in practice. In fact it may be much more deep-seated and enduring aspects of organisational life that influence how people see themselves, what they do and how they do it.

A change in identity is implied both by the way in which the teaching component of the academic role is seen and in its importance in relation to the whole. As curricula become more complex and based on other organising principles than the epistemology of a discipline, it becomes necessary for academic staff to develop a more sophisticated view of the curriculum. Knowledge of one's own subject and the ability to deliver a lecture and mark an examination script are no longer enough. Teaching has become a much more nuanced activity. This requires that greater attention be given to teaching and that a higher level of proficiency be achieved. In most institutions in the UK, this is marked by a requirement for probationary staff to undertake a formal certificated course in higher education pedagogy. There is now a significant literature discussing the extent to which pedagogy is, or should be thought to be, discipline specific. Academics in disciplines are likely to bring their own discipline-related perspectives to their consideration of teaching, and some disciplines are likely to be more attuned than others to the predominantly social science-based education literature. In some disciplines, the soft knowledge of education may struggle to be seen as having parity with the hard knowledge of other disciplines (Schon 1983).

How roles are changing

Some of the very practical changes in roles and relationships are explored here, in terms of the fundamental underlying issues that introduce tensions when change is contemplated. There is reference to the broad themes listed below, and a more

extensive exploration of the specific changes that are currently observed in universities. While the 'traditional' route into academic life, via a PhD and postdoctoral appointment, remains a very common pattern in research-intensive institutions, particularly in the natural sciences, an increasing number of staff join the academy in mid-career, particularly in professional and vocational fields. This is likely to become more common with the continuing trend for universities to engage increasingly with 'mode 2' knowledge (Gibbons *et al.* 1994). It is necessary for universities to find ways of valuing expertise along with traditional disciplinary knowledge, as the boundaries of academic life become a great deal more permeable.

We have already noted the increased pressure on academic staff to be excellent in both research and teaching, and there is a consequent tendency towards an 'unbundling' of the traditional tripartite academic role. This can be seen in the number of teaching-only appointments that are made, including a growth in the number of graduate teaching assistants. We have also seen an increase in the number of support roles, usually on professional rather than academic contracts. In some cases, significant new professional groups have emerged, an obvious example being the learning technologists, whose expertise spans technology and pedagogy and should enable them to give useful advice and guidance to academic staff. This growth in hybrid roles has been noted as a widespread phenomenon (Whitchurch 2008, 2011).

Much of the growth in support staff has taken place in a relatively piecemeal way, with staff distributed widely across an institution, often poorly networked with one another. For example, it is common for universities to employ learning technologists centrally, at school and at departmental levels. Those in such posts may or may not be well networked with one another. It could be argued that career paths are a great deal less clear for such hybrid roles than is the case for either academic or mainstream administrative staff. The adoption of a new curriculum has been the trigger in some institutions for a review of the way in which support staff are organised, partly so that they can be managed more effectively against institutional objectives, and partly to provide a seamless service for students who might find it useful to access a range of forms of support from the same point.

Teaching is now far less often undertaken by an individual teacher in isolation. More teaching is done in teams, sometimes because of the need to deal with larger numbers of students and sometimes to provide the breadth of expertise that an interdisciplinary field might require. The increase in the use of learning technologies brings another group of support staff into the picture. Thus teaching requires engagement with a larger number of people, and institutions need to ensure that appropriate connections are made so that effective teamwork can take place. There may be tensions, in that some groups of staff may value some things more than do other groups. For example, the degree of commitment to the institution can differ between academic and support staff. The former may have a cosmopolitan orientation and the latter a more local one (Merton 1968). The frustration of support staff who perceive that academic colleagues are less committed than they themselves are to the institutional enterprise has been noted (McInnis 1998).

Communication across roles

A further factor in a change process is the extent to which various stakeholders are included. There are many stakeholder groups within and beyond the institution, with interests that may not coincide. Successful initiatives engage key stakeholders. Not surprisingly, there are usually strong efforts to engage academic staff in curriculum change. However, the extent to which students, employers and community representatives are included varies considerably. We noted that this appeared to make a considerable difference to the kind of change that was implemented and also to the process of change. Very often, where a stakeholder group is not consulted, there is an assumption made about their viewpoint that may then be cited as a reason for not proceeding.

The need to involve as many of the stakeholders as possible means that effective two-way communication is a vital part of a change process. One of the most important features was openness of process. Some universities went to great lengths to ensure that every aspect of discussion was recorded and made widely available. Staff in one university felt that the best advice they could offer others was to ensure that there was a 'paper trail' of decision-making. Another institution used a website as its central repository, recording information about over seventy public events and offering webcast meetings, newsletters and blogs. 'Roadshows' were a favoured way of taking ideas out into academic schools and departments. Even if they were not well attended, they provided an opportunity for discussion and tended to reduce dissent.

Some universities found that having information about other institutions' initiatives could be a useful lever, especially if it could be seen that a peer institution had decided to make a change. Opinions from stakeholder groups could also be powerful. Student opinion is hard to discount: a proposal that has strong student support is far harder to oppose publicly. Often it was suggested that a change would not be acceptable to bodies outside the university, such as employers and accrediting agencies. One institution found it useful to gather views in advance, so that supposed external opposition could be shown to be inaccurate supposition. It was common to see signs of 'us and them' attitudes developing in some institutions. This was most likely to happen when a change was thought not to have originated in the academy but from the administration. For such purposes, Vice-Chancellors and Pro-Vice-Chancellors count as administrators. Networks of academic supporters in key positions across the institution often helped to make change possible, highlighting the role of leadership, which we now turn to.

Leadership issues in curriculum change

We have noted that universities exist in an increasingly fast-moving and complex environment. Within institutions, individuals and groups experience rapid change. Existing roles are changing; new roles are coming into existence and through this existing identities are challenged. Curriculum change is thus a very complex issue. Its epistemological component reaches deeply into the nature of

a university and the identities of those who work in them. Leading curriculum change is therefore a challenging activity.

Defining leadership

The term 'leadership' is a contested one with a variety of meanings that have been explored in a higher education context (Middlehurst 1993). Much current writing focuses on leadership as a practical activity. For example, Ramsden describes leadership as: 'a practical and everyday *process* of supporting, managing, developing and inspiring academic colleagues [that] … can and should be exercised by everyone, from the vice-chancellor to the casual car parking attendant' (1998:5). In keeping with this, leadership is most usually seen as having a strong relationship with its context. In discussing departmental leadership, Knight and Trowler describe it as a socio-cultural phenomenon, embedded in a context so that leadership work is 'contingent … it involves dealing with the specifics of a time, a place and a set of people' (2001:viii).

Levels of leadership

It may be useful to differentiate among levels of leadership, especially if it is viewed as being widely distributed. As the case studies in this book show, change requires strong and consistent senior leadership support for it to be successful. However, hyper-rational change processes that took no account of local context were likely to be ignored or explicitly resisted. We researched a number of institutions that attempted a major curriculum change and then had to abandon plans for change. It has been claimed that academic work cannot be heavily managed, partly because in the end its quality resides in the interchange between teacher and taught, partly because its technology is not widely understood (Cuthbert 2006) and also because its nature requires professional autonomy so that complex situations can be dealt with in appropriate ways. Thus, alongside the strong senior support, there is a need for a more distributed view (Cowan and Heywood 2001), which enlists a large number of academic and support staff in the change project, delegating responsibility to the greatest possible extent. However, there is an obvious danger of stasis in this approach. To make progress, major change requires action at all levels – the institutional, the departmental and the individual.

The quality of leadership at a departmental level has often been cited as a decisive factor in the provision of excellent university teaching (Martin *et al.* 2003). Clearly the role of Head of Department is a vital one. In many research-led institutions it is a role that is not sought by many staff, who may see it as an impediment to promotion. It may be taken on reluctantly as a part of good citizenship (Macfarlane 2007). Often it is still filled on a rotational basis, usually on a three-year basis (Bryman 2007) to limit the impact on research productivity. The extent to which role holders are offered induction varies considerably.

Another important level within the department is that of course or module leadership. Two studies in recent years have shown the importance of this level and that preparation for it is often informal or non-existent. Blackmore's study (2007) showed that although course and module leaders have responsibility for designing, managing and evaluating provision, they generally do not see themselves as having a leadership role in terms either of pedagogy or evolving content. The function is largely seen as administrative, simply a matter of making sure that teaching takes place and that essential requirements, such as those for quality assurance, are met. Another study by Johnston and Westwood (2007) of twenty UK universities came to similar conclusions about the lack of formal preparation and the reluctance of many to take on the role. The study recommended personal and professional development support for those coming into the post. Those who were driving change efforts often found themselves in the position of 'hero innovator'; Georgiades and Phillamore (1975) have argued that, for this reason, leadership development should be widely distributed. Research in both industry and education has shown that a dominant work culture was usually stronger than the effect of any training undertaken away from the workplace.

A study by Gibbs *et al.* (2008) of excellent teaching departments in eleven research-intensive universities has strong relevance to leaders promoting curriculum change. Gibbs was unable to find any standard pattern of approach to change: he found a complete diversity of approach from strong central action through to no apparent attempt at all to facilitate change. Departments studied had widely differing cultures and leadership, and change approaches were similarly diverse. Heads of Departments reported a range of ways of encouraging change, which they frequently blended, including using external consultants, student consultation, consensus building, making time available to innovators and attempting to neutralise those who would disagree and prevent change. That study did not attempt to link leadership style with academic discipline, but some have done so. The preferred styles and practices of leadership differ on a disciplinary basis. Adair (1998) suggests that leaders need the qualities that are expected of the group they lead – so a head of engineer should have the qualities of a good engineer if he is to command respect. His is an interesting claim, given that institutions are increasingly actively managed by staff who often have cross-institutional responsibilities and are therefore working beyond their original disciplinary remit. For all of these reasons, a distributed approach to leadership seems appropriate in the promotion of curriculum change. However, this does not remove the need for a strong change supporter at a senior level. This point is noted throughout the case studies in this book.

Practices in leading curriculum change

The situated and embedded nature of curriculum leadership makes it challenging to describe what it is that leaders do. Here we draw from two recent studies of leadership of this kind. A study of the leadership behaviour of academic staff at a

UK and an Australian university developing interdisciplinary approaches (Blackmore and Kandiko 2010) drew on Adair's three-part model of action-centred leadership, which consists of achieving the task, building and maintaining the team and developing the individual. Given the academic context, this was modified to a concern for learning, identity and discipline. In other words, to effect change interdisciplinary leaders needed to understand the academic content of the discipline, the way in which individuals and groups saw themselves, and the ways in which the capacity for changed behaviour could be brought about, through learning at both an individual and a group level. This is a challenging combination of abilities, suggesting that those who are not highly aware of academic identity and of disciplinary cultures are not likely to be successful, which points to insider-driven change. It also perhaps suggests that an understanding of individual and organisational learning cannot be taken for granted. Analysis of extensive interviews identified four principal areas of activity: identifying need and opportunity; working with motivation; co-ordinating and directing; and communicating (ibid). Perhaps the most significant conclusion of the study is that the term 'leadership' does not always sit comfortably in an academic environment, and yet at its heart academic work is an act of intellectual leadership.

A further study of a range of academic departments and research centres (Blackmore and Kandiko 2011) drew on the anthropological conception of a 'prestige economy' (Bascom 1948; Grinev 2005; Herskovits 1948) and Bourdieu's notions of *habitus* and capital to explore patterns of motivation at a departmental level. Most accounts of motivation refer to intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. However, the idea of a prestige economy adds the socio-cultural and political entity of the academic discipline and department. The study shows that the culture of a department places a stronger value on some activities than on others. Only those who are very secure in their position, usually through seniority, can afford to stand outside such a culture. One conclusion is that a thorough understanding of academic motivation at a local level is essential if change is to take place. Alongside this are institutional-level motivational aspects, such as the way in which probation and promotion and other forms of recognition are managed.

A study of attitudes to leadership development at two institutions was undertaken as part of our curriculum project (KLI 2010). Interviews suggested that a wide range of skills is needed, and also that staff tended to focus on some skills more than others. Programme directors felt that local institutional knowledge of aspects such as the decision-making structure of the institution was essential. Senior administrators were conscious of the value of the particular expertise that they could bring concerning, for example, course approval and review processes and university regulations. Perhaps unsurprisingly, senior staff tended to think in more strategic terms, and junior staff tended to think more operationally.

The interviews revealed a widespread awareness of the need to work within the constraints of a collegial academic setting. Senior staff spoke of taking a facilitative approach, of consultation and achieving consensus. There was a preference for a contingent leadership style that took account of individuals' motivations and

Case study: A failed interdisciplinary restructuring

Institutional initiatives may start with clear intentions and a carefully structured plan, but the reality of change is often messier and less coherent. University X attempted to develop interdisciplinarity in the undergraduate curriculum, by grouping together disciplines that were considered to be cognate and introducing programmes that drew on the grouped disciplines. The initiative encountered pedagogical, logistical and personal challenges. The groupings were opposed by academic staff across a range of disciplines. The change brought together staff who sometimes felt they had little in common with one another and who were not prepared to invest time and effort in learning to work productively together. The new arrangements were also seen as being too rigid. After the courses were launched, enrolment numbers fell and there was a high administrative load. Senior academics and administrators reviewed the curriculum and reverted back to the original disciplinary-based majors system. Several years after the start of the change, only one of the discipline groups remained. Although the change did not last long, the endeavour has had a long institutional impact. No major changes have been attempted since. Curriculum change is widely seen in the institution as being difficult, undesirable and to be resisted, as it immediately evokes memories of a very turbulent and unproductive experience.

The perspectives of a number of staff involved in the initiative help to illuminate some of the sources of difficulty. An academic in the humanities felt that interdisciplinarity was important to the new Vice-Chancellor. The new programmes were produced from 'bundles' of existing disciplines, and it was assumed that staff would find no difficulty in working across disciplines. One of the reasons for the failure of the programmes was believed to be that the programme convenors had no power, partly because resources had not been reallocated. This highlights the need for resourcing to follow strategic changes.

Another academic from Education spoke of 'adventures with programmes'. He believed that there was a lack of advice and support for students, who had been left to make sense of a fragmented experience. The disciplines – referred to as taproots for the university's work– were withering. Although the change was popular with some students, brighter students, he claimed, were not sufficiently grounded in a discipline and therefore lost out when they went on to postgraduate study.

From the view of an anthropologist, the programmes, which required faculty to teach outside of their disciplines, were too rigid and could turn off the 'high-flyers' who were disappointed by the loss of the creative options they previously could choose for themselves. Overall there was a sense that the programmes reduced opportunities for all students. Before (and after) the programmes initiative, in the humanities there was freedom for students to mix and match across disciplines, although no bridging or co-ordination had been built into the curriculum.

Similar problems were seen in the Sciences. From the perspective of a Chemistry professor, there had always been interdisciplinary opportunities, with extensive choice and variability. There was also a focus on research, generic skills and practical work, so in some ways it was business as usual. Overall there was disillusionment with the programmes, which were felt to be too complex to administer and for students to come to terms with, and the new programmes were scrapped.

ways of working. It was important to achieve a mix of skills within a team, with all members contributing their strength. One commented that it was not productive to attempt to require staff to take part in a curriculum change if they did not wish to. Colleagues' attitudes featured strongly. It was suggested that some were entrenched in disciplinary silos. A frequent lament was the perceived low status of teaching, set against research. Obvious and consistent senior support was felt to be vital, together with very public recognition of and reward for excellent teaching. There was widespread recognition that academic work was becoming faster and more complex, that leadership was required, and that the time has passed when a 'gentleman amateur' approach to leadership is acceptable. There was little support for formal taught leadership programmes, although those who had undertaken them said that they found them useful; learning from practical experience was valuable. There was a need for excellent role models and recognition of the value of coaching and mentoring. The need for leaders to attend to local cultures is shown in the case study on page 140.

Conclusions

Curriculum change in a research-intensive environment is challenging because changes in roles and relationships are involved, touching on issues of identity. Institutional change has to deal with the strong orientation that academic staff often have to their discipline or profession, which engages them with a network of colleagues beyond the university, and also to the immediate environment of the department. The institution, even though it is the employer, often has the weakest claim on staff loyalty. The pace of centrally mandated change may therefore be very slow. Simply getting agreement to make changes may take several years, and sometimes change initiatives may make no progress at all.

Yet individuals and groups in fact adjust to changing conditions and needs all the time and have the capacity to make significant improvements. In any research-intensive university, research groups and networks are established, initially often quite informally, taking advantage of immediate needs and opportunities. Course teams find pragmatic solutions to problems in the management of teaching. It therefore makes sense to encourage a climate in which at the lowest possible level, staff are encouraged to take responsibility for shaping change. This requires sympathetic HR approaches and a change strategy that favours local interpretation and recognises the value and importance of networks.

The discourse around change may also either help or hinder. In our study we found very wide agreement about the purposes of a higher education: that it has to do with developing autonomy, criticality, tolerance of others and a range of other attributes, alongside disciplinary knowledge. However, some of the ways in which that broader agenda for learning are approached did not find favour with many academic staff, often because it was seen to be framed in terms of a rather reductivist and decontextualised notion of 'skills', rather than rooted in the exploration of a discipline. A re-evaluation of what it means to lead in an academic environment would be timely. A flexible organisation that is able to change

organically requires that leadership capacity be broadly distributed, and that the social aspects of leadership – the ability to inspire and enthuse colleagues working in a collegial environment – are centrally important.

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Chapter 2

The internationalisation of higher education

Sheila Trahar, Wendy Green, Hans de Wit and Craig Whitsed

Introduction

The higher education sector is being transformed by a 'widening, deepening and speeding up of worldwide interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary life' (Held *et al.* 1999: 2). Concurrently, many universities have become key agents in the globalisation process. Through teaching, research and community engagement, universities contribute to the flows of information, technology and people across the globe and, in the process, they – some more than others – become key partners in the development of sustainable, equitable societies within and across national borders (Singh 2011). However, enacting such a commitment to social justice means imagining a university that is transformational, rather than transactional, in its relations with its various stakeholders.

In this chapter, we explore and tease open several complexities that surround and permeate the internationalisation of higher education. Reflecting critically on research conducted in the last fifty years, we consider the insights into the internationalisation of higher education gained through this research, and reflect on its contextual limitations. We focus on globalisation and internationalisation and how these concepts are being reconceptualised and enacted in different higher education contexts. According to Knight (2008), internationalisation can be perceived as having two components: internationalisation abroad (mobility of students and scholars, as well as cross-border delivery); and internationalisation at home (focusing on curriculum and learning outcomes). The focus of attention over the years has been on internationalisation abroad in practice, policy and research. Our focus, however, is on internationalisation 'at home' and the notion of global citizenship, together with implications for the internationalisation of the curriculum, learning outcomes and related issues such as English as the *lingua franca*. We seek to problematise the dominant discourses and methodological approaches, calling for future research to foreground a social justice agenda through which international higher education can develop global responsibility and citizenship.

Globalisation

According to Rizvi and Lingard (2010), 'globalisation' not only describes a set of empirical changes in the world but also affects the way we understand

and imagine it. As a descriptor, the word denotes the increased flows of people, finance, information, images and the 'intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa' (Giddens 1990: 64). Ideologically, globalisation constructs and circulates value orientations towards these changes. Held *et al.* (1999) conceptualise these value orientations in three ways. Firstly, the *hyperglobalists* see globalisation as a real, significant historical development that has fundamentally altered all aspects of our lives by creating new modes of transnational social organisation, and thus as a positive process that is creating a 'flattened' playing field for competition (Friedman 2005). Secondly, the *sceptics* deny that there is anything fundamentally new about globalisation; current discourses are nothing more than an ideological construction with limited explanatory power. Thirdly, the *transformalists* argue that globalisation has an undeniably material form, producing entrenched and enduring patterns of world-wide interconnectedness, but that this does not affect all communities in the same way. *Transformalists* would argue that globalisation is 'unequal, divergent and sometimes contradictory' (Caruana 2010: 52). Each of these different ideological orientations has implications for higher education, as we will now elaborate.

Globalisation, internationalisation and higher education

Highlighting the dominance of neoliberal ideology in the discourse of international education, Rizvi and Lingard (2010) link it to certain effects of globalisation, such as the trend towards minimal public funding, deregulation and instrumentalist values such as economic efficiency or 'growth first'. For some 'discontents' of globalisation, the internationalisation of higher education is viewed as a redemptive 'White Knight', which is pitted against the destructive 'Black Knight' forces of globalisation (Sanderson 2010: 212). The espoused aims of internationalisation – to promote international, intercultural and global understandings in higher education – are seen as a way of softening the negative effects of globalisation, 'act[ing] in a "bottom-up" fashion on many "top-down" global forces' (Sanderson 2010: 212). However, this dichotomy is challenged by those who argue that (ideas and ideologies of) globalisation shape discourses and practices regarding internationalisation – in both liberating and restrictive ways – whether or not we open these ideas to scrutiny and debate (Rizvi and Lingard 2010; Whitsed and Green 2013).

According to Scott (2005: 14), 'the distinctions between internationalisation and globalisation, although suggestive, cannot be regarded as categorical. They overlap, and are intertwined, in all kinds of ways'. Cantwell and Maldonado-Maldonado (2009: 304) observe that the distinction between 'globalization' and 'internationalization' of higher education, while 'common', is challenged by researchers and perceived as 'theoretically unsatisfying'.

Moreover, Marginson and van der Wende (2007: 5) argue that globalisation's impact on the internationalisation of higher education has been asymmetrical

and 'nuanced according to locality, language(s), and academic cultures'. According to Barnett (2000), the tension between the global and the local is a defining feature of the contemporary university. In his view, the university is 'a striking example of the phenomenon of glocalization, that heady and tense admixture of the global and the local in the same set of activities' (Barnett 2000: 17). Discerning a conceptual shift from internationalisation towards 'glocalization', Marginson and van der Wende (2007: 9) explain that internationalisation 'takes place in the borderlands between nations and leaves the heart of those nations untouched. In contrast, globalisation has a fecund potential to remake the daily practices of people working in higher education'. Therefore, the terms internationalisation and globalisation are not mutually exclusive. Rather, they operate, and need to operate, dialectically within the contemporary university (Marginson and van der Wende 2007).

The need for further critical debate about higher education's role as object – and agent – of globalisation can be discerned in the different, even contradictory, rationales for internationalisation within universities and the sector as a whole (Hanson 2010), which are then enacted differently in national and institutional contexts (de Wit *et al.* 2008). For example, while internationalisation is a 'familiar' term in higher education, its use in 'research and discussion [has been] varied' (Marginson and Sawir 2011: 14). Many categorisations of institutional and national rationales for internationalisation have been offered (cf. Knight 2004). These rationales shape models of practice; an economic rationale will mean the adoption of a market model wherein internationalisation is centrally concerned with strengthening one's competitive edge, while a social transformative model sits 'philosophically opposed to a market model' and emphasises cross-cultural understanding and critical social analysis (Hanson 2010: 72–3). Where an institution's rationale and model of practice differ from the values of its staff, the staff tend to disengage from internationalisation. In Australia, for example, where the sector is largely dependent for its survival on fee-paying international students, internationalisation tends to be viewed sceptically by academics, as a largely economic, neo-liberal enterprise (Marginson and Sawir 2011), in spite of the policy rhetoric published by Australian universities, which de-emphasises its economic rationales.

Despite the complex environment of higher education internationalisation, with its vastly different rationales and 'incoherent and contradictory goals' (Caruana 2010: 51) within and across institutions, countries and regions, research in this field, until recently at least, has been predominantly descriptive and applied (de Wit 2013). To understand why the field has evolved thus it is necessary to explore its emergence as a discrete domain of research and practice within a specific historical, geopolitical context.

Internationalisation: an emerging concept

The internationalisation of higher education as a research field has its roots in post-World War II Europe and the United States (Altbach *et al.* 1982). In those

regions, 'international education' was understood to be virtually synonymous with study abroad. Even though the accents are quite different (de Wit 2009), study abroad remains a core feature of higher education in Europe and the United States (Wächter 2014). In contrast, the United Kingdom and several other Anglophone countries focused on 'importing' foreign students (Rivza and Teichler 2007: 463), a phenomenon that prompted the development of a second dominant strand of inquiry in the field: the problem(atisation) of international students (Trahar 2011).

During the past two decades research has broadened out from a focus on certain students (the temporarily mobile and the remediation of international students) and embraced a more systemic view of internationalisation. This shift has been informed by Jane Knight's definition from the early 1990s. That definition emphasised the integration of an international/intercultural dimension into all of a university's activities, including the teaching, research and service functions, shifting the emphasis away from student mobility, study abroad and international students. As de Wit (2013) states, this shift is a reflection of the increasing importance of the international dimensions in higher education and of the related transfer from a marginal set of programmes and activities to a more comprehensive process. In other words, there has emerged among several leading voices 'the shared feeling that international education should be . . . integrated, broad and core' (Brandenburg and de Wit 2011: 15). At the same time, this shift in research interest is not reflected in the practice of internationalisation, which is still predominantly focused on 'internationalisation abroad' and mobility, and less on the 'at home', curriculum and learning outcomes.

Despite the desire of some to broaden the scope of internationalisation, research in this field remained narrow in its concerns, methodologies and reach. According to de Wit (2013), practice and policy concerns continue to be dominant in the discourse on international education. Nevertheless, there have been repeated calls for greater criticality, reflexivity and diversity within the field. Teichler (1996), for example, argued for a broader thematic range in the theoretical basis and approaches used in internationalisation research, which, he considered, focused primarily on psychological dimensions of students' attitudes, behaviour and experiences, students from low-income countries studying abroad and (cf. Volet and Jones 2012) descriptions and evaluations of international programmes and projects. He concluded this research was 'occasional, coincidental, sporadic or episodic' (Teichler 1996: 341), and noted that most of it was conducted in the United States.

Changing notions and perceptions

During the last decade, the established discourse, definitions and concerns in the field have been more systematically challenged (cf. Clifford and Montgomery 2014). For example, Whitsed and Green (2013) draw attention to the problem of consensus when defining constructs such as internationalisation because

of changing notions and perceptions over time and context. Hawawani, in particular, critiques Knight's definition as being 'too narrowly defined', arguing that it does 'not capture the essence of a process whose ultimate goal should be to *integrate the institution into the emerging global knowledge and learning network* rather than *integrate an international dimension into an existing institutional setting*' (Hawawani 2011: 5, original emphasis). In addition, there is also a trend to emphasise the need for a strategic, integrated, transformative and/or comprehensive internationalisation. For example, Hudzik (2011: 1) argues that internationalisation ought to be a:

> commitment, confirmed through action, to infuse international and comparative perspectives throughout the teaching, research, and service missions of higher education. It shapes institutional ethos and values and touches the entire higher education enterprise. It is essential that it be embraced by institutional leadership, governance, faculty, students, and all academic service and support units. It is an institutional imperative, not just a desirable possibility.

While such constructions of internationalisation are laudable, they are not necessarily universally applicable or appropriate. To elaborate, dominant Anglocentric, 'Western' conceptualisations of internationalisation are now being retheorised to be more relevant to 'non-Western' contexts (cf. Cheung 2012). As a way of 'decentering the hegemonic stranglehold of the Eurocentric epistemological order', Zeleza (2012: 3) argues for 'more empowering knowledges for the south and symmetrical forms of internationalization in higher education'. Jones and De Wit (2012) speak in that context of 'the globalisation of internationalisation'. According to them, in the current global knowledge society the concept of internationalisation of higher education has itself become globalised, demanding further consideration of its impact on policy and practice as more countries and types of institution around the world engage in the process. Thus, internationalisation should, therefore, no longer be considered in terms of a westernised, largely Anglo-Saxon and predominantly English-speaking paradigm.

This can be seen in Hong Kong, for example, where there is a developing push against 'the Anglo-American way' of internationalisation (Cheung 2012: 106). Writing in that context, Cheung maintains that higher education should:

> strive to meet domestic needs and undertake work that is of local relevance . . . Internationalisation is not the same as Europeanisation or Americanisation. It should be genuinely international – i.e. bringing together cross-national and cross-cultural experiences and knowledge, and appreciating diversity and plurality across nations and societies. (Cheung 2012: 106)

In Malaysia and Japan, internationalisation is conceptualised as a way of promoting the context to the international community and inculcating a sense of nationalism. Such aims are visible in the Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education's

Internationalisation Policy (2011: 3), which positions the internationalisation of higher education as a significant factor in increasing 'Malaysians' international awareness and developing a sense of national pride'. The main emphasis in this policy document continues to be, however, mobility. Research on internationalisation in the Malaysian context tends to focus on the increasing number of international students studying there, rather than deeper investigations into the complexities as well as the advantages of internationalised higher education environments. In Japan, internationalisation of higher education 'has been embraced as a way of producing graduates capable of explaining their country to the wider world' (Trahar 2011: 5). In the Japanese context internationalisation is intertwined, inextricably, in policy documents with Japanese cultural identity (Hashimoto 2009; 2013). In common with other parts of the region (e.g., Hong Kong, Singapore), an increasing number of higher education programmes in Japan are being taught in English to attract international students, raise the status of institutions internationally and market themselves to domestic students (Hashimoto 2013; Brown 2014). Despite this rise of English medium instruction (EMI) courses, internationalisation of higher education policy in Japan aims to resist 'Western globalisation and English dominance while promoting unique Japanese culture and identity to the world through its internationalisation and language policies' (Phan 2013: 166; also Hashimoto 2013). In considering the pervasiveness of English in Japanese society and education policy as well as the increase in EMIs within 'the internationalisation agendas of . . . [G30] universities [and] in their self-promotion messages',[1] some scholars, such as Phan (2013: 169), question whether the country really has been able to resist the hegemony of English – a point for further discussion later in the chapter.

According to Marginson (2013: 14), many universities globally now want to

> achieve more intensive and self-transformative international experiences. They want to bring an international dimension to the knowledge content of the curriculum, to enhance global skill building and to improve intercultural relations in culturally mixed classrooms. In a departure from the past, they want to move from rhetoric and bland mission statements, to changing the nature of the education that everyone receives.

This aim is increasingly encapsulated in policies and strategies for producing graduates who are 'global citizens' (Clifford and Montgomery 2014). However, the 'nefarious overused concept of global citizenship' (Schuerholz-Lehr *et al.* 2007, as cited in Zeleza 2012: 6) will ring hollow unless these universities foster critically reflective conversations among staff and students about what this concept means in their chosen discipline/s and in their daily lives.

Higher education for global citizenship?

The trend for Anglo-European, and increasingly Asian, universities to describe themselves as 'global' institutions which foster global citizenship in their students

is attracting mounting criticism. For one thing, the term is ideologically ambiguous: it covers a range of meanings, from those who view it uncritically as a dimension of capitalism (Dower 2008) to those who view it as transformative and based on an acceptance of our shared responsibility for the world's future (Clifford and Montgomery 2014). A second objection is that there is no global political structure to which a 'global citizen' might belong (Wood 2008). While 'the pervasive nature of the nation state' produces ongoing tensions between 'western and non-western countries' the concept of global citizenship will remain elusive and fraught with contradictions (Rapoport 2010: 180). Moreover, 'universalistic' notions of global citizenship lose sight of 'locality, contingency and cultural context' (Marginson and Mollis 1999/2000: 56). Essentially, this calls for a 'rooted cosmopolitanism . . . that requires both the local and everything beyond the local to constitute its meaning' (Sanderson 2008: 291). In refiguring the relationship between the local and the global, the question of language, and specifically the increasing dominance of English as the language of instruction in universities, raises thorny issues. This is an issue we take up later, in relation to curriculum, teaching and learning.

Another challenging issue regarding 'global citizenship' related to curriculum and teaching specifically is that 'citizenship' has historically been associated with the political/civic domain – that is, one's political rights and responsibilities. However, Rhoades and Szelényi (2011) argue that the focus on the political ignores the larger complexities of life (economic, social and cultural). They propose a definition that assumes a more complex identity, one that emphasises a citizen's rights and responsibilities to act in all domains. If higher education is to prepare graduates to be global citizens, it will need to engage a radical, or 'emerging', curriculum (Barnett and Coate 2005) which encompasses three domains: not only knowing (as in the traditional curriculum), but also doing and being. In particular, today's students, who face a future that is much more uncertain than in the past, need a curriculum with an ontological focus, one that engages them as whole persons as global citizens. Yet, the ontological domain is still 'an embryonic component' in many university curricula (Barnett and Coate 2005). Along with the dominance of English as the language of instruction, the ontological domain of the curriculum has important implications for universities who claim to foster global citizenship. Both of these issues will be elaborated in the following sections.

Global citizenship and English as the *lingua franca*

'The internationalisation of higher education has become institutionalised around a linguistic preference for English' (Phan 2013: 160), and thus it is impossible to reflect on the internationalisation of higher education without recourse to language and, in particular, the global spread of English as the *lingua franca* (ELF). The implications of this are particularly clear in transnational higher education contexts, the term that describes a programme undertaken by students located in a different country (the host country) from the one in which the institution

delivering the programme is based (the home country). Adopting English as the language of instruction has enabled, for example, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Singapore and Dubai to emerge as 'mature importers . . . that aim to transform or are turning themselves into [regional] education hubs' (Leung and Waters 2013: 480). Support for young scholars and students to teach and learn in English is driven by their interest to connect with the rest of the world, while resistance by older academics may be founded on fear of transformation, as the attempts by the rector of the Università Politecnico de Milano to change all graduate education to English have demonstrated (de Wit 2012). Increasingly, academics teaching in universities are becoming more international, and the number teaching in another language is growing. Yet, others address the dangers of linguistic imperialism, 'with anglocentricity . . . operating within a structure in which unequal power and resource allocation is effected and legitimated' (Phillipson 1992: 54).

> The current global status of English dominates local languages in many communities, thus reshaping the language culture identity dynamics of these contexts in varied ways. English simultaneously carries multiple meanings, including memories of a painful colonial past, the glorification of English as a global language of necessity, popularity, opportunity and advancement, a language of reconciliation, empowerment and integration, a language of identity liberation and yet constraint, a language of exclusion and discrimination and a language of local creativity and sensibility. (Phan 2013: 161)

The inherent tensions of ELF identified by Phan constitute one of the wicked problems for the internationalisation of higher education. The 'wickedity' of the problem becomes even more apparent in contexts where at least two other languages coexist with English (Doiz *et al.* 2013), such as the Basque Country and Catalonia in Spain, and many African nations. Doiz *et al.* (2013: 1419) concluded from their research in the Basque context that the 'predator effect' of English not only threatens 'the development of Basque' but may also 'forc[e] other languages off the curriculum'). This is not an isolated concern.

To date, the emerging research concerning ELF has focused on its impact on non-Anglophone countries. However, the corollary of this – the decreasing funding and motivation for learning other languages in the Anglophone world – also has implications for the teaching and learning of native English speakers. Different languages give one access to different histories and ways of thinking. Thus, the inability to speak more than one language has to be seen as a limitation in universities that claim to produce global citizens through the 'internationalisation of the curriculum'.

Internationalisation of the curriculum

In spite of its relatively long history, internationalisation of the curriculum (IoC) remains under-theorised and operationally challenging (Whitsed and Green 2013).

Although many universities, particularly in Anglophone countries, have adopted policies which support it (Leask 2013), there is widespread confusion about what IoC actually means, and how it can be conceived, implemented and assessed within specific disciplines (Liddicoat *et al.* 2003; Green and Whitsed 2013; Leask 2013). As Rizvi and Lingard (2010: 173) observe, 'the appeal of the idea of internationalisation of the curriculum appears ubiquitous [but] it is not always clear what it means and how it might represent a new way of prioritizing and organizing learning'.

Indeed, other terms, such as 'internationalisation at home' (Leask and Beelen 2009) and comprehensive internationalisation (Hudzik 2011), have emerged in recent years in addition to IoC. Typically, initiatives associated with these terms involve local and international content, face-to-face intercultural activities at the local level and the fostering of a lively interconnected cosmopolitan campus. Arguably IoC is the most difficult term to define, however, owing to its unrepentant focus on the 'curriculum' (Whitsed and Green, 2013). It is for this reason, as well as the fact that it continues to be taken up in policy statements in many countries, that we argue that IoC is a particularly significant area for further critical investigation.

IoC was originally defined in 1995 by the OECD (IDP Education Australia 1995: n.p.) as 'the process of developing a curriculum which is internationally oriented, aimed at preparing students for performing (professionally, socially) in an international and multicultural context, and designed for domestic students as well as foreign students'. Over time, new definitions evolved, each emphasising elements felt to be missing or under-played in the first definition. For example, Carter (2008: 629) emphasises the importance of criticality, flexibility and reflexivity within a globalised world. One definition that has gained considerable traction is offered by Leask (2009: 209): 'the incorporation of an international and intercultural dimension into the curriculum as well as the teaching and learning arrangements and support services of a program of study'.

Leask and Bridge (2013: 81) specify that this definition reflects a broad conceptualisation of curriculum, which includes 'all aspects of the learning/teaching situation and the student experience – the formal, informal and hidden curriculum'. Also worth noting is Leask's explicit references to the intercultural dimension of the curriculum, and to learning outcomes.

If teachers are to assist learners to become more reflexive about their own cultural values in relation to others, it follows that the teachers will themselves need to develop reflexive teaching practices (Trahar 2011). Yet, in universities, curriculum design is rarely a reflective practice, primarily because the curriculum is 'invisible' (Barnett and Coate 2005). The lack of debate about the curriculum has profound implications for IoC (Leask and Beelen 2009), because 'decisions about curriculum innovation for internationalisation are not neutral'; rather, they are ideological in nature, shaped by beliefs about internationalisation/globalisation and about the curriculum itself (Leask 2008: 13). Some argue that universities involved in transnational education tend to promote

a 'one size fits all' curriculum (Schapper and Mayson 2004), where 'Western' knowledge and pedagogy are assumed to be 'universally relevant' and 'universally welcome' (Caruana 2004: 4, citing Patrick 1997: n.p.). Moreover, in the absence of public debate, the curriculum is changing – significantly, and by 'stealth' – in countries such as the United Kingdom and Australia, where universities are increasingly influenced by market forces (Barnett and Coate 2005).The trend in these countries towards the commodification of learning, evident in the 'parcelization' (Mestenhauser 2011) or 'fragmentation' (Senge and Kim 1997) of learning programmes, arguably fails to adequately prepare students for a complex and somewhat unknown future (Barnett and Coate 2005; Mestenhauser 2011).

What is needed, therefore, is a curriculum that fosters the formation of ethical 'human being and becoming' for a 'supercomplex' (Barnett 2000), increasingly interconnected world. If IoC, as defined above by Carter (2008) and Leask (2009), is to perform this role it needs to be characterised by a transformational approach to education in and for a globalising world, with an emphasis on criticality for 'critical being' (Barnett 1997: 7). Importantly, the process of IoC in politically conflicted contexts can provide opportunities for students and academics to 'critique their deeply held assumptions' and destabilise 'their view of themselves and their worlds' (Leibowitz *et al.* 2010: 84). Motivated by sessions that Trahar, one of this chapter's authors, facilitated on the cultural mediation of learning, teaching and assessment and intercultural communication, as part of an EU TEMPUS IRIS project, the Israeli partners in the project are moving beyond the simplistic perception that to internationalise a curriculum means to teach in English.[2] They are establishing programmes that aim to challenge students' and academics' perceptions of each other by integrating global perspectives into the learning, teaching and assessment processes. In a conflicted context, this necessitates a 'process that is painful, but contains the promise of hope for the future' (Leibowitz *et al.* 2010: 84). Engaging in such a curriculum is likely to be personally challenging for teachers as well as students. Sanderson (2008: 277) elaborates: 'The corollary, indeed the precursor, of . . . a university's mission to help all students become new internationalist learners, workers and citizens . . . is that teachers as individuals must operate . . . as cosmopolitans of the 21st century'.

In short, the gap between IoC rhetoric and practice will remain unless academics, as the 'primary architects of the curriculum' (Leask and Bridge 2013: 80), adopt a more critically reflexive approach to the curriculum and its construction and then become intellectually and affectively engaged in that process.

Academic staff: a wicked problem?

Because IoC is a construct rather than a set of prescribed activities and must be developed reflexively as a situated practice, it is particularly complex and demanding (Leask and Bridge 2013). Indications are, however, that many academics feel under-informed, -supported, -prepared and -confident when it comes to IoC

(Green and Whitsed 2013; Leask and Beelen 2009). While there are examples of good practice, these tend to be descriptive and lacking a coherent conceptual framework (Leask and Bridge 2013). Moreover, they are predominantly written from an institutional perspective and tend largely to frame academics as obstacles to internationalisation (Childress 2010). In short, reflexive, theoretically informed, contextualised studies investigating the implementation of IoC from the perspective of those tasked with such implementation are rare (for exemplars see Leask and Bridge 2013; Trahar 2011).

Mestenhauser (1998: 4) was one of the earliest to focus an IoC-related inquiry on academics themselves. He attributed academics' 'resistance' to IoC to their 'conceptual confusion about what international education means'. Later, Bell (2004) found that academics' engagement with IoC was functionally linked to their broader understandings of teaching, learning and knowledge. She argued that academics take up four distinct positions along a 'spectrum of acceptance' of IoC, which could be mapped onto Ellingboe's 'Great Divide between attitudes of curricular and systemic change' (Ellingboe, cited in Bell 2004).

Mestenhauser's and Bell's work usefully conceptualised IoC as inseparable from academics' understanding and practice of curriculum and teaching rather than being an optional or specialised extra. Two other recent studies investigating academics' perspectives on IoC take a different tack to address the same problematic, investigating the ways that IoC knowledge and practices are shaped by the extra-individual discourses and material conditions in which academics work. Clifford (2009) interviewed academics in different disciplines and locations to investigate the role of disciplinary cultures in blocking or enabling IoC. She found the least sophisticated understandings of IoC were associated with what Becher (1989) termed the 'hard pure disciplines' (natural sciences and mathematics), where knowledge and ways of teaching and learning are largely considered universal and culturally neutral.

While Clifford's study highlighted the power of disciplinary communities to shape an individual academic's interpretation and practice of IoC, it provided no insights into how intra-disciplinary differences or cross-discipline similarities between academics influence their understandings or practices. With the increasing emphasis on interdisciplinarity across the university sector, single disciplines may one day become a thing of the past. Newer disciplines, such as business, tend to be interdisciplinary in nature, while even those disciplines with deep historical roots, such as mathematics, find it difficult to maintain their boundaries as they are diluted or dissolved through 'restructuring' into large interdisciplinary faculties (Trowler 2012). Moreover, the rapidly increasing mobility of academic staff (Universities UK 2007) means that new ideas and practices are more likely to disrupt departmental 'teaching and learning regimes' (Trowler and Cooper 2002: 221). Taking these trends into account, it is clear that more nuanced, multifaceted understandings of academics' engagement with the (internationalisation of the) curriculum are needed.

Leask (2013) investigated how different disciplinary cultures influenced conceptualisations and practices relating to IoC. Based on the findings of her project, she developed a conceptual framework for IoC (see Leask and Bridge 2013) in which the place of disciplinary knowledge is recognised as a critical determinant of academics' conceptualisation and practice of IoC, but this knowledge is nested within and shaped by the institutional, local, national, regional and global context. According to Leask and Bridge (2013), the dynamic interrelationships between these contextual layers explain how differences in practice arise. Within their framework, dominant and emergent paradigms within a discipline, the requirements of relevant professional bodies and practices, and assessment practices, are all influenced by the multi-layered context in which these activities take place. Thus, the framework illustrates the hegemonic forces (implicit and explicit) within disciplines and universities that constrain or allow curriculum innovation (in the context of globalisation and increasing cultural diversity).

While Leask and Bridge (2013) present the most nuanced, evidence-based framework of IoC practice to date, their work does not account for individual differences between academics working in the same context. How is it, for example, that one or more 'champions' can often be found in contexts so apparently unsupportive of innovative IoC practice? Sanderson addresses this question by sketching a theoretical 'foundation' for understanding academics' engagement with IoC as a personally transformative process. Drawing on Cranton's conceptualisation of the 'authentic teacher' and a critical review of cosmopolitanism, he argues that the 'whole of person transformation' required for IoC calls for an authentic, cosmopolitan or 'internationalised academic Self' (Sanderson 2008: 286).

Just what such an 'internationalised academic Self' might look like in practice, how such academics might conceptualise and practise IoC within their disciplines and, importantly, how such a disposition might be fostered are not addressed by Sanderson. As he acknowledges, his 'foundation' is theoretical and abstract. Furthermore, in its determined focus on the individual, it lacks a structural perspective on academics' engagement with teaching.

Taken together, the research surveyed here highlights the importance of considering the situatedness of academic practice in the context of IoC. Not only will the debates about internationalisation, globalisation and the curriculum as concepts have different implications for different disciplines and the professionals they train, but the multi-faceted context in which curricula are constructed, enacted and experienced constrain or enable innovation in myriad ways. Moreover, 'engaging the curriculum', as Barnett and Coate (2005) argue, is personally demanding work – it is the forge where academic identities and those of their students are formed and reformed. For these reasons, we argue, research into the internationalisation of higher education needs to take a more reflexive and critical turn. In the following, we ask: what gaps have been revealed through

our critique of the questions and discourses that have dominated the field to date, and how might we address them?

Current and future research themes

According to Hartman (2014: 1), the current body of research on internationalisation 'overlooks the broader context and strategic selectivity, transformation and struggles within which the object of analysis is to be placed'. In light of the numerous critical studies cited in this chapter, we suggest that such a categorical dismissal of the field is limited. Much more has been conducted in recent years than the descriptive studies Teichler referred to in 1996 (de Wit and Urias 2012). As exemplified in our survey of the literature, one can see an increase in contextualised studies particularly in Asia, the Middle East and other regions, alongside a growing critique of the Anglo-Eurocentric assumptions of earlier research. In terms of scope, interest has broadened well beyond the flow of international students. Yet, as one might expect, given the influence national politics and histories have on higher education, one can also see a relationship between authorship and themes. American authors tend to concentrate on study abroad and international students. Continental European authors on exchanges, partnerships and EU programmes, while British, Canadian and Australian authors tend to write more about transnational education and on internationalisation of the curriculum than others (de Wit 2014).

What needs to happen next? As Wächter (2014: n.p.) observes, 'we need a far more rational discourse – a discourse that is underpinned by evidence'. While we concur with this call for more evidence-based research, and argue that it needs to extend beyond the effects of mobility to include all aspects of international education, we would also like to see a more critical and reflexive edge to that research. We have argued that the internationalisation of higher education is occurring in a world that is far from 'flat' (Friedman 2005). We applaud the emergence of comparative studies in regions other than the Anglo-European sphere and argue that far more are needed. However, the question of how this might be achieved is itself a 'wicked problem'. In *Academic Capitalism and the New Economy*, Slaughter and Rhoades (2009) argue that the 'academic capitalism' practised by countries in the global North makes it increasingly difficult for those in the global South to contribute to knowledge production. By ensuring that knowledge is more a commodity to be sold than a public good, academic capitalism works to keep research 'capital' in the hands of the dominant players in the 'market'; it is they who determine access to the literature, funds and personnel needed to conduct new research. The domination of English as the *lingua franca* only exacerbates the problem. From this perspective, research into internationalisation needs to name and disrupt these processes.

Methodologically, research into internationalisation has been rather narrow to date, as it has more broadly across the field of higher education (Green 2015;

Tight 2013). According to Manathunga (2006: 20), questions of power in higher education research are silenced and the 'progressive and positively change driven' is celebrated. The critiques of higher education as a whole can arguably be directed at research into the internationalisation of higher education. This may be particularly the case in countries that were net exporters and are now importers of international students – thus in the earlier phases of internationalisation. In these contexts, the research tends to be quantitative, reflecting the continuing dominance of that methodological approach in the context (cf. Yusoff 2012). Yet, as we have argued, the internationalisation research across the globe continues to be characterised by a lack of attention on the experiences of students and academics, the 'core players in the process' (Teekens 2000: 30) – except in a rather remedial sense, whereby they are framed as the problem (cf. Volet and Jones 2012).

There has been very little research that focused on the academic experience and little that did not position 'international students', or, indeed, 'local students' as homogeneous groups. Those such as Montgomery (2010) and Leask (2013) have gone some way towards redressing that balance, as has Trahar (2011; 2013). We need more robust theoretical research that can reveal the myriad ways globalisation is impacting on university staff and students and their families, employers and communities, and how these actors in turn negotiate this landscape. The constant, rapid change across the sector as a result of globalisation means that our understandings will always be emergent, contingent and necessarily situated. Echoing Haggis (2009: 389) in her comment on higher education research more broadly, we suggest that research into the internationalisation of higher education needs to expand its range of epistemological and methodological tools in order to 'deal well with "the fleeting", the "disturbed", the "multiple" and the "complex"'.

Notes

1 G30: This refers to a Japanese government initiative to fund up to thirty universities to be members of the 'Global Thirty' Project with the aim of further internationalising participating universities. Thirteen universities were selected. Read more here: http://www.uni.international.mext.go.jp/global30/(accessed 1 July 2015).
2 Fostering Academic International Relations in Israeli Colleges to Promote Education, Research and Innovation, EU Tempus IRIS project, http://www.hit.ac.il/sites/en/iris/About_IRIS/overview (accessed 23 June 2015).

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Chapter 7

Widening access with success

Using the capabilities approach to confront injustices

Merridy Wilson-Strydom

Introduction

> Justice cannot be indifferent to the lives that people can actually live.
> (Sen, 2009, p. 18)

Much research has been published documenting the persistent inequalities in access to higher education based on structural constraints such as race, class, gender, and educational background (for example Archer, 2003; Dudley Jenkins and Moses, 2014; Furlong and Cartmel, 2009; Johnston, 2010; Mountford-Zimdars, Sabbagh, and Post, 2014). Beyond accessing higher education, these inequalities are further mirrored in student success and graduation trends. Selected chapters in this book present evidence of these inequalities. Particularly concerning are the global nature and the persistence of inequalities with respect to participation and performance in higher education, even in contexts where participation rates are relatively high. Clearly, widening participation or improving university access with success is an issue of social justice (Marginson, 2011).

There are several different theoretical frameworks we might use for thinking about social justice in the context of university access. Theories are important in "framing the way issues are seen, shaping perceptions of salience, and thus slanting debate towards certain policies rather than others" (Nussbaum, 2011, p. xi). In this chapter an argument is advanced for the value of the capabilities approach (CA) – originally developed by Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum – as a normative framework that enables us to think differently about access and success from a social justice standpoint. With roots in the disciplines of economics, philosophy, and development studies, the CA sets out an alternative to the economic construct of utility and resource-based understandings of social justice within philosophy. As will be argued in this chapter, this alternative conceptualisation is also helpful for rethinking university access. In her useful and accessible book on the CA and development ethics, Deneulin (2014, p. 6) notes that the CA "is an alternative normative language with which to frame decisions and actions,

and . . . offers a distinctive analysis of situations." In this chapter I use this alternative normative language for understanding access issues. The chapter will demonstrate how a capabilities-based analysis of university access and success helps us to frame actions in the direction of more just higher education environments.

Being cognisant of the fact that using the CA to study university access specifically is a relatively new and emerging field, the first part of the chapter centres on introducing the key concepts of the CA for readers new to it. In particular, the concepts of freedom, well-being, agency, capabilities, functionings, and conversion factors will be covered, drawing on illustrative examples from access contexts to contextualise the theory. The value added to access research by the CA foundational assumption of human diversity, together with how diverse agents and social structures interact, is emphasised. Drawing on the small, but growing, body of work on access issues using the CA (for some examples, see Hart, 2012; Walker, 2006; Watts, 2009; Wilson-Strydom, 2015a), the remainder of the chapter will make a case for why the CA helps us to think, and so act, differently with respect to the myriad of access challenges globally.

Key concepts of the capabilities approach

The CA has a wide disciplinary audience and application, or to quote Sen, there are a "plurality of purposes for which the capability approach can have relevance" – one of these being access (Sen, 1993, p. 49). While it is common for theories of social justice to focus on theorising what an ideal society ought to look like, such as we see in the work of John Rawls (1999), Sen argues instead that since pragmatically the achievement of a perfectly just society (or university environment) might be unlikely under current conditions, we should thus redirect our energies towards understanding how we might at least reduce the myriad of injustices we see all around us, even if a state of ideal justice seems out of reach. He describes the aim of his work as seeking "to clarify how we can proceed to address questions of enhancing justice and removing injustice, rather than to offer resolutions of questions about the nature of perfect justice" (Sen, 2009, p. ix). While there is debate about the extent to which the CA provides a theory of justice *per se*, it does provide us with a normative framework for assessing and comparing individual well-being and social arrangements in a manner that supports striving for just outcomes for all (Alkire and Deneulin, 2009a).

In essence then, the CA is a normative or moral framework for thinking about people's well-being and agency, and what this means for their freedoms to live the kind of life that they have reason to value (Sen, 1985, p. 169). As noted above, one of Sen's aims was to provide an alternative to the dominant utilitarian and neoliberal approaches to development and well-being. A practical outcome of Sen's work, pioneered by Mahbub ul Haq, is the Human Development Index (HDI) now widely used in development studies and in comparing relative human development[1] levels of countries. Alexander (2008, p. 1) usefully describes the fundamental intent of a capability theorist as being "to defend the idea that social

justice consists in creating the greatest possible condition for the realisation of basic capabilities for all." In an access context our focus is thus on creating the greatest possible conditions for the realisation of the capability to participate in higher education.

Six key concepts which form the foundation on which the CA is based are introduced in this section. While each concept is introduced individually, there are important overlaps as these concepts cohere into a capabilities-based normative framework.

Freedoms

The CA makes a cross-cutting distinction between actual achievement (ends) and freedom to achieve (means) (Crocker and Robeyns, 2009). In his book titled *Inequality Reexamined* Sen states that

> A person's position in a social arrangement can be judged in two different perspectives, viz. (1) the actual achievement, and (2) the freedom to achieve. Achievement is concerned with what we **manage** to accomplish, and freedom with the **real opportunity** that we have to accomplish what we value. The two need not be congruent.
>
> (Sen, 1992, p. 31, emphasis in original)

This distinction between actual achievement and freedom to achieve is central and will be built on below as we consider the concepts of well-being, agency, functionings and capabilities. The notion of freedom, as used in the CA, is a positive freedom and takes account of both the opportunity and the process aspects of freedom. Opportunity freedom refers to the ability of a person to achieve what they have reason to value (the real opportunities available to a person) and process freedoms refers to the extent to which the person is able to exercise their agency and freedom of choice, the extent to which a person has autonomy to act in the manner that they value. Thus, this view of freedom "involves both the processes that allow freedom of actions and decisions, and the actual opportunities that people have, given their personal and social circumstances" (Sen, 1999, p. 17). Freedom has both instrumental and intrinsic value.

Well-being

With roots in Aristotelian notions of human flourishing, the CA takes as a starting assumption that when we assess how well someone is doing, we need to focus on the person's state of being – their well-being (Nussbaum, 2011; Sen, 1980, 2009). According to Sen, we need to ask: "What kind of a life is she leading? What does she succeed in doing and in being?" (Sen, 1985, p. 195). Nussbaum (2011, p. x) notes that "this question, though simple, is also complex, since the quality of a human life involves multiple elements whose relationship to one another

needs close study." This is the crux of the CA, understanding lives in practice, as opposed to economic growth as the main indicator of development or participation rates of improved university access. As the quotation presented at the outset of this chapter indicates "[J]ustice cannot be indifferent to the lives that people can actually live" – in other words, their well-being (Sen, 2009, p. 18).

Importantly, well-being should not be confused with being well-off (opulence) (Deneulin, 2014). While the later usually refers to a person's wealth or how much a person has, well-being is about a rich conception of the quality of one's life, seen in terms of how a person can 'function', or the extent to which a person can be and do what they value for their life (Sen, 1985). As we will see in the example of two students' lives discussed below, the CA adopts a multidimensional conception of well-being that takes into account "the links between material, mental, and social well-being, or the economic, social, political and cultural dimensions of human life" (Crocker and Robeyns, 2009, p. 65). As such, individual well-being cannot be understood outside of the context in which a person functions (see "Conversion factors" below).

Agency

Agency[2] is the third key concept that requires our attention, distinguishable from well-being, but closely related. Sen defines an agent as someone "who acts and brings about change" (Sen, 1999, p. 19). Thus, agency is the ability of a person to realise the goals that they value. Related are concepts such as self-determination, having a voice, autonomy, and empowerment. The opposite of being able to exercise agency is someone who is passive, forced, or coerced. Sen argues powerfully for the value of agency and freedom as a cornerstone for achieving the types of institutional arrangements needed for development and positive social change (Sen, 1999). Agency is an expression of process freedom discussed above.

Well-being and agency are closely related, but should be seen as analytically distinct. In addition, agency and well-being can sometimes work against each other. For example a student who has paid their fees and is eligible to study may join an illegal protest action in solidarity with other students who are being excluded from university because they cannot pay their student fees, even when there is a risk of suspension for participation in the protest action. This would be an expression of agency on the part of the student, even though his/her personal well-being might be diminished through possible suspension from university.

Functionings and capabilities

Functionings represent achievements or outcomes. They are the things that a person is able to be or to do within their given life context. Thus, an individual or group's achieved functionings provide a metric of well-being. At a broad level, functionings encompass being adequately nourished, being employed, being literate, doing a job that is meaningful and fulfilling, and so on. If we consider

university access, functionings would include, for example being able to read academic texts, being able to take part in university life, taking responsibility for oneself, or being able to pass an examination. The second important element of the concept of functionings is that it refers to outcomes or achievements that a person values or has reason to value. In this way individual autonomy and choice (agency) is explicitly recognised. An achievement or outcome may not be regarded as a functioning if it is not something that is valued by the person concerned (Alkire and Deneulin, 2009b, p. 32). For example a university student who completes a business degree because that was the only study direction his parents would pay for, despite wanting to become a pre-school teacher, may not regard his business degree as a functioning he has reason to value. The business degree, whilst creating certain opportunities for employment, does not contribute to the graduate's well-being because he wishes to be a teacher.

The concept of capabilities combines the concept of functionings with opportunity freedom. While a functioning is an outcome or an achievement, a capability is the potential to achieve. As such, capabilities can be seen as the freedom, or choices and options, a person has to achieve functionings that are of value to them. This distinction between functionings and capabilities is fundamental for both Sen and Nussbaum, and provides an additional means through which agency can be exercised as was shown above with the example of the student protesting in solidary (Nussbaum, 2011; Sen, 1999). In sum, when thinking about inequality we need to be concerned not only with what people have been able to achieve, but also with the opportunities that have (or not) been available to them.

Conversion factors

Recognition of human diversity is a central assumption within the CA, which is particularly generative for thinking differently about social justice concerns, and for how diversity is accounted for in university access policy and practice. The concept of conversion factors provides a useful conceptual tool for taking explicit account of diversity. People differ in many ways and these differences affect the extent to which they can convert opportunities (capabilities) into achievements (functionings). While differences do not inherently imply inequality, differences become inequalities when they impact on capabilities and functionings. Sen reminds us that "there is evidence that the conversion of goods to capabilities varies from person to person substantially, and the equality of the former may still be far from the equality of the latter" (Sen, 1980, p. 219). For example a student who is deaf is different from a hearing student. This difference is not inherently an inequality. However, if specific support, such as sign language interpreting, is not available then the capability to learn at university will be limited for the deaf student compared to the hearing student. The deaf student thus requires different resources for learning compared to the hearing student. Working towards equality of resources would not result in equality of capabilities or educational functionings.

Adapting Sen's conceptualisation, Robeyns (2005, p. 99) outlines three groups of conversion factors: personal conversion factors (e.g. physical condition, reading ability, intelligence, health, etc.), social conversion factors (e.g. power relations, policies, social norms, gender roles, family relations, practices of discrimination, etc.), and environmental conversion factors such as geographical locations, rural versus urban, climate, and so on. These personal, social, and environmental conversion factors impact on the extent to which a person is able to make use of the resources available to them to create capabilities or opportunities. Paying attention to conversion factors provides a mechanism for understanding what is needed in practice to realise potential outcomes (functionings) (Walker and Unterhalter, 2007, p. 10). Thus, when assessing equality or social justice within a given situation (such as within universities) we need to ask whether "some people [students] get more opportunities to convert their resources into capabilities [for accessing education] than others?" (Walker, 2005, p. 109). As Sen points out, "[I]nterpersonal variability of the relation between goods and functionings turns out to be quite central to many important policy issues" (Sen, 1985, p. 199). University access and success is one such policy issue.

Access for human capital or capabilities formation

> It is people who matter ultimately, profits are only instrumental to human lives.
>
> (Nussbaum, 2011, p. 185)

Many authors have argued that the dominant ideology informing higher education policy with its foundations deeply rooted in neoliberal ideology and politics is the human capital understanding of education (Assie-Lumumba, 2005; Boni and Walker, 2013; Giroux, 2008; Nussbaum, 2010; Robeyns, 2006; Tikly and Barrett, 2011; Walker, 2006). However, human capital theories are limited in that they focus exclusively on the instrumental economic benefits of education; "human qualities that can be employed as 'capital' in production in the way that physical capital is" (Sen, 1997, p. 1959). Thus the purpose of higher education as a public good has been replaced by neoliberal market models that prioritise producing graduates who can contribute to economic advancement and so help to make countries more competitive in capitalist knowledge-based economies. In this context the purpose of widening participation or increasing access to university is to contribute skilled graduates to the global knowledge economy. As will be shown below, the CA contends that this instrumental understanding of the role higher education plays in society is limited, and also limits our thinking when we consider issues of access. Since the creation of human capital has, arguably, become the pervasive purpose of higher education, and also because there are both overlaps and fundamental differences between the human capital and the CA, it is necessary to briefly highlight the similarities and differences.

The notion of human capital, first introduced by Becker (1964), made a significant contribution to economic theory, particularly in drawing attention to the human element of development. With a focus on building human capital through investment in education and skills development, this approach was critical in drawing attention to the importance of education for development (Lanzi, 2007; Robeyns, 2006; Sen, 1997, 1999). Despite redirecting attention towards investment in higher education – and by implication underpinning calls for increased access – human capital theories are limited because they emphasise only the instrumental economic benefits of education (Sen, 1997). It is also commonly assumed that labour markets work rationally and hence that once a person has completed higher education that the labour market will allocate them to appropriate employment (Unterhalter, 2009). In this way, human capital frameworks take scant account of the multiple injustices at play within higher education, labour markets, and broader society. This injustice limits certain groups' access to educational opportunity, and labour markets often do not function as a just allocator of employment. As we saw above, using the concept of conversion factors, the CA explicitly seeks to understand the personal, social, and environmental conditions or factors that influence well-being, the well-being of each and every person as an end in their own right. Human capital concepts of the individual, in contrast, position the person as a means of development through expansion of human capital and so, economic development.

The CA extends human capital conceptions to take account of *both* instrumental and intrinsic values of higher education. Further, it draws attention to the role that education plays in the expansion of individual freedoms and agency, so also facilitating development (Nussbaum, 2006; Sen, 1997). Like freedom which has both instrumental and intrinsic value, being educated can be both a functioning in its own right and an enabler of other capabilities and functionings. From a capabilities perspective, the *actual lives* of people, what they are able to be and do, is foregrounded. This means that the approach is directly concerned with *practical, everyday forms of inequality and injustice.* Within a CA account, each and every individual is viewed as an end in themselves, and not the means to some other (larger) end such as building the knowledge economy, contributing to economic growth, or achieving access equity targets. As such, individuals, and how individuals' lives are going, is positioned as the ultimate moral concern within the normative lens of the CA. Importantly, this is evidence of the CA's assumption of *ethical* individualism which is "the view that what ultimately matters is what happens to every single individual in society [university]" (Alkire and Deneulin, 2009b, p. 35). Ethical individualism is not the same as *ontological* or *methodological* individualism. The former assumes that society consists only of the individuals that make it up, and hence no emphasis is placed on social structures or institutions. Methodological individualism, which is rooted in an assumption of ontological individualism, assumes "that all social phenomena can be explained in terms of individuals and their properties" (Alkire and Deneulin, 2009b, p. 35). Individual well-being is positioned as the normative goal towards

which we should strive, but individuals are explicitly located in social contexts which enable and constrain action in multidimensional ways.

A capabilities-based understanding of access and success

> [W]hilst public education does benefit everyone, it necessarily also benefits some more than others, with those gaining most likely to be those who start out better placed, whether that is by nature or circumstance.
>
> (Jonathan, 2001, p. 49)

In his 1979 Tanner Lecture on Human Values, Sen posed his central question as 'equality of what?' (Sen, 1980). The CA provides a powerful answer to this question. Other social justice theories also seek to answer this question, but, Sen and Nussbaum argue that all have limitations that can be overcome with a capabilities-based formulation. In particular, both Sen and Nussbaum present strong critiques of utilitarianism and the Rawlsian notion of primary goods (Alexander, 2008; Nussbaum, 2011; Sen, 1980, 1999) – two approaches to social justice that have been particularly influential.[3] In making a case for the value of the CA for work on access, it is useful to begin by posing Sen's central question, 'equality of what?' in relation to university access. Typically, in access research and policy discussions, the focus is on the participation rates of young people – often comparatively across various groupings – entering and successfully completing their studies. Where participation rates and completion rates are similar, we assume equality of access. To explore this further, we will use the stories of two students currently participating in a longitudinal qualitative study[4] at a South African university. Bellah and Miguel (pseudonyms chosen by the students) are both enrolled at the given university for a Bachelor of Science degree. They both started their studies in 2014 and completed their first-year – in comparison to the approximately 30% of first-year students in South Africa who drop out of their studies (CHE, 2012). When counted using typical access and success measures, Bellah and Miguel would be regarded as equal – having achieved equality of access and retention in the first year. However, the CA asks us to broaden our metrics of assessment to take account of how people's lives are going, their well-being or quality of life. Further, as noted earlier, individual differences, or human diversity, is central, rather than incidental, and as Sen reminds us, "[T]he recognition of the fundamental diversity of human beings does, in fact, have very deep consequences" (Sen, 1980, p. 202).

Returning to the two students – more in-depth consideration of their lives as students points to important differences, which have 'deep consequences' for how we think about social justice with respect to university access. Bellah grew up prominently with her mother as her father is a politician and was mostly away from home. Both her parents have university degrees and her mother now works

at the state Education Department where she is responsible for school-related planning activities. The importance of education was always emphasised in her home. Bellah attended a relatively well functioning school in the township[5] in which she lived. Although not always well stocked, the school did have facilities such as science laboratories, a computer lab, and a library which is not common at township schools. On the whole, most of Bellah's teachers were committed to their teaching and encouraged the learners to work hard and perform well. Bellah applied to three different universities, and made her final selection because of a family member living in the university town who was able to provide support while she is away from home. She was fortunate to obtain a place to live in a university residence. She speaks highly of the additional support provided by virtue of living on campus and having access to senior students as mentors, easy access to computers and the Internet as well as the university library. Bellah has a bursary from a private company that covers her tuition and accommodation costs and her family is able to assist with money for daily living expenses and book purchases. She enjoyed her first-year of university and describes the university environment as conducive for studying, she is involved in various activities on campus, and at the end of her first year she successfully ran for a leadership position in her residence.

Miguel was orphaned at the age of 16, from which time he became responsible for himself and his two younger siblings. His parents migrated from Mozambique to South Africa before his birth and Miguel does not know or have any contact with his extended family for additional support. Miguel was able to complete high school due to the kindness of members of his church and one of his teachers who provided food for him and his siblings to complement the meagre child support grants that his siblings qualified for. He attended a local township school which was extremely poorly resourced. He was not able to afford electricity or candles and so studied for his final high school examinations under the street light outside his shack. Despite these conditions, he obtained good school leaving marks and qualified to enter university. Miguel had to put his dream of higher education on hold for five years while he worked as an underground miner to earn enough to put his siblings through school. Thus, Miguel was older than most of his fellow first-year students when he started university and found it difficult to identify with his peers and make friends. He qualified for a government loan, but needed to send much of the money home as his siblings were unemployed. As a result, Miguel lived in very poor quality illegal housing to save money, and was unexpectedly evicted late in the year and in effect became homeless. He was often not able to afford to buy food and would survive on water, one apple per day, and any food his fellow students shared with him. Nonetheless, he was committed to his studies and worked extremely hard, spending much of his time in the university library and the 24/hour study area. Miguel managed to complete most of his first-year courses.

With this additional contextual information about Bellah and Miguel's lives and their well-being, should we still assume equality of access and success? Can we conclude that since both Bellah and Miguel were able to enter university and

complete their first-year that the situation is a just one? How do we answer Sen's central normative questions – "What kind of life is she leading? What does she succeed in being and doing?" (Sen, 1985, p. 195). Like assuming that equality of income implies equality of well-being, assuming equality of access and success based on participation, retention, and completion rates is insufficient. Instead, our answer to the question of 'equality of what?' ought to be: equality of the capabilities to meaningfully participate in higher education and so achieve well-being as a student. For example drawing on her research on widening participation in the United Kingdom, Hart argues that the CA

> highlights the way current policy tends to be evaluated in terms of outcome, based on achievements such as numbers applying to, and being accepted at, higher education institutions, as well as the level and number of qualifications achieved [none of which take] account of the well-being an individual has achieved, or indeed the range of opportunities the individual has been able to choose from.
>
> (Hart, 2007, pp. 37–38)

The growing body of research that applies the CA to access and widening participation is opening up our understanding of what the capability to participate in higher education might look like in different contexts (Hart, 2012; Unterhalter and Brighouse, 2007; Unterhalter and Carpentier, 2010; Walker, 2006; Wilson-Strydom, 2015a, 2015b). Hart's research has usefully highlighted the central role that aspirations play in widening participation, as well as the manner in which aspirations may be encouraged or silenced by various conversion factors at play across different social contexts (Hart, 2012). Okkolin (2013) applied the CA to understand how highly educated Tanzanian women were able to access higher education even when structural conditions limited women's educational opportunities. Watts and Bridges (2006) used CA to critique widening participation policy in the UK from the perspective of working-class young people who chose not to attend higher education. They argue that "the twin agendas of social inclusion and economic development lead to the reformation rather than the resolution of injustice" (Watts and Bridges, 2006, p. 143). In the US context, Deprez and Wood (2013) apply the CA to pedagogic practice as they argue for teaching that promotes well-being. Drawing on a large scale multi-year study in South Africa, a list[6] of capabilities for socially just university access and success has been developed (Wilson-Strydom, 2014, 2015a). The study took place between 2009 and 2012 and involved 2,816 high school learners in their final three years of schooling and 270 first-year university students. While the contextual specificity of the empirical data underpinning the list is that of South African higher education, the theoretical and literature-based underpinnings of this conceptualisation of capabilities are global, and the capabilities are formulated at a general level. As such, the capabilities listed are likely to resonate in contexts other than South Africa, although the specificities and particular areas of emphasis will need to be contextually determined.

Table 7.1 Capabilities for university access and success

Dimension	*Capabilities*
Practical reason	Being able to make well-reasoned, informed, critical, independent, and reflective choices about post-school study.
Knowledge and imagination	Having the academic grounding for chosen university subjects, being able to develop and apply methods of critical thinking and imagination to identify and comprehend multiple perspectives and complex problems.
Learning disposition	Having curiosity and a desire for learning, having the learning skills required for university study and being an active inquirer (questioning disposition).
Social relations and social networks	Being able to participate in groups for learning, working with diverse others to solve problems or complete tasks. Being able to form networks of friendships for learning support and leisure.
Respect, dignity, and recognition	Having respect for oneself and for others, and receiving respect from others, being treated with dignity. Not being devalued, or devaluing others because of one's gender, social class, religion, or race. Valuing diversity and being able to show empathy (understand and respect others' points of view). Having a voice to participate in learning.
Emotional health	Not being subject to anxiety or fear that diminishes learning. Having confidence in one's ability to learn.
Language competence and confidence	Being able to understand, read, write, and speak confidently in the language of instruction.

Returning to the stories of Bellah and Miguel – using the capabilities listed in Table 7.1 as the metric for assessing equality with respect to access and success, rather than enrolment and retention statistics only, would provide a much richer informational basis (Sen, 1999) for identifying the inequalities and injustices at play in students' lives, and so points towards interventions that universities might consider in an effort to achieve greater equality of student experiences and well-being rather than equality of participation rates across groups. In particular, we see how different Bellah and Miguel's experiences were with respect to their freedoms, agency, and well-being, and particularly with respect to the capabilities for social relations and social networks, emotional health, knowledge and imagination, and respect, dignity, and recognition. Revisiting Sen's question of 'equality of what?' – if we see expansion of university access as an issue of social justice, then we cannot be indifferent to the lives that our students can actually live once they enter university (Sen, 2009, p. 18, see quotation at the start of the chapter). Interventions[7] that seek to improve access should then take account of these capabilities – and the personal, social, and environmental conversion factors

that impact on their realisation. From this basis, institutions are better placed to create university environments that enable the multidimensional capabilities for participation.

Conclusion

This chapter set out to introduce the CA as a theoretical framework that helps us to think about university access in new ways, and explicitly in a manner that foregrounds social justice concerns. After a short conceptual tour of the key concepts within CA, the approach was applied to university access, using the stories of two students to illustrate the arguments. In this way, the chapter has sought to follow the call made in the opening quotation, namely, that justice cannot be indifferent to the lives that people actually live. Since the CA foregrounds an understanding of what people can actually be and do, the boundaries between conceptual critique and practical action for change are potentially blurred, so opening up spaces for action (Walker, 2006, p. 142). In this way, the CA provides both a conceptual lens for theoretically exploring access and widening participation from a social justice point of view, as well as the basis for proposing interventions, drawing on the actual experiences of students.

Notes

1 The concept of human development seeks to move discussions about what development means beyond the dominant approaches focusing only on income as measured by Gross National Product (GNP). Human development is defined as follows: "Human development aims to enlarge people's freedoms to do and be what they value and have reason to value. In practice, human development also empowers people to engage actively in development of our shared planet. It is people-centred. At all levels of development, human development focuses on essential freedoms: enabling people to lead long and healthy lives, to acquire knowledge, to be able to enjoy a decent standard of living and to shape their own lives. Many people value these freedoms in and of themselves; they are also powerful means to other opportunities" (Alkire, 2010, p. 43).

2 For a more fully developed account of agency in the capability approach than is possible in this chapter, please see Crocker and Robeyns (2009).

3 Space does not permit a deeper engagement with these debates in this chapter, see Wilson-Strydom (2015a, 2015b) for detailed argument about theories of social justice in relation to university access.

4 This longitudinal study (2014–2016) is focused on understanding students' lives with a view to exploring how students, as agents, interact with university structures. Forty students who entered the university as first-year students in 2014 were selected to participate in the study. All students attended relatively poorly resourced township schools. They are enrolled in courses across five major fields of study and both male and female students are participating. Methodologies include annual in-depth interviews and a series of four participatory workshops per year using a variety of qualitative methodologies such as group discussions, photo voice, student drawings, written reflections on experiences, and others. The study is funded with a grant from the South African National Research Foundation (NRF), grant number: 87922.

5 The term 'township' refers to large, poor, and often underdeveloped urban areas that house many of South Africa's unemployed. Townships have their roots in apartheid policies of race-based segregation. Despite major legislative and policy changes since 1994, townships remain poorly serviced, with high levels of poverty and violence.
6 There is a robust debate in the CA literature about whether or not to propose specific lists of capabilities. Space does not permit this issue to be considered here. For more information about these debates see (Alexander, 2008; Nussbaum, 2003; Robeyns, 2003, 2005; Sen, 2004; Walker, 2006).
7 Since the role of context is critical, this chapter does not propose specific interventions as the interventions needed to foster capabilities for participation that are appropriate in one university context would not necessarily apply in another. Nonetheless, the list of capabilities for university access provides a general entry point from which contextual specificities can be identified and addressed.

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Chapter 8

Four duties

Introduction

The previous chapter focused on the freedoms of intellectual leadership and the importance of establishing a credible reputation through criticism and advocacy. There are iconoclastic individuals in academic life who have achieved these things and are widely respected on this basis. They are intellectuals but they are not all considered necessarily to be intellectual *leaders*. It is not, in other words, enough to be a thinker and an activist. Sometimes such individuals can offer what Trow (2010a) and others have labelled symbolic leadership. Their ideas or personality become the focus of attention; a rallying point for a group of individuals or a movement. Possessing the qualities of leadership though is about more than intelligent analysis and the courage and confidence to speak out. A leader must have a commitment through action to work with others in a way that inspires and serves. They need a generosity of spirit and a desire to serve others. In an academic context, this may be expressed as a commitment and a facility for *academic duty*.

This chapter will examine characteristics or traits that form the key components of academic duty. On the basis of the feedback I received from my interviewees and questionnaire respondents, these traits may be summarized as being *a mentor, a guardian, an enabler* and *an ambassador*. A professor needs to be committed to these roles, in addition to possessing a strong reputation based on their academic work, if they are going to be regarded as an intellectual leader. The emphasis on individual performance and achievements in the development of academics means that these qualities cannot be automatically assumed. Being an able mentor, or a person sufficiently motivated to uphold standards of scholarship within the discipline through peer review, demands a commitment to others. These traits require both experience and a moral commitment to the development of the discipline. The only real formal training that most professors (or indeed most academics) receive for their role is the doctorate. Informally as much, if not more, is learnt by working with academic colleagues, including doctoral supervisors, who can be influential role models. Here, the emphasis, especially in the humanities and social sciences, is on lone scholarship rather than the development of a broader set of skills and dispositions that support academic duty. This is why the traits of academic duty cannot be taken for granted.

Academic duty

While academic freedom attracts widespread attention both in academic thought and in the popular press, academic duty is a less visible but nonetheless fundamental feature of academic life. It is every bit as essential as academic freedom. This is because the production of knowledge and the teaching of students is a cooperative process. It necessitates a collegial infrastructure on which everything else depends. This is partly about belonging to an 'invisible college' (Halsey and Trow, 1971; Barnett, 1990) through which academics share intellectual connections via informal relationships that link institutions and disciplines. Academics have obligations to their students, to their immediate colleagues, to their disciplinary peers, to their institutions, and to the wider public with whom they want to communicate their ideas (Macfarlane, 2007). This set of obligations involves processes that demand an unselfish attitude of contributing to the understanding of others through activities, such as giving feedback to a student, mentoring a colleague, reviewing a paper for publication, serving on a university committee, working as an external examiner or advising a government minister. These examples illustrate the gamut of academic duty and activities that attract varying degrees of prestige. They are all, though, about sacrificing time that might otherwise be spent on more self-regarding and better rewarded activities, such as personal research and publication or paid consultancy. Even the lone scholar depends on her or his peers to review their papers for publications, to write reviews about their books, or to introduce their students to their work. Academic life, in short, depends on cooperation. Without this, the whole enterprise would falter.

Conventionally, the word service has often been used to invoke the kind of activities that I refer to under the heading of academic duty. The phrase academic citizenship has also been coined (Shils, 1997; Macfarlane, 2007). In recent years, though, the modern university appears to have turned its back on the importance of service as the third element of its mission alongside teaching and research. A more business and commercially oriented lexicon has entered the university. Knowledge transfer or knowledge exchange has become part of the mission of universities in the UK, Hong Kong and elsewhere in the world. In part, this trend is prompted by governments, and their respective funding councils, seeking evidence for the way in which the university adds value to the economy. Universities are under pressure to demonstrate that they deserve continued public funding. The problem though with this new language is that it erodes the sense in which academics are responsible towards others on an individual, *pro bono* basis. In short, it encourages a shift toward a business-oriented culture where all activities are evaluated for their commercial, rather than social and moral, value (see Chapter 10).

Yet, in practice, to be an intellectual leader demands a commitment to academic duty: a desire to help others without the expectation necessarily of an exchange value or *quid pro quo*. It necessitates a selfless disposition and skills that will enable others to develop. It is about full participation in, and making a

contribution to, building intellectual communities often associated with the discipline.

Role model

How can these academic duties be described? The starting point before describing duties is that, in an overarching sense, a professor needs to be a good role model. They must be a good example to other academics able to demonstrate what it means to be not just an ordinary academic, but a very good one. In part, this means having a well-respected scholarly reputation with achievements to match. It also implies a range of other qualities, such as being a respected teacher, possibly holding a formal role as a leader, or contributing informally in a variety of ways. The ways in which professors contribute informally in leading others has a good deal to do with the tacit expectations connected with academic duty.

A considerable challenge for the modern day professor lies in the extent to which they seek to be a role model across a wide range of activities. Despite attempts to raise the status of teaching in many contexts, and the growing responsibilities of management in modern higher education, as we have seen their personal excellence in research still remains the principal reason for their appointment as a professor. As I illustrated in Chapter 6 there are now, in reality, many different types of professor. Despite this, most professors that I spoke with or heard from said they need to be role models across most, if not all, aspects of the academic role. They want to be excellent researchers, inspirational teachers as well as capable managers. Here, there was a vision of the professor as a meta-academic, an exemplar who possesses the credibility upon which to lead. Here are a few of the descriptions of the way that professors see the role:

> A productive and high-impact scholar and inspirational teacher with good administrative and managerial skills who has a real interest in fostering the personal and collective development of colleagues (both within their immediate remit and outside of it). Somebody with foresight, energy, and optimism, who is both internally and externally engaged, and is up-to-date with current developments in academia nationally and globally.
>
> (professor of law)

> [A professor] should be a model of professional expertise and knowledge, an example of dealing with the complexities of academic work (research, teaching and managerial duties).
>
> (professor of history)

> A professor should be a leader in his subject area of research. Inevitably, professors are asked to become managers of their section, department, etc.

> I also believe professors should strive to be good teachers and should be able to foster scholarship and excellence in teaching in their subject area.
>
> (professor of English)

> Academic and administrative expertise; fund raising and mentoring young staff; facilitating research of older staff; establishing national and international collaborations and obtaining funding for this; providing earned income for the university.
>
> (professor of oncology)

These are idealistic portraits of the professor as a role model across all elements of academic practice. A professor must, in other words, be capable of doing it all. But is this realistic? Some professors do not think so, and believe that a distinction needs to be made between academic leadership and management. Here, the professor is defined as a field or subject specialist or expert rather than possessing more all-round abilities.

There was recognition among some respondents and interviewees that professors can be poor role models as well as good ones in practice. Professors falling short in this area of academic duty were seen as those with a lack of commitment to helping others or prepared to carry out their fair share of teaching and administrative duties. Professors, in other words, should do things as a good citizen and not just focus on their individual research interests:

> Some people are extremely selfish and only do things to benefit their own research activity.
>
> (professor of engineering)

> … it is difficult to get professors to take responsibility to do things unless they are really interested and they have benefit (i.e. for them) or by nature they have an attitude as a team player.
>
> (professor of management)

> The Dean [said] this guy [a professor] is fantastic, 'you just have to lock him in a cage and rattle that cage once a week and get a paper out' but you couldn't let him talk to the students or anything and I don't think that my subject area in the UK is big enough to absorb those sorts of people.
>
> (professor of accountancy)

The notion of acting as a role model, and having credibility, mirrors one of the 13 forms of 'leader behaviours' identified by Bryman in his meta-analysis of the literature about leadership in higher education (Bryman, 2007). In other words, having academic standing is a prerequisite. However, being a role model is still largely associated with the qualifications needed to become a professor. In *being* a professor, respondents referred to additional qualities.

Professor as mentor

Overwhelmingly, professors spoke to me about the importance attached to being a mentor to less experienced colleagues, through encouraging and nurturing the potential of others. The language used to describe being a mentor varied, including words such as 'facilitator', 'guide to others' and 'nurturer'. An interviewee explained that the practical reality of her role as a mentor was that it had cost her 'a fortune in taking people for coffee'. More poetically, another respondent described his motto as a leader in terms of a Welsh proverb, 'a fo ben bid bont', meaning that 'the person who would be a leader must also be a bridge', i.e. a bridge to assist people to develop – even if this means leaving the organization. This encapsulates the idea that good mentorship involves helping people realize their own potential and putting their personal interests above those of the organization they are currently working for. The word mentoring was used frequently by nearly all the professors I spoke to, or who responded to the survey. A number of examples were given of practices that were considered as constituting this type of activity:

- advising on sources of funding;
- advising on publication outlets for research;
- co-supervision of PhD students with a less experienced colleague;
- co-authorship;
- applying for research grants with less experienced colleagues;
- sitting on an external fellowship panel;
- helping colleagues to try again if they have had a paper or grant proposal rejected;
- advising on long-term career development.

The importance of the mentoring role related to the stage at which respondents had become professors. Greater importance was attached to this role by those professors who had become professors in their mid-to-late career. Some of these professors felt that their best academic work was probably behind them, and they were nearing the end of their career, so they placed more emphasis on the notion of mentoring as a means of passing on the benefit of their experience to others. This was especially notable among some female professors, who felt that the delay in their achieving professorial status, due to various forms of direct and indirect discrimination, meant that they had already enjoyed their best and most productive years. These individuals were also motivated by the desire to try to nurture women, in particular, in order to give more opportunity for the next generation of female academics to break through the professorial glass ceiling.

A number of respondents identified the importance of the professor acting as someone who nurtures colleagues with potential. Part of this role was regarded as being a talent-spotter, able to point colleagues in the right direction. Often this

involves getting colleagues to take intellectual risks described by one interviewee as 'giving them the confidence to fly and jump off, when they think there might not be a safety net'. Other comments that represent this perspective include the following:

> … securing and harnessing the intellectual capital of those members of the university within your purview.
>
> (professor of computer science)

> My view is that professors should have an organic role to play as an intellectual leader and motivator …
>
> (professor of mathematics)

Academic obituaries often refer to the commitment of leading professors to mentorship as part of their teaching and service activities (see Chapter 9). The legacy of the evolutionary biologist Michael Majerus (1954–2009), for example, was described as 'not only in terms of the scientific contributions that he made, but also in teaching and mentoring the evolutionary biologists of tomorrow' (Reisz, 2009b). The supervision of doctoral students plays a sig-nificant part in the mentoring activities of many professors. Fred Halliday (1946–2010) supervised 62 to successful completion during his career as a professor specializing in international relations (Reisz, 2010b).

Another perception connected with mentoring was that the professor should act as a kind of 'buffer', protecting colleagues from some of the internal and external pressures faced by academics in terms of institutional demands:

> I tried to create a situation in which colleagues and students could best flourish. This entailed, negatively, being a buffer between them and internal and external pressures …
>
> (professor of marketing)

The role of mentor is a defining quality of a good academic. It is, at root, about a commitment to inter-generational equity, but to some extent it is also about leaving a legacy, both personal and scholarly. There are, though, potential risks associated with the mentoring role. One of these is that the mentee becomes overly dependent on the mentor. This might occur in an intellectual sense inasmuch as they are not just influenced but become a devotee or uncritical disciple of the mentor. Here, it is important that the professor as mentor encourages their mentee to become independent minded in their intellectual interests and affiliations. In practice this is a difficult balancing act to achieve, since mentoring tends to engender, especially where the mentor is a doctoral supervisor, a strong sense of loyalty. However, as with all good teaching relationships, success comes when the student, or in this case the mentee, is no longer intellectually dependent on the mentor and finds their own voice. The professor as mentor has succeeded when the mentee no longer needs their support and guidance.

Professor as guardian

A second quality associated with professorial leadership is being a guardian (or steward) of academic standards and associated values. These include the established tenets and conventions of the discipline or profession. Upholding the principles of good scholarship is a key part of the responsibilities of senior academics when working as editors, peer reviewing contributions to journals or in undertaking any number of other gatekeeping or *pro bono* activities, such as examining doctoral candidates or reviewing papers, that determine who receives recognition and advancement in their discipline or professional field.

Being a guardian is part of a professor's good citizen role. In many respects it represents the shift in role that takes place when someone becomes a professor. Whilst becoming a professor demands a focus on a great deal of (often individualized) personal achievement, being a professor implies undertaking reciprocal duties such as reviewing and editing. To some extent this is a natural process. Research-active academics, regardless of whether they are professors, normally acquire an increasing number of guardianship duties or responsibilities as they become more experienced and better known in their field. However, as respondents and interviewees made clear, not all professors are prepared to 'give back' in this way.

An implicit part of guardianship is ensuring that the next generation of academics are inculcated with an appropriate set of values and academic standards inherent to the discipline. There is a desire, as one professor expressed it, to 'pass on the baton'. Here, professors are concerned about what might be termed succession planning; ensuring their own research interests are taken forward by younger colleagues following their own retirement. There is some overlap here with mentoring, but guardianship also involves ensuring that the next generation not only succeed but continue to preserve the structures and standards that have been established:

> I think it is necessary to, when we are looking at a research structure, to have people coming through the ranks and aspiring to the next step on the ladder. Otherwise when you drop off the edge, if you don't have anyone else in that discipline, that discipline just dies …
>
> (professor of oncology)

> … the whole of the professoriate should be very conscious of bringing on the next generation of the academy because although they would like to professors do not go on forever.
>
> (professor of law)

This element of guardianship is about ensuring continuity and the survival of disciplinary specialisms in an increasingly competitive world of epistemological fragmentation. As a young researcher, a professor will have benefited from having had their own papers and research grant proposals reviewed by more senior

colleagues. By the time someone becomes a professor (or perhaps in some instances well before) it is now their turn to take on or contribute more in relation to this academic duty. This does not mean though that such activities are entirely selfless. While membership of editorial boards or research councils is rarely remunerated, except occasionally in nominal terms, they have a prestige value that is valuable to an ambitious academic.

As with mentorship there are risks attached. The professor as guardian is often in a powerful position as a reviewer of grant proposals or journal papers. Here, great care needs to be taken to avoid the temptation, for example, to reject manuscripts that do not conform to a particular theoretical or methodological stance that the reviewer might favour. The professor as guardian needs to distinguish carefully between academic work with which they might disagree, and that which, more straightforwardly, represents poor scholarship. Some reviewers gain warranted reputations as 'assassins' (Siegelman, 1991) who apply unreasonably exacting standards, while others, referred to as 'zealots', represent the other extreme of behaviour by accepting manuscripts without examining them with sufficient rigour. Hence, the role of professor as guardian involves moral dilemmas and a need to find a median position between these extremes. Being a gatekeeper for a discipline demands both the maintenance of high standards whilst retaining open-mindedness and a desire to encourage the development of the field in new directions.

Professor as enabler

Being a facilitator or an enabler is an extension of mentoring in the sense that it involves opening up opportunities for others to do research, meet influential academic colleagues and generally provide chances for collaboration. It is about collaborative networking. An important part of this function is giving others access or an entrée to networks of other scholars. This involves professors in using their social capital (Bourdieu, 1986), in the sense of resources based on membership groups, relationships and influential and durable networks. A professor's recommendation or introduction can be part of a process of gaining acceptance into the wider academic community. This type of activity is often seen at academic conferences through co-presentation of papers, where one of the authors is a junior colleague (often a doctoral student or post-doctoral fellow), and the other might be a more established figure in the field. Professors are aware that networking is critical to their own influence and to that of other academics who wish to advance in their careers. They even invoked the language of Bourdieu in explanation:

> Too often colleagues think it [i.e. being a successful academic] is about publishing more when actually it is undertaking service that enables one to network and form social and political capital.
>
> (professor of economics)

> An important role is fostering collaborations between colleagues you know … putting people in touch and so on.
>
> (professor of education)

> I always saw my role as a facilitator … never ceasing to look for ways of advancing and encouraging individuals and groups.
>
> (professor of fine art)

Informally, networking can result in opportunities being presented to less experienced academics by more senior academics, such as involvement in peer review, brokering invitations to speak at seminars or conferences or simply informal conversations, both online and face to face. Electronically processed information networks are now critical to understanding the way that social structures and activities form and work in practice (Castells, 2000). However, whilst network technologies make it easier than ever for academics at all levels to link up with others within and beyond their field, professors still play an important role in being gatekeepers of, and providing access to, the most prestigious networks and contacts.

Being an enabler is about more than effecting introductions. It also involves generating resources and income. This provides a means that allows others to participate, especially in research activities, and leads to the employment of research assistants and other junior or inexperienced academics as part of project teams. Most professors did not regard income generation as a high priority compared with the emphasis that their institutions placed on such achievements. However, they were aware that attracting grants, contracts and other resources were an integral part of a new commercial reality regardless of discipline. Without income generation a professor will have a diminished impact as an enabler. Creating research centres and winning research grants means that professors can give opportunities to more doctoral students and employ more pre- and post-doctoral research assistants. This increases their intellectual influence over others. Professors with research centres and substantial research grants are likely to have bigger networks of influence. Resources bring the power to influence and also, to some extent, the power of independence from other institutional demands such as management and teaching.

Being an enabler is closely related to supporting younger researchers and research teams. A number of professors explained that while their role was, in part, to acquire research grants, these funds were necessary to support their less experienced colleagues and research assistants, whose time could be calculated on a more affordable economic basis. Hence, professors can find themselves in a position where their own time is too expensive to conduct research and act principally as an attractor of funds and in writing up papers for publication:

> I do very little real research myself now … my role mainly involves getting research grants and project management.
>
> (professor of biochemistry)

There may be less expectation of acquisition of grants and other resources for professors in some areas of the arts or humanities, for example, than in the bio-medical sciences. Similarly, some professorial appointments are closely linked to areas of public and social policy where an individual might be expected to play a more visible role as an advocate, for example. Professors in science areas, where team-based working is the norm, tend to face this pressure more strongly. As I reported in Chapter 5 based on my survey data, they are more likely than their counterparts in the arts and humanities to see income generation as a legitimate part of their role. In part this is also attributable to the need for major funding in order to conduct scientific research, while the concern of professors in the arts and humanities is mainly about securing time to do research. They tend to see income generation as a means of justifying their use of time rather than in supporting a wider team or in building up equipment or laboratory facilities.

There are, of course, risks that being an enabler can slip into the realms of nepotism or what is sometimes termed cronyism. Here rather than simply effecting introductions and seeking to help others to network, such activities can become directed at seeking preferential treatment for favoured former students or junior colleagues, rather than on the basis of their academic merit alone. In Chinese culture the benefits derived from social connections are described as *guanxi* and this plays an important role in academic life. Whilst academic duty would suggest that being an enabler is a selfless activity in practice it can involve the expectation of reciprocation.

Professor as ambassador

Finally, in an external facing capacity, some respondents referred to the importance of the professor acting as an *ambassador* on behalf of the university, representing its interests on the national and international stage.

Being visible or 'out and about' were seen as vital activities for a professor, to both maintain their national and international profile and as a means of promoting the reputation of the university. Examples given of this type of activity included keynote addresses at academic conferences and participating in international recruitment and research collaboration with other universities or commercial organizations. These activities were regarded as a means of providing the university with a higher public and sector-wide profile. Here, there is perhaps some crossover with the advocate role (see Chapter 7). Being an ambassador, though, implies promoting the university and the department, whereas being an advocate was associated more closely with promoting conceptual and socio-political perspectives often connected closely with the discipline:

> [Being a professor] … denotes that by definition one is deemed a leading figure in one's discipline as well as someone capable of representing one's institution, both internally and externally.
>
> (professor of law)

> We [as professors] can contribute to raising the profile of our institutions by our academic and research activities.
>
> (professor of oncology)

However, many professors do not necessarily rate this quality as highly. Ask an academic what their main point of identity is and they will reply that it is their discipline, first and foremost. Loyalty to their institution comes often a very poor second. This is borne out by an international study of the academic profession carried out in 2007 (Locke, 2007). This pattern is most apparent (and extreme) among academics from countries with so-called 'mature' higher education systems such as Australia, Canada, Japan, Norway, the UK and the United States; 80 per cent of faculty in these countries considered their affiliation to their discipline to be either fairly or very important. By contrast, asked about their commitment to their institution, the figures look very different. Just 57 per cent of academics from these mature systems considered institutional affiliation fairly or very important. In many ways this finding is unsurprising as, like other professionally qualified people, academics are focused on their professional identity rather than institutional objectives.

Table 8.1 summarizes the academic duties associated with professorial leadership. Collectively, they incorporate a commitment as both a local, in serving the institution, and a cosmopolitan, in contributing toward the development of the discipline or profession. This suggests that professors see themselves as 'cosmo-locals' (Goldberg, 1976), with an orientation that combines commitment to both internal and external communities, or in the mould of 'rooted cosmopolitans' as suggested by Nixon (2010b).

It is important to recognize that this is an idealized set of academic duties. In practice, it is challenging for all professors to necessarily live out all these qualities. Quite apart from differences in personality, respondents recognized there are different types of professors (see Chapter 6). This disaggregation means that professors are seen more as specialists rather than all-rounders. Hence, a research (or star) professor might be expected to attract more resources than, say, a managerial professor, who might in turn spend more time in ambassadorial roles

Table 8.1 Four duties of professorial leadership

Mentor	To less experienced colleagues within and without the institution
Guardian	Of standards of scholarship and academic values within the discipline or profession
Enabler	Of opportunities for others through providing access to networks, funding grants, collaborations including the acquisition of grants, contracts and other commercial opportunities
Ambassador	On behalf of the university in external relations both nationally and internationally

for the institution, promoting its image, forging new partnerships with a view to course expansion and recruiting students. At root, though, one might expect all professors to demonstrate most of these academic duties, especially mentoring and guardianship of standards.

The importance of legacy

In this, and the previous chapter, I have sought to identify the core qualities of intellectual leadership – critic, advocate, mentor, guardian, enabler and ambassador. Such a list of qualities is daunting for any one person to possess. Hence, I want to add a note of realism. Here, it is important to emphasize that not all intellectual leaders necessarily possess all of these traits. Even great leaders have weaknesses. Some have strengths in particular areas, such as advocacy of a particular position or an ability to mentor others. There is also likely to be some shifting of emphasis between these traits according to the stage at which someone finds themselves. Although this may not be the case for everyone, a more senior figure, toward the end of their academic career, might be likely to focus on the qualities connected with academic duty, while a less experienced or younger professor will tend to be more concerned with making their mark via critique and advocacy, and may not necessarily have yet developed the full set of skills, or dispositions, associated with academic duty.

The problem with most lists of qualities, such as the one I have presented, is that there are always others that may be added. Intellectual leadership is a concept that is remarkably hard to capture. Any list of qualities cannot do the concept justice, since it involves an amalgam of skill, experience and a hard-to-define capacity. In the entertainment world, talent shows try to identify the performer who stands out from others by dint of an X factor: a special gift that can be recognized in practice but rarely described in theory. An X factor is something that makes a performer different. Amongst all the other participants their voice or skill is memorable. This is what makes a star. It involves a talent to stand out and to be recognized.

The X factor for intellectual leaders is about legacy. This word is commonly associated with property or money left by someone in their will. Here though I am referring to a person's intellectual work or associated achievements, as they are remembered and continue to have an impact on thinking or practice. Legacy can be both tangible and intangible. A tangible legacy might be a body of research, or perhaps, more memorably, a key concept, theory or argument for which someone is remembered. It might also be connected with student learning or the curriculum, such as an integrated curriculum or an innovative teaching technique that someone is especially associated with or is considered to have pioneered. An intangible legacy might be the influence that someone has had as a mentor on the intellectual thinking of another scholar, often evidenced through subsequent citation or acknowledgement.

Legacy means that sometimes people can be regarded as great intellectual leaders in retrospect rather than during their lifetime. Their work might gain limited

recognition whilst they are alive but subsequently prove to be considerably more influential. The work of many great artists, such as Vincent Van Gogh, only gained critical and popular recognition, for example, after their death. Cardinal Newman's lectures in Dublin, that later formed the basis for *The Idea of a University*, were at first neglected but subsequently became a highly regarded articulation of a liberal ideal of university education (Brock, 1996). In more recent times, the work of Germaine Greer, particularly the sustained influence of her book *The Female Eunuch* (Greer, 1970), established her as one of the most influential feminists. Other figures can have a big impact for a shorter time, such as the anti-globalization campaigner Naomi Klein, who rose to prominence with her book *No Logo* in 2000 (Klein, 2000). Whilst Klein was listed as the eleventh most prominent public intellectual in a 2005 poll, her name did not even appear in the top 100 when the same exercise was repeated in 2008 (Prospect, 2008). Hence, it can be hard to predict who will have a significant legacy and who will not. Some figures might appear to be important during their lifetime but can prove to be less influential in death than they were in life. This might suggest that intellectual leadership is not something that can be ascribed too readily to anyone. The only real judge is time.

The nature of academic legacy is to some extent discipline related. Academics in the social sciences are often known for one key idea or concept. An example is the sociologist Stanley Cohen. He is famously associated with the notion of 'moral panics', which occur, according to his analysis, when a 'condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests' (Cohen, 1972, p. 9). The mass media and establishment figures in society line up to variously analyse and condemn a phenomenon that they regard with approbation, such as football hooligans or Hell's Angels. In reality, many concepts associated with one particular academic or theorist are in themselves derived previously from other theories or ideas. Concepts, like any other form of knowledge, build on each other. Sometimes concepts supplant rather than add to existing knowledge, they replace an old idea with a new one. A good example of this is the concept of relative poverty that replaced the absolute definition of poverty. Here, the work of the sociologist Peter Townsend was significant in changing understanding and attitudes (see Chapter 7).

Rather than trying to self-ascribe primacy, many ethically grounded scholars take pains to explain that they are drawing on previous work but often, despite such assiduousness, they nonetheless become associated with the concept, idea or phrase. An example of this is the way that the sociologist Robert Merton will always be remembered for the concept of the self-fulfilling prophecy (Merton, 1948) among other ideas (e.g. the Matthew effect). Merton points out at the beginning of his essay that he owes an intellectual debt to various writers, in particular to W.I. Thomas, who stated that if men define situations as real they can have real consequences. Merton develops the idea of the self-fulfilling prophecy from this basis, arguing that falsely defined situations can lead to patterns of behaviour that can ultimately make the false definition come true. He

illustrates the point by giving the example of a financially sound bank, which is subject to a false rumour that it is short of capital. This false rumour creates a panic as people rush to withdraw their money, as a result of which the bank does end up going out of business. Yet over 60 years later, it is Merton, not Thomas, who is seen as the real creator of this concept.

Conclusion

There are those that argue we live in a therapy culture, one in which assumptions of vulnerability prevail (Furedi, 2004; Ecclestone and Hayes, 2009). According to this critique, modern society is too ready to medicalize normal episodes of stress and is too focused on discourse about human emotion. Assumptions surrounding these concerns have resulted, so the thesis goes, in the phenomenon of 'helicopter' parents and a significant expansion of mental health and counselling services for university students. In a similar vein, it may be argued that the qualities or traits associated with academic duty identified in this chapter, particularly the role of mentor, are characteristic of the assumptions of a therapy culture. However, here it is important to emphasize that this set of qualities is intended as an indicator of a balanced approach to the provision of support and development. Some of the qualities demand what might be termed tough love. Mentoring involves not just the display of sympathy or empathy but honest feedback, which might, on occasions, be highly critical. Similarly, guardianship is about striking a balance between encouraging new ideas and approaches to knowledge with a concern to ensure that standards of scholarship are preserved and respected in the process. The operation of these duties are not, therefore, about being 'soft', but largely about being committed to inter-generational equity in ensuring that opportunities to support and nurture the next generation of scholars are taken seriously as part of someone's role as a professor.

The duties described above relate to the role of a professor both within and external to the university. In the internet age, the colleagues professors look to support and nurture may just as easily be on another continent as in an adjacent office. Some degree of balance though is important in ensuring that professors contribute not just to the wider development of their discipline or profession but also to the internal life of the institution they work for. Professors need to be connected both to the local and to the cosmopolitan context. If they are seen as lacking in commitment to the institutional context, professors are likely to have little influence at the local level and there is a strong chance they will be disconnected from leadership. On the other hand, it is also important for professors to avoid the other extreme: being regarded as locals but with insufficiently strong scholarly influence and networks beyond the walls of the institution. This lack of credibility will undermine the extent that they can truly be considered intellectual leaders.

In thinking through what it means to be a professor, this section of the book has identified the way they are appointed (Chapter 5), the roles they play in

practice (Chapter 6), and their freedoms and duties (Chapters 7 and 8). The concluding section of the book will consider how intellectual leadership can be recovered. It will propose a model of intellectual leadership (Chapter 9), consider how universities can play a more positive role in offering intellectual leadership at the corporate level (Chapter 10) and identify ways they might make better use of their professoriate as intellectual leaders (Chapter 11).

Chapter 8

The impact of marketisation

Quality

In this chapter we review what the available evidence suggests about the impact of market-based reforms on quality, distinguishing between student education and research. We also discuss more briefly the effect of marketisation on the academy's ability to control the 'academic agenda', what is to be taught and researched and how. This in turn has implications both for quality and for universities' broader relationship with society.

Educational quality

> Our proposals are designed to create genuine competition for students between HEIs, of a kind which cannot take place under the current system. There will be more investment available for the HEIs that are able to convince students that it is worthwhile. This is in our view a surer way to drive up quality than any attempt at central planning. To safeguard this approach, we recommend that the [proposed] Higher Education Council enforces baseline standards of quality; and that students receive high quality information to help them choose the HEI and courses which best matches [sic] their aspirations.
>
> (Independent Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance, 2010, p. 8)

As we have seen, it has been the view of successive governments that market competition improves quality as institutions 'raise their game' to attract students. Against that, a number of writers (e.g., Smith *et al.*, 1993; Yorke and Alderman, 1999; Naylor, 2007; Alderman, 2008, 2009, 2010; Gibbs, 2012) have claimed that academic standards may be falling and that increased competition, reinforced by institutional league tables, is one of the main reasons. A 2004 survey of 400 academics by *Times Higher Education* (Baty, 2004a) found that five out of six agreed that 'the squeeze on the resources of higher education institutions is having a general adverse effect on academic standards'. Seventy-one per cent agreed that their 'institution had admitted students who are not capable of benefitting from higher level study', 48 per cent reported that they had 'felt obliged to pass

a student whose performance did not really merit a pass', 42 per cent said that 'decisions to fail students' work had been overruled at higher levels in the institution', and almost one in five admitted to turning a 'blind eye' to student plagiarism. A further survey in 2008 (Gill, 2008b) had 500 responses. Whilst there was only a bare majority for the view that reports of 'dumbing down' were not incorrect or overstated, more than 80 per cent felt that resourcing constraints were affecting academic standards, about 77 per cent saw plagiarism by students as a growing problem, more than 70 per cent agreed that the need to maintain acceptable retention rates had led to lower failure rates on courses at their institution, and almost 70 per cent disagreed that rising numbers of 'good' degrees was evidence of improving standards.

In *Higher Education and the Market* the author identified from the literature a number of reasons for suggesting, prima facie, that the quality of education – students consistently achieving worthwhile educational outcomes – might have declined as a result of a combination of marketisation and reduced levels of spending per student. These included: a reduction in the amount of learning due to a reduction of the 'size' of the curriculum, a shorter academic year, less contact with academic staff, heavier staff workloads, larger teaching groups, higher student-staff ratios, more students working in term-time, etc.; lower rates of progression, retention and graduation; increasing reports of students less well prepared for degree level study; greater pressure on pass rates and grade inflation, especially at the more prestigious institutions; more plagiarism and other forms of cheating; declining levels of trust between students and staff seen not only in increasing student complaints, but also in misbehaviour in the form of violence, harassment, public humiliation and rudeness, as well as accusations of unfairness and lack of professionalism; increasing resort to temporary and part-time lecturers and tutors, including graduate students; a growing tendency for programmes and awards to be valued for their 'exchange' value, particularly in the labour market, rather than for their 'use' value, to the student ('commodification'); students adopting a more 'instrumental' approach to their studies, focussing their work on what will gain them good marks; and a diversion of resources away from teaching and learning towards activities like marketing that have only a remote relationship to educational quality (Brown, 2011a).

Time on task

HEPI has conducted a series of surveys of the academic experience of students at English universities (Bekhradnia, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2012). The author was a member of the steering committee for the project. The most striking finding has been the enormous variations in scheduled hours of teaching (contact hours), private study time and total learning load not only between subjects, but also, within subjects, between institutions. The HEPI conclusions were endorsed in a 2009 report for HEFCE by the Centre for Higher Education Research and Information (2009); this showed that besides having the shortest degree courses in

Europe, UK students also study for a shorter period each week (about 30 hours a week compared with 42 hours in France, for example). In 2006 the *Times Higher* reported that students at Sussex were campaigning for a minimum of eight hours a week contact time with lecturers (THE, 2006). The *Higher* in 2008 reported an hour's reduction for social science students at Manchester, subsequently admitted by the Vice-Chancellor (Attwood, 2008b, c). Harding (2009) reported a substantial reduction in contact hours in the Arts Faculty at Edinburgh since 1980.[1]

Term-time employment

A survey of students at four universities (Metcalf, 2003) found that term-time working was affecting the quality of education. It was particularly damaging for students whose father did not have a degree and for female students, especially ones from ethnic minorities.[2] A survey for UUK (Centre for Higher Education Research and Information and London South Bank University, 2005) found that even an average amount of term-time employment could significantly affect the chances of a student obtaining a good degree; students with lower academic attainments were much more likely to be working longer than the average. Using data from 1,000 students in six universities, Callender (2009b) quantified the impact of students' paid work on their actual marks and degree results, whilst controlling for their academic attainment on entry and other factors including their hours of work. Irrespective of the university attended, term-time working had had a detrimental effect on both final year marks and degree results: the more hours students worked, the greater the negative effect. Students working the average number of hours a week (15) were a third less likely to get a good degree than an identical non-working student. Moreover, some of the most adversely affected students were amongst the poorest and least qualified. A 2010 study (Barker, 2010) found that some trainee teachers on PGCE courses were working for more than 21 hours a week on top of their courses, many to stem their debts; nearly a third were working for between 11 and 20 hours a week.

Retention

The National Audit Office (NAO) has investigated retention twice in the past decade (NAO, 2002, 2007). On each occasion it found that in spite of increases in participation rates, projected UK completions continued to show up well in international comparisons. The 2002 report found that 85.5 per cent of students were projected to complete their degree at the institution at which they had started their course, obtain another award or transfer to another institution. This compared with 84 per cent in 1997–98, the earliest year for which comparable figures exist. The 2007 report found a figure of 86.6 per cent. The latest Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) figure (for 2009–10) is 86.7 per cent. It is true that many institutions have put a lot of effort into retention in the past decade or so, partly in response to government prodding. However, these figures,

whilst reassuring at least in comparative terms, in themselves tell us little about academic standards, especially as low levels of retention can significantly affect institutions' finances (Baty, 2004b).

Grade inflation

Yorke (2009) showed how the proportion of good degrees (Firsts and Upper Seconds) rose between 1994 and 2007 in all subject areas. In the earlier period (1994 to 2002) the increases were most apparent in the Russell Group institutions; in the later period (2002 to 2007) the increases were more evenly spread. However, it should not necessarily be inferred that the cause was grade inflation: the modularisation of curricula, the greater emphasis on learning outcomes (so that students have a clearer idea of what is expected of them), encouragement of examiners to use the full range of marks, and the shift towards assessed coursework and away from unseen exams could all have contributed (see also Hunt, 2008, and Yorke, 2008). This upward trend has continued so that, according to HESA data, 65 per cent of full-time UK students obtained 'good' degrees in 2010–11, compared with 62 per cent in 2006–7.[3]

Student preparation for university study

Grade inflation is not confined to higher education. The Chief Regulator of Ofqual, the government agency that oversees the standards of school exams, was recently reported as saying that A-levels and GCSEs had suffered 'persistent grade inflation' for 'at least a decade' (Stewart, 2012b; see also Shepherd, 2012b). The same report quoted the President of Pearson, the owner of EdExcel, the largest school exam board, as saying that exam boards should be 'worried about' the discrepancy between 10 years of rising A-level and GCSE results and England's failure to achieve better scores on international benchmarks. Two months previously, the man who ran EdExcel was reported as saying that he resigned after being expected by Ofqual to manipulate GCSE results downwards to prevent grade inflation (Stewart, 2012a). The Government has responded by announcing a reform of A-levels in which the universities will play a larger part (Stratton, 2012).

There have been numerous reports of university entrants being inadequately prepared for higher education, a common theme being that sixth-formers are being 'spoon-fed' and that teachers are 'teaching to the test' so that students find the demands of independent study difficult even after a year (Ovens, in preparation). For example, in September 2011 the Institute of Physics found that more than half of the physics and engineering academics surveyed said their first-year undergraduates were 'not very' or 'not at all' well prepared to cope with the maths content of their degrees (Allen, 2011). In the same year, a report by the Advisory Committee on Maths stated that maths A-level and other post-16 qualifications were not stretching pupils enough for many higher education courses (Shepherd,

2011). The nature of the problem can be seen from the fact that the previous year the same committee had warned that making maths A-level harder would mean fewer students studying the subject (Mansell, 2010a). These concerns are not confined to the sciences: in 2008 the *Times Higher* reported a Cambridge University study which found widespread worries about British students' English language skills (Gill, 2008c).

Several years ago the Government introduced an A* grade to distinguish outstanding performance at A-level. A number of universities (e.g., Imperial College) have instituted entrance exams. Increasing numbers of students are resorting to private tuition agencies to help bridge the gap between A-levels and university (Vasagar, 2010). In 2010, counselling services at Oxford and Cambridge reported 'year on year' rises in the number of youngsters seeking help because they lacked the necessary resilience when faced with challenges in their studies (Mansell, 2010b).

Plagiarism

It is generally agreed that advances in technology have facilitated plagiarism and other forms of cheating and misconduct by students. However, the author is not aware of any recent work on the extent of this across the UK, or on any trends. A survey of 100 institutions a few years ago for the Higher Education Academy and the Joint Information Systems Committee (Tennant and Duggan, 2008) found 9,229 cases in one year and 143 student expulsions. There were variations by type of institution (with less selective universities having higher rates) and level of course (with a higher rate at postgraduate level). The great majority of offences were 'first-time' ones. There was no data by subject, but others have suggested (Jack, 2008) that plagiarism is commonest in business studies, computing and accountancy, perhaps because a larger amount of text is available on-line. As regards other forms of cheating, the *Times Higher* in 2008 carried two reports of academic staff encouraging students to give their departments' positive NSS ratings (Attwood, 2008a; Newman, 2008). In 2010 *The Guardian* reported that eight universities were being investigated by HEFCE for putting undue pressure on students to boost their NSS ratings (Kenber and Taylor, 2010). Cheating seems to be common in university admissions in both the US (Marcus, 2008) and the UK (Stewart, 2011).[4]

Student expectations and behaviour

A number of writers (e.g., Bone and McNay, 2006; Lee, 2006; Tahir, 2007; Attwood, 2009) have drawn attention to possible links between a decline in trust between staff and students and poorer student behaviour (see also Jones and Philp, 2011). Leon (2001) reported students adopting a more 'instrumental' attitude to their studies, narrowing the focus of their studies to what will win them marks (see also Broadfoot, 1998; Shepherd, 2008). This was also one of

the main findings of the *Times Higher's* 2008 staff survey. In a two-year study, Soin *et al.* (submitted for review) found lecturers increasingly reluctant to write anything critical about students in references; this fear had spread to discussing contentious issues in class, or even putting critical comments on exam scripts. As we noted earlier, complaints have increased, albeit from a low base (Jones, 2006). Students are putting greater pressure on staff about marks but also demanding to see staff whenever it suits them. Much of this arises from the growing view – not least on the part of the Government – of higher education as a commodity and of the student as consumer. Finally, Palfreyman (2010) has warned that the risk of legal action by students unhappy with their marks could even increase if higher education is 'commodified' with 'mechanistic and formulaic' teaching methods. This seems to be an increasing risk.

Commodification and consumerisation

Several writers (e.g., Naidoo and Jamieson, 2005; Cooper, 2007) have identified a growing trend for higher education to be valued for its 'exchange' value (especially in the labour market) rather than its 'use' value (to the student); for a similar argument on the possible commodification of research, see Boden and Epstein, 2006. A number of writers (Barrett, 1996; Scott, 1999; Barnett, 2000; Rolfe, 2002; Morley, 2003; Potts, 2005; White, 2007; Hearn, 2008; Furedi, 2009; Molesworth *et al.*, 2009; Alderman, 2010; Cuthbert, 2010; Molesworth *et al.*, 2011; Naidoo *et al.*, 2011; Williams, J., 2012) argue that standards may be at risk from the reconstitution of the student identity – not least through commercial league tables and exercises like the National Student Survey – from that of 'apprentice academic' to that of 'novice consumer', so that students increasingly see themselves as customers with needs rather than as clients or partners in an educational project. To quote Williams (2011, J., p. 181):

> the consumption model, in shifting the focus so successfully away from learning processes and onto educational outcomes, denies students the transformational potential of higher level study in exchange for satisfactory experience and a suitable product (degree attainment).

(See also Furedi, 2012.) The fact that this student-as-consumer culture is even stronger in the US (Marcus, 2006; Oxford, 2008) is hardly reassuring in this context.

The impact of competition

There have been several reported instances – so far, modest in number but individually important – where competitive pressures appear to have led to management interference with academic judgements. Some of these were reported to the House of Commons Innovation, Universities, Science and Skills

Committee (IUSSC) during its inquiry into students and universities in 2008–9. They included:

- The resignation of Professor Paul Buckland at Bournemouth University in 2007 in protest at the decision of the university authorities that 13 students whom he and an exam board had failed should nevertheless be deemed to have passed. He subsequently won his claim for compensation for unfair dismissal.
- The attempt at Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU) to discipline a lecturer, Walter Cairns, who had protested at management attempts to force him to lower his standards of assessment because of the damage that high failure rates could do to the university's finances. When he subsequently complained to the Select Committee about his treatment, he was removed from the Academic Board at the Vice-Chancellor's insistence (the Vice-Chancellor thereby risked incurring the charge of contempt of Parliament and had to make an apology).
- Another MMU lecturer, Susan Evans, was reported by the *Times Higher* in March 2009 as alleging that marks were often bumped up at the university without consulting tutors, and that in 2004 this had meant nine economics students graduating who should not have done (Gill, 2009).
- *The Times* on 2 July 2008 (p.5) reported the leaking to the BBC of an internal MMU memorandum asking lecturers in maths and computing to bear in mind 'the understandable desire' to increase the number of Firsts and Upper Seconds so as to help the institution to compete more effectively. Lest it be thought that apparent manipulation of academic standards was a post-1992 monopoly, we should also note the Vice-Chancellor of York's memo to all the university's external examiners in 2000 saying that a university of such calibre should be awarding more 'good degrees' (Baty, 2000).
- The case at Kingston University where it was alleged that an external examiner had been pressured into altering her report so that it reflected less badly on a department that had in her view admitted sub-standard students and then assessed them too favourably. This was investigated by the QAA, which publicly gave the university a clean bill of health (QAA, 2009).
- In 2011 the *Times Higher* reported a head of school at a Russell Group university e-mailing colleagues urging them to be 'VERY generous' when assessing student applications for PhDs, and warning them that they 'simply cannot afford to be too choosy' (Jump, 2011).
- Most recently, there was a report of a Dean at Teesside encouraging staff to improve completion rates by resubmitting work, giving 'generous' deadline extensions and passing assignments before they had been seen by external examiners (Matthews, 2012f).

Unfortunately, we lack any serious study of the impact of market competition since 1979 on the quality of student learning and achievement. Even by recent standards of policy making, it is surely extraordinary that in spite of all the atten-

tion and resources devoted to quality assurance since at least 1992, and even allowing for the undoubted difficulties of definition, we should have so limited a picture of what has actually happened to quality – the quality of the student experience, the standards of student achievement. Equally depressing has been the failure of any national body to take responsibility and ownership of the problem. Too often, when presented with evidence of these detriments, the sector's response has been tardy and defensive.

Of a number of cases within the author's direct knowledge, three stand out. The first was when HEQC first audited institutions' overseas partnerships. Three universities received consistently damning reports. When the author as HEQC Chief Executive suggested to one or two senior vice-chancellors in 1996–97 that CVCP might invite the institutions to temporarily withdraw from membership of CVCP he received a reaction that can best be described as polite ridicule. The second was the vice-chancellors' reaction to the first of the HEPI student experience reports in 2006: instead of acknowledging that they had failed to collect this quite basic information and agreeing to interrogate it, the HEPI Director was hauled over the coals and in effect 'told off' for embarrassing the sector. The third was the IUSSC inquiry in 2009–10, which the Funding Council and the vice-chancellors together first tried to prevent, then water down the terms of reference, and then ignore, at least publicly, the resultant report.

However, even if there was clear evidence that quality had declined, one would still need to know how far it was due to the introduction of market competition, as opposed to other factors such as changes in resourcing levels, developments in the school curriculum, wider changes in society, etc. We also need to take into account the enormous expansion of the system and the admission of students from a much wider set of backgrounds and with a much wider range of abilities than previously.

Quality and resourcing

One attempt that was made to examine the effects of cost pressures on the quality of student education was the report prepared for HEFCE in December 2008, sometimes called the Crossick Report after the chair of the group that produced it (Geoffrey Crossick, then Warden of Goldsmiths College, subsequently Vice-Chancellor of the University of London). This highlighted five areas where cost pressures were clearly impacting on the fitness for purpose and sustainability of the student learning experience:

- The relationship of staff to students
- The curriculum and assessment
- The student population and its needs and expectations
- Infrastructure for teaching and learning
- Student support services.

(HEFCE, 2008, paragraph 1.10)

The report went on to comment:

> These areas are all inter-related, but the first of them, the relationship between staff and students, has a particular significance because it is at the heart of the distinctive UK higher education experience. It is influenced by a number of relevant issues including staff-student ratios (SSRs); contact hours; group sizes and loads of learning; other activities of academic staff; the needs and expectations of students; and the learning environment and services available to support student learning.
>
> The evidence, from a range of sources, shows that cost pressures in all these areas have grown in the last few years as the task for higher education institutions (HEIs) has become larger and more complex. They have made remarkable gains in efficiency and productivity, and the pressures are being contained by a variety of means. Some of these 'coping strategies' are effective ways of delivering higher education at lower unit costs in a more massified system, but others are incompatible with attaining a world-class experience and delivery of government agendas such as widening access and employer engagement (which impose additional costs).
>
> (HEFCE, 2008, paragraph 1.11–1.12)

Regrettably, there is very little hard UK evidence about the relationship, if any, between funding and quality. The odd QAA institutional review report may refer to problems, but one will look almost in vain for any systematic views; one exception was a 2006 report which stated that students were getting poor academic and personal support because of the 'strain' that tutorial systems were under (QAA, 2006). This may not be an accident. Peter Williams, Chief Executive of the QAA from 2002 to 2010, and previously head of its audit group, confirmed to the author (personal communication) that, for different reasons, neither HEFCE nor UUK was ever keen for the Agency to get into this territory. This will almost certainly change as competition and institutional resourcing differentials increase as a result of the Government's reform programme (for the full argument, see Brown, 2011d).[5]

One important exception was a 2010 survey for the Higher Education Academy, in which Gibbs argued that the key was less the availability of resources and more whether the resources are committed to things that make for student success, such as staff development and teaching and learning centres (things not usually picked up by external quality assurance processes). However, he also noted that low student-staff ratios might be helpful for educational gain, provided they are appropriately exploited throughout the institution. Similarly, Gibbs cited several studies showing how class sizes affect student achievement, as does the amount of contact between lecturers and students (Gibbs, 2010, p. 19). Both these process variables are of course resource-related.

There is more American work on this issue. In a 2006 study of 416 public institutions, Blose *et al.* found a clear correlation between graduation rates and expenditure per student. In a 2007 article, Bound and Turner showed how reduced resources per student in the American states had affected degree attainment in the public institutions. These effects arose from a combination of larger student cohorts and lower state appropriations, precisely the combination we have been facing in the UK since the 1980s. A later article by two of the same authors (Bound *et al.*, 2010) similarly explained how the overall reduction in completion rates in US higher education was mainly due to growing performance differences between more and less selective institutions, which in turn are linked to widening resourcing differentials: in 2006, average spending on education and related spending per FTE student ranged from nearly $37,000 at a private research university to under $10,000 at a public Associate's institution (Wellman, 2008). As we have seen, the UK already has resourcing differentials of this magnitude and these will increase still further after 2012.

Use of temporary and part-time teaching staff

There are also some American studies (Bettinger and Terry Long, 2006; Ehrenberg and Zhang, 2006; Glenn, 2008; Schmidt, 2008) which suggest that changes in the composition of the teaching force – specifically the reduction in the proportion of tenure track faculty and the increasing use of part-time instructors ('adjuncts') – may be having a negative impact on completion. Both are of course the result of declining institutional revenues. Comparable UK studies are scarce. Surveying the use of graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) in a research-led department at the University of Sheffield, Muzaka (2009) noted concerns about subject knowledge and teaching skills only partly offset by good interpersonal skills and recent experience as an undergraduate. The only other UK study the author has been able to find is a recent survey of GTAs in Scotland (Dickie *et al.*, 2012). This points to the danger to universities if undergraduates see that teaching is given a low priority and delivered by an insufficiently trained, inappropriately remunerated and poorly motivated workforce of assistants: research students teaching other postgraduates could be an area of special concern. Both studies call for more training for GTAs. The HEPI academic experience surveys suggest that students at older universities are more likely to be receiving their small group tuition from non-academics (i.e., graduate students) or 'pre-academics' (post-doctoral students at the start of their career); they are also more likely to be taught in larger groups. An NUS survey in 2008 (Attwood, 2008b) found that students did not rate researchers or postgraduates highly as teachers. As regards the resort to temporary and part-time staff, in spite of concerns about increasing use of temporary or short-term staff, the HESA Staff Record actually shows a declining proportion of fixed-term staff since 1995–96 and an increase in the proportion of staff on open-ended and permanent contracts.

Changes in the curriculum

We also lack a proper picture of changes in the curriculum including in the subjects offered for study by the universities. Ramsden, B. (2012, p. 4) notes that there has been a decline in science and technology subjects, alongside a significant increase in creative and performing arts, media studies and politics. However:

> In general, the major changes in subject provision by HE institutions have matched the changes in demand as evidenced by applicant choices – although Mathematics is a notable exception to this, having seen an increase in demand and a reduction in supply.

The latter may of course reflect the problems with maths A-level to which we have just referred.

A number of writers (e.g., Rolfe, 2003) have suggested that, as a result of higher charges and a greater emphasis on the economic benefits of higher education, students are switching to more 'vocational subjects', whilst institutions are increasing the vocational content or relevance of their courses. However, in the fourth of the reports that UUK commissioned on the impact of variable fees in 2009 (Brown, N., and Ramsden, 2009, paragraph 107) the authors concluded:

> There is no evidence either that the introduction of the new full-time undergraduate fees has had any impact on student subject choices. There have been significant changes in subject balance of acceptances onto first degree programmes over the last five years, with significant declines in computer science, business and management and, most recently, subjects allied to medicine. There have been increases in other subject areas. These changes would appear to reflect longer term cyclical changes in the perceptions of individuals about subject choice and career prospects rather than any issue about tuition fees.

This is yet another phenomenon that everyone believes may be occurring, but no one has thought worth seriously investigating.

Dysfunctional expenditure

Increased expenditure on things that help to attract students but which have little or no educational value – such as student residences, cafeteria and recreational activities, what one commentator has called 'gilding their palaces of exclusivity' (Carey, 2011) – has long been noted as a significant feature of modern US higher education. Hearn (2008, p. 209) refers to Luettger's (2008, p. 22) estimate that the amount of money spent on marketing and communications by colleges and universities in the US had risen by over 50 per cent since 2000. This may be why many American students pay far more in tuition than their colleges spend on educating them, something we shall increasingly see here as tuition fees take off

after 2012.[6] Much of this expenditure is of course in response to what students, as consumers, need or say they need. In the UK, a number of writers (e.g., Rolfe, 2003) have drawn attention to increased expenditure on marketing and branding as universities seek to maintain and improve their position in the market, even though much of this is ineffective. There has so far been less comment about dysfunctional expenditure on the US pattern, but this can surely be only a matter of time.

Research quality

> The UK is the most productive country for research in the G8, producing more publications and citations per pound of public funding than any other major country.
>
> (DBIS, 2011a, Executive Summary, paragraph 21)

> The RAE has undoubtedly brought benefits but it has also caused collateral damage. It has damaged staff careers and it has distracted universities from their teaching, community and economic development roles. Higher education should encourage excellence in all these areas, not just in research.
>
> (House of Commons Science and Technology Committee, 2002, Conclusion, paragraph 5, quoted in Bence and Oppenheim, 2005, p. 23)

> Nothing less than the positional status of every institution was at stake.
>
> (Marginson, 1997, p. 74, quoted in Hicks, 2008, p. 12)[7]

> Long-term evaluation will be needed regarding the quality of research and research education, the national and institutional epistemic ecologies, and the research institutional structures resulting from the changes that have occurred in the United Kingdom. Much of the UK story seems to support Geuna's argument (1999) that the challenges of a new era are opening up an unbridgeable gap between universities; only a few elite research universities will fully adapt to the new demands and also manage to retain some of the assumed defining features of universities; many will be marginalised and little influenced by international changes in the production of knowledge.
>
> (Henkel and Kogan, 2010, p. 380)

Geuna (2001, p. 620) has set out very well the assumptions that underpin a performance-related system of research funding:

- That it is possible to evaluate the quality of the research output accurately.
- That it is possible to identify the most promising research avenues.
- That cost reductions can be achieved without any decrease in the quality of output.

- That due to the existence of scale and scope economies, the concentration of scientific capabilities increases the research output of the system.
- That the administrative costs of assessment and evaluation, for both government and universities, linked to the implementation of a competitive system, are small compared with the cost savings (see also Vincent-Lancrin, 2006).[8]

We noted in Chapter 4 the quite widely held view that the introduction of selectivity, and in particular the RAE, led to better use of research resources, to a reduction or restraint on costs, and to the elimination or reduction of 'poor' research. This was a consequence of the stimulus that selectivity gave to institutions to manage research more tightly. As Geuna and Martin (2003, p. 296), reviewing the widespread adoption of competitive research regimes more widely – some in direct emulation of the RAE – remarked:

> Its main virtue lies in the assumption that it is inherently meritocratic, rewarding success and improving quality … It gives a mechanism to link research to policy, a way to shift priorities across fields, and a rational method of moving resources from less well-performing areas to areas where they can be used to greater effect. Assessments also give leading departments a 'marketing' tool to attract top researchers and students.

Other benefits include a higher priority being given to research than might otherwise have been the case, and more support being given to researchers, especially in less 'research intensive' institutions.

But it also seems clear – and again there are international studies of the RAE and similar mechanisms that confirm this (e.g., Geuna, 2001; Geuna and Martin, 2003; Himanen *et al.*, 2009) – that these benefits may diminish over time, not least because institutions learn to 'play the game' (Clarke, 2005; Crespi and Geuna, 2006; Lucas, 2006). Hence the need to keep raising the bar higher with each successive RAE (see also Hicks, 2009). In addition, doubts have been raised about the benefits of scale in relation to research. Johnston has produced a series of analyses contesting the assumption that 'big is necessarily beautiful' at department/unit level (e.g., Johnston *et al.*,1993; see also Evidence Ltd, 2011). There is some American work which comes to the same conclusion (Jackman and Siverson, 1996). Evidence Ltd (2003) found that the statistical correlation between size and performance was mainly attributable to the fact that large units rarely have poor research.

At institutional level, Whiteley's (2009) statistical analysis of the 2008 RAE suggested that research performance declines once an institution gets too big (over 10,000 faculty). These are on top of the wider disadvantages of concentration already noted in our discussion of institutional diversity (see also Horta *et al.*, 2008). Watson and Bowden (2002, referring to Ramsden and Brown, 2002) and Evidence Ltd (2005) pointed out that universities with medical schools have been particular beneficiaries of selectivity, receiving not only large amounts of

government funding, but also substantial funding from charities such as the Wellcome Trust. There is also the problem of geographical concentration and the risk that certain regions (especially the East Midlands and Wales) will lose important areas of research and suffer a reduction in research performance (Evidence Ltd, 2003; Adams and Smith, 2004).

There are further detriments and distortions to research selectivity, including:

- The treatment of all subjects within a 'one-size-fits-all' framework in spite of very different forms of knowledge production across the academy (Griffiths, 2004).
- The unavoidably backward-looking nature of the assessments, which may favour established researchers, research fields and research methods, at the expense of newer and more innovative researchers and ways of doing things.
- A narrowing in the topics chosen for research and in the perspectives and techniques applied.
- A bias in favour of 'pure' and theoretical research at the expense of 'applied' and practice-based research that may be of greater benefit not only to external users but even to the academy itself.
- A bias in favour of research with relatively shorter time horizons.
- A bias in favour of traditional discipline-based research and against inter- and multi-disciplinary research, 'Mode 1' knowledge production rather than 'Mode 2' to use the now familiar terms.[9]
- The risk that the measures become more important than the research itself (Lucas, 2006).

Moving away from the detriments to research, there have also been many costs to teaching and learning. To begin with, many studies (e.g., McNay, 1997a and b) have commented on the separation or distancing of research from teaching. Selectivity has meant researchers spending less time teaching, and more teaching being done by part-time staff and postgraduates (JM Consulting, 2000). Ironically – in view of the claims often made by such institutions about the advantages to students from learning in a 'research environment' – this is more likely to be the case in 'research intensive' institutions (Bekhradnia, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2012). Hence the scope for exploiting the synergies that can arise when research and teaching are conducted together is reduced; it is also reduced because, as well as relegating pedagogical research, selectivity has downgraded research processes and outcomes that might be of particular value to students as well as other 'end-users' (Locke, 2004).

Research selectivity has also meant teaching having a lower priority than research when it comes to rewards, appointments, and promotions, even in primarily teaching institutions (Jenkins, 1995; Court, 1999; Barnett, 2000; Rowland, 2000; Coate *et al.*, 2001; HEA and the Genetics Education Networking for Innovation and Excellence (GENIE) CETL, 2009). This has even been admitted by the former Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge:

> The fact is that rankings, prestige and investments are strongly weighted towards our research endeavours. This carries over in some measure to the training of postgraduate students, but makes it ever harder for research-intensive universities to give serious attention to the education of undergraduates. The standing of individual academics, in their disciplines and universities, depends more and more on research accomplishments and less and less on their contributions as teachers. Investment from the public and private sectors reflects and reinforces this asymmetry.
>
> (Richard, 2006, p. 1)[10]

The one serious study of innovation in UK higher education known to the author (Hannan and Silver, 2000) found that the demands of disciplinary research, and especially the RAE, were a major impediment to pedagogical innovation, especially for less senior lecturing staff. Similarly, the demands of the RAE were a major challenge to quality assurance, although again there does not appear to be any recent work on this:

> The greatest threat is undoubtedly the prospect of another UFC research selectivity exercise. The overriding urgency with which universities and departments seek to maximise their research outputs (and inputs) is currently the main obstacle to innovation in quality assurance, and, indeed, the systematic improvement of teaching. Not only is time short, but resources in general are painfully inadequate to support innovations in teaching. Whether this is internal or external I refuse to say!
>
> (SWOT analysis of quality assurance by a distinguished academic auditor, CVCP 1992)

Research selectivity has produced a bizarre situation where a large part of the academic workforce has to do some teaching in order to be able to do what they really want to do (research, mainly in the older institutions), whilst another segment (mainly in the newer institutions) has to undertake some form of research to safeguard their positions as teachers. It is strongly arguable that what is really needed is for all academic staff in a department or group to undertake between them the full range of academic tasks, not only teaching and research, but also quality assurance, some administration, serving on committees, admissions, links with schools, etc., all of which should be equally valued. Finally, selectivity has also damaged other forms of scholarship, such as the production of textbooks, one of the classic ways in which academic research feeds into (and from) the student curriculum (see also Henkel, 2000).

As regards research quality, the strong comparative performance of UK academic research has already been noted (see also Wellings and Winzer, 2011). Adams and Gurney (2010) show how, relative to the world average, the citation impact of the UK research base dramatically improved in the late 1980s (see also Adams *et al.*, 2000; Evidence Ltd., 2002 and 2008; King, 2004; DBIS, 2012c).

Adams and Gurney noted that whether this improvement was a result of the RAE or simply a 'correlative outcome' of the policy and management environment in which the RAE has operated is not clear, though it would be 'reasonable to conclude' that it was a consequence of the introduction of the RAE (2010, paragraph 28).

However, the reviews by Williams, B. (1987) and by McNay (1997a and b, 2003, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011a and b) present a more mixed picture. Managers tend to be more positive in their views than academic staff, with autonomy and freedom to choose what and how to research being a major issue. There can certainly be little doubt that, as a result of the combination of increased evaluation and selective funding, the control of research has moved away from the individual researcher in many institutions: the model of the lone researcher has long been replaced by managed environments (research into higher education may be an exception). Using OECD data, Himanen *et al.* (2009) compared the research performance of five developed systems – Australia, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway and the UK – between 1987 and 2005. They found that when staff are given more autonomy, they do more research and are more productive. Trying to control research at the input stage by resource allocation conditions, as with the RAE and similar exercises, is actually counterproductive.[11]

There is also work that suggests that research quality may be uneven across our system.

Adams (2006) suggested that the overall quality of UK research performance was heavily influenced by a small group of very highly cited performers. More than half the UK's output between 1995 and 2004 was uncited, or had a citation count less than the world average: two-thirds of the UK's papers were in these categories. Typically, a third of papers in the physical sciences and engineering were uncited. As Roberts (2006, p. 17), commenting on this analysis, wrote: 'This translates into there being expensive-to-run laboratories and large cohorts of academics engaged in "handle-turning" research with little academic impact.'

This unevenness applies both at institutional level and within mission groups. Also using citation analysis, Chester and Bekhradnia (2009) showed how the research standing of the Russell Group is heavily dependent on the performance (and, ultimately, the resources) of Oxford and Cambridge. For papers published between 2002 and 2006, 7.9 per cent of articles and reviews published by Oxford and Cambridge were 'highly cited' (i.e., they were cited at least four times as much as the relevant world average); the figure for the Russell Group as a whole was 5.7 per cent, compared to a sector average of 5.2 per cent. In other words, the Russell Group performed only half a per cent better than the sector as a whole: when the other 'golden triangle' institutions (Imperial College, University College London and the London School of Economics) were excluded, the Russell Group actually performed *below* the sector average.

Adams and Gurney (2010) confirmed this analysis. Although the post-1980s improvement in citation impact was associated, at least until 2005, with a rising share of publications authored or co-authored by Russell Group academics, the

overall performance not just of the Russell Group but of the entire UK research base was driven 'to a significant extent' by the impact of papers from a small number of institutions. This justified more selective funding for 'the rare peaks of internationally outstanding excellence [but] there is no case for a general and universal policy to concentrate on historical characteristics' (Adams and Gurney, 2010, paragraph 54).

The authors based this conclusion on two considerations: first, the fact that 'the curve of relative excellence' extended across the full range of impact categories for all institutional groups (Adams and Gurney, 2010, paragraph 40 and Figure 2). Second, the fact that over 20 per cent of the UK's research output – and even 15 per cent of golden triangle research – was uncited raised questions about value for money:

> It seems that a significant amount of the research done even in golden triangle institutions might be considered not very good at all, and that the money provided for such research could be better – or at least as well – spent elsewhere. At the very least this suggests that care should be exercised in pursuing a general policy of increased concentration as distinct from selectivity based on merit.
>
> (Adams and Gurney, 2010, paragraph 41)

This was written in the aftermath of the Government's decision, in December 2009, described in Chapter 4, to change the weightings initially adopted after the 2008 RAE so as to provide for greater relative reward for high scores. It makes the present Government's decision to increase selectivity still further even more questionable.

As well as being uneven across institutions (and groups of institutions), quality is also patchy across disciplines, being stronger in clinical sciences, health and environmental sciences than in the physical sciences and engineering (King, 2004; DBIS, 2012c). Finally, there is the issue of the quality, and especially the validity, of the RAE judgements themselves on which the whole edifice rests, which many have questioned (e.g., Sharp, 2004; Johnston, 2008; McNay, 2009, 2011b).[12]

As good a judgement as any on selectivity and quality is that of Thomas (2007, p. 42):

> The conclusion must be that the main increase in the quality of UK research has been in a small amount of top quality output. It is perfectly rational to explain this as a result of increased selectivity. The more infrastructure, resources and staff are concentrated in fewer locations, the more likely that, in general, the output will be high quality, especially in science. There is no evidence that the process that is used to concentrate these resources increases quality; the explanation is the concentration itself.

As Vice-Chancellor of Bristol, previously Dean of the Medical School at Southampton, and subsequently President of UUK, Thomas is in as good a position as anyone to make such a statement.

What makes all this even more piquant is the fact that the immediate financial consequences of each RAE for individual universities and colleges are relatively minimal: a HEPI analysis of institutional gains and losses between 2001–2 and 2005–6 found that only one institution saw its revenues affected by more than 3.7 per cent after the 2001 RAE: the median impact was less than 0.6 per cent (Sastry and Bekhradnia, 2006). Yet institutions have put enormous effort and money into preparing for, participating in, and adjusting to the consequences of each exercise, including the costs of hiring expensive research 'stars' who will add only marginal financial benefit unless they can generate massive indirect cost recovery on research grants. Thomas indeed (2007, p. 44) considered this 'damaging investment behaviour' to be one of the main reasons for the sector's poor financial performance over the years. In fact, the RAE has long had more symbolic than financial importance. As a signifier of status for institutions, departments and individuals, it has become a 'fact totem' (de Santos, 2010) just like, though considerably earlier than, the National Student Survey and the AAB+ threshold. The policy question that arises, therefore, is whether the advantages of some degree of research selectivity might not have been achieved with fewer costs, detriments and distortions, especially to academic activities other than RAE-able research. This is an issue we shall revert to when we consider the lessons from the period in Chapter 9.[13]

The control of the academic agenda

> The high protecting power of all knowledge and science, of fact and principle, of inquiry and discovery, of experiment and speculation.
>
> (Newman, 1959, quoted in Naylor, 2007, p. 1)

> It shifts the determination of what is taught in universities away from professorial power towards student demand power, and what is researched from autonomous disciplinary interests towards the service of industry, government, and the practising professions … There is a decline of donnish dominion.
>
> (Halsey, 1995, p. 12)

As noted in Chapter 2, in many developed countries universities enjoy both legal and operational autonomy in return for providing a wide range of valued public and private goods. In America, the main threats to the universities' control of the academic agenda – the ability of the academic community to determine what is taught and researched – have come from commercial sponsorship of university research, epitomised by the University of California, Berkeley's arrangement with Novartis, whereby the latter obtained first call on the outcomes of the university's

biotechnology research (Kezar, 2004; Krimsky, 2005; Washburn, 2005; Greenberg, 2007; and many others). In Britain, in contrast, the main threat to academic control of research has come from a series of state initiatives since the early 1990s to promote what successive governments of all parties have deemed to be in the national economic interest.

Moriarty (2011) gives a useful list of these. Referring to American experience since the 1980 Bayh-Dole legislation, he argues that, by focussing on research impact, near-market deliverables and the privatisation of research results, these policies are not only at odds with the principles of openness, objectivity and independence that traditionally underpin academic research and scholarship, but are also likely to be *economically* damaging by reducing, rather than enhancing, the return on state investment in research (see also Royal Society, 2003; Willmott, 2003; Peters and Olssen, 2005; Boulton and Lucas, 2008; Moriarty, 2008; Henkel and Kogan, 2010; Macdonald, 2011; Smith, 2012). This is highly relevant to our discussion of value in Chapter 9.

The 2009 report by Scientists for Global Responsibility, based on a close study of commercial involvement in university research in five major industrial sectors (pharmaceuticals, tobacco, military/defence, oil and gas, and biotechnology) points to very similar detriments to those identified in the American literature. These include: the introduction of (not always conscious) bias ('sponsorship bias'); an increasing orientation to sponsors' commercial needs, rather than to broader public interest or curiosity-driven goals; as a consequence, the marginalisation of work with potential social or environmental benefits; lack of openness, due to the use of commercial confidentiality agreements and other IPR considerations; conflicts of interest; and a greater focus on IPR, including patents, in academic work, so that knowledge is increasingly being commodified for short-term economic benefit. There has also been suppression of findings. There are also wider risks to academic standards, collegiality and the integrity of the academy. Perhaps of greatest importance is the threat which academics' engagement in commercially funded or sponsored research is likely to pose to the universities' standing with the public (see also Parkinson, 2011).

America also furnishes cases of the dangers that can arise from private donations (e.g., Hundley, 2011). Here, however, one does not need to go so far to find examples. The scandal of Saif Al-Islam's £1.5 million donation to the London School of Economics, which led to its distinguished Director's resignation, as well as considerable damage to the institution, is all too recent. This can also be seen as a failure of governance (Vasagar, 2012); in fact, it is a good illustration of the author's thesis (Brown, 2011f and g) that present university governance arrangements will not be strong enough to cope with increased market competition and greater commercial involvement in higher education.[14]

Conclusion: the impact of market-based policies on UK higher education

It appears that, in broad terms, what has been happening in the UK as a result of the market-based policies described in this book is consistent with the picture painted by the general academic literature on the subject:

- Market-based policies have almost certainly made UK higher education much more efficient, entrepreneurial and responsive to external stakeholders.
- There has been a small reduction in horizontal institutional diversity but a significant increase in vertical institutional differentiation, which the Coalition Government's reforms will further increase. Research selectivity has played a crucial part in this.
- While it is not certain that increased competition has narrowed socio-economic and other forms of participation hitherto, it likely will from 2012, again as a direct result of the Government's reforms.
- Increased competition coupled with significantly reduced expenditure per student over the period has led to a reduction in the quality of education experienced by most students, although we lack the evidence to demonstrate this.
- Whether or not it has raised research quality, selectivity has undoubtedly damaged other academic activities, not only teaching and quality assurance but also non-RAE forms of scholarly inquiry and knowledge exchange. These costs and detriments almost certainly outweigh the benefits to research quality.
- Whilst Government policies on economic impact represent the main threat to academic control of the 'academic agenda', the same detriments that have been attributed to commercial sponsorship of academic research in the US have also begun to appear here.

In effect, market-based policies have partly compensated for – and even been a (deliberate?) distraction from – a failure to consistently invest an appropriate proportion of national wealth in higher education. This has been at considerable cost in terms of quality, cohesion and, probably, equity. In Chapter 9 we shall consider whether and how it might be possible to obtain some gains from the adoption of market-based policies, whilst avoiding or minimising the detriments.

Chapter 1

The academy in peril

'Every thinker puts some portion of an apparently stable world in peril.'
John Dewey, *Experience and Nature*, 1929

Introduction

Anyone who has worked or studied for any length of time in higher education over the past two decades cannot fail to have noticed a number of dramatic changes across every aspect of the university. Although these changes have been many and diverse, they are generally regarded either as the *impetus for* or as the *result of* a growing corporatism and managerialism, to the extent that universities are now being organised and run as major business players in the increasingly lucrative 'knowledge economy'.[1] In what Frank Furedi describes as 'the age-old tension between economic calculation and a commitment to impersonal and non-instrumental values such as the advancement of knowledge and science',[2] it would appear that economic calculation has emerged on top. Supporters of these developments regard them as necessary responses to changes in how the university is funded (particularly the need to attract more 'paying customers'); to the emergence of new academic disciplines (and the demise of long-established ones) in response to the demands from these paying customers for vocational courses; and to the growing need for management, administration and accountancy in an ever larger and more complex organisation. Academics and students alike are being told that the university can no longer afford them the time for unproductive speculative thinking, that they must engage with the 'real world' of finance and industry, and, increasingly, that academics must justify their existence in terms of research grants from external funding organisations.

Responses from within the academy to these changes and challenges tend to follow one of two broad themes. On the one hand are those who rail against recent moves to corporatise the university by advocating a return to 'the good old days' and a rebuilding of the ivory towers. On the other hand

are those who seek to adapt and profit from the new regime, who reason that they are powerless to bring about a return to the way things used to be, or else who argue that it is only right that universities (and individuals within them) should compete for customers and funding with other private and public-sector organizations in a global market economy.

In his book *The University in Ruins*, the academic, literary theorist and writer Bill Readings sets out an alternative vision for the university that argues neither for the necessity and inevitability of the current project of (as he sees it) the ruination of the university, nor for the romantic and largely untenable project of rebuilding from the ruins. Rather, he asserts:

> I want to perform a structural diagnosis of contemporary shifts in the University's function as an institution in order to argue that the wider social role of the University as an institution is now up for grabs.[3]

Readings' project, and mine, is a 'structural diagnosis' of the modern university and its engagement with the cultural life of western society over the past 200 years.[4] Readings sets out to demonstrate how the rationale and purpose of the university has shifted during this time from 'reason' to 'culture' and eventually to what he calls 'excellence',[5] and how this shift has resulted in the current 'crisis of legitimation' with regard to the role and function of universities and those who teach and study in them. However, the aim of this diagnosis is not merely to chart the history of the ruined university, nor to bemoan our current plight as small cogs in a large business organization, but rather, as Readings points out, to argue that the university as an institution is now 'up for grabs', and to explore and expound a strategy for grabbing it.

The rise and fall of the modern university

Readings begins his structural diagnosis with the origins of the modern university in Berlin at the start of the nineteenth century. The foundations of the modern university were first expounded by the philosopher Friedrich Schleiermacher and later enacted by the Prussian minister of education Karl Wilhelm von Humboldt, and were based on a belief in the intrinsic value of intellectual inquiry and the Enlightenment aspiration to 'lay open the whole body of learning and expound both the principles and foundations of all knowledge'.[6]

The modern university thus emerged as an important component of the Enlightenment project of universal knowledge and progress through science and reason, which Readings calls 'the historical project of culture'.[7] Readings defines culture as, on the one hand, the unity of all knowledges that are the object of study, and, on the other hand, the process of development or cultivation of character.[8] Culture can therefore be seen as 'the symbolic and

political counterpart to the project of integration pursued by the nation-state',[9] that is as the social glue of national identity. As a major player in the project of national culture, the early development of the modern university was closely linked to the emergence of the various western European nation-states and took on different characteristics in Germany, France, Scotland and England (and, later, the USA and Canada). However, Readings claims that the modern university was not merely a *product* of the Enlightenment, but that it also played a central role in *maintaining* the Enlightenment project by producing and disseminating the cultural norms, values and aspirations of the nation-state. Drawing on the work of the French philosopher Jean-François Lyotard, Readings argues that the modern university in western Europe both sustained and was sustained by national culture. In particular, he suggests that the Enlightenment grand narratives of truth and emancipation[10] not only defined the subject matter of the university but also acted as its 'narratives of legitimation',[11] its organizing principles and terms of reference.

The Enlightenment grand narratives of truth and emancipation were set in opposition at the birth of the modern university at the turn of the nineteenth century and have been in a state of conflict ever since. As we have seen, the modern university was founded on the principles of German idealism, that is on the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, with truth as the ultimate goal of academic inquiry. However, although this idealist philosophy emerged as the blueprint for the modern university, there also existed at the time a contrasting vision of the Napoleonic university, which arose following the French Revolution. Rather than a community of self-governing scholars pursuing knowledge for its own sake, this alternative model brought the university firmly under state control and was driven by the revolutionary ideal that knowledge should be controlled by the state and put to work for the good of society. However, the project ultimately failed, and Lyotard notes that this 'humanist principle that humanity rises up in dignity and freedom through knowledge [was] left by the wayside'.[12] Thus, for more than a century, the university was guided and legitimated by the idealist narrative of truth rather than the utilitarian narrative of emancipation.

This Enlightenment grand narrative of truth resonated with the nineteenth-century Romantic vision in which 'Beauty is truth, truth beauty',[13] and tended to favour the project of the arts rather than the sciences at a time when the term 'science' was only just entering general circulation in the university, and where science was usually subsumed under the liberal arts. Since the time of the Ancient Greeks, the project of the arts has been to distinguish between appearance and essence and to pursue the latter. In Aristotle's words, 'the aim of art is to represent not the outward appearance of things, but their inward significance'.[14] More than 2,000 years later, we find the same sentiments echoed in the words of the architect Frank Lloyd Wright, for whom 'the truth is more important than the facts'. Art is (or

should be) concerned not with how things seem (the facts), but with how they really are (the truth).[15] Indeed, the fact of the matter, the outward appearance, is of little interest to the artist, who wishes to capture the essence, the soul, of what she sees before her. This concern with *essence*, arguably, applies across the entire spectrum of artistic endeavour from painting and poetry to photography and drama; in each case the aim is to penetrate or transcend the mundane world of outward appearance to represent things *as they really are*.

However, in recent years Lyotard has noted that the second Enlightenment grand narrative of emancipation has been 'gaining new vigour',[16] and is associated with the rise of the concept of the self-managing autonomous subject. This utilitarian view, which regards knowledge as the means to the ends of freedom, justice and the reduction of suffering, is nowadays most often found in university departments of natural, biological, social and political sciences. The rationale for this scientific narrative in which 'knowledge is no longer the subject, but in the service of the subject',[17] is technological control, which in turn results in freedom and emancipation from the blind and often hostile forces of nature. This grand narrative usually takes a realist or neorealist view in which truth is defined in terms of a correspondence to the external, empirical, 'real' world of facts, and regards the purpose of science as *Erklären* (explanation) rather than *Verstehen* (understanding). As Auguste Comte, the nineteenth-century advocate of 'a positive science of society', observes:

> Finally, in the positive state, the human mind, *recognizing the impossibility of obtaining absolute truth*, gives up the search after the origin and hidden causes of the universe and a knowledge of the final causes of phenomena. It endeavours now only to discover, by a well-combined use of reasoning and observation, the actual laws of phenomena . . . The explanation of facts, thus reduced to its real terms, consists henceforth only in the connection established between different particular phenomena and some general facts, the number of which the progress of science tends more and more to diminish.[18]

Thus, whereas in the arts absolute truth or essence is more important than 'mere facts', scientists, including social scientists, have traditionally argued against the notion of absolute truth in favour of a form of surface or factual truth; that in a sense, the observable facts *are* the truth, or at least, as close as we can come to it.[19]

As we have seen, these grand narratives have always existed in a state of tension and conflict, perhaps best exemplified by the public and acrimonious 'two cultures' debate in the 1950s and 1960s between C.P. Snow (on the side of science) and F.R. Leavis (on the side of literature and the arts). Snow's point is that since the Renaissance, the arts and the sciences have

become more and more separated until we have reached a point where the two cultures do not, and indeed cannot, talk to each other.[20] Snow lays much of the blame at the feet of what he referred to as the 'literary intellectuals', claiming that whereas many scientists took an interest in the arts (Snow himself was a published novelist), most academic members of arts faculties were 'natural Luddites' who displayed a staggering lack of knowledge about even what Snow regarded as the 'first principles' of science such as the laws of thermodynamics.[21]

The project of the modern university can be seen as an attempt to reunite these disparate 'two cultures', to demonstrate how aesthetics and empirics, the inner and the outer, the truth and the facts, complement one another and form a whole that is at once *unifying* and *universal*. This very difficult, perhaps impossible, task of maintaining and uniting these two grand narratives of science and the arts has, traditionally, fallen to the discipline of philosophy, which Schleiermacher regarded as the space where knowledge may reflect on itself and which Kant saw as the seat of reason within the university. However, Readings suggests that Snow's 'culture wars' were triggered by 'the invention of the category of literature' and the subsequent 'move from philosophy to literary studies as the major discipline entrusted by the nation-state with the task of reflecting on cultural identity'.[22] The problem, as Readings sees it, was that whereas the discipline of philosophy understood and mediated between the arts and the sciences, 'the literary is opposed to the scientific in a way philosophy is not'.[23] This discussion about the location of the 'cultural heart' of the university will be resumed and expanded later in the book. As we shall see, a major part of Lyotard's project is to restore philosophy (albeit in a rather different guise) to its traditional and rightful place at the centre of the university.[24]

We have seen that, for Readings, the production and dissemination of culture has been 'the legitimating idea of the modern University', its *raison d'être*. However, he continues, 'the nation-state and the modern notion of culture arose together, and they are, I argue, ceasing to be essential to an increasingly transnational global economy'.[25] Not only is culture at war with itself, but the importance of culture as a unifying activity in our national life is also in decline, and with it the defining role of the university as an institution dedicated to safeguarding and propagating national culture.[26] Lyotard links this questioning of the purpose of the university to a wider postmodern incredulity towards grand narratives in general, and to the Enlightenment grand narratives of truth and emancipation in particular. For Lyotard, the ultimate failure of modernism was exemplified by the events at Auschwitz, which pushed the Enlightenment cultural ideals of reason and rationality to their logical and perhaps inevitable conclusion: the scientific and rational administration of genocide. As Readings notes: 'the summit of reason, order, administration, is also the summit of terror'.[27] We might argue that 'after Auschwitz',[28] western society felt that it could no longer trust itself, and has

instead handed over responsibility for its management and development to the impersonal forces of economics and the market. Thus the twin cultural pillars of the Enlightenment university are crumbling and the grand narratives of truth and emancipation have been replaced by the monolith of liberal capitalism; culture has been superseded by economics as the driving force of the university.[29]

The University of Excellence

The diminishing role and status of Enlightenment culture during the second half of the twentieth century has brought about a crisis of legitimation for the modern university, which has been forced to respond to the challenges of the postmodern age.[30] However, whereas a postmodern stance would suggest, in Lyotard's words, an incredulity towards *all* grand narratives, the university has merely replaced the Enlightenment grand narratives of truth and emancipation with an unquestioning acceptance of the liberal capitalist grand narrative of the market.[31] For this reason, Readings is reluctant to refer to the 'postmodern university', since there has been little or no attempt to embrace the postmodern values of scepticism and anti-foundationalism. He also argues that, in any case, the label 'postmodern' is commonly misunderstood to refer simply to that which follows on from modernism. As he points out, there is a danger that we might end up speaking about the postmodern university as if it were 'a newer, more critical institution, which is to say, *an even more modern* University than the modern University'.[32] He continues:

> I would prefer to call the contemporary University 'posthistorical' rather than 'postmodern' in order to insist upon the sense that the institution has outlived itself, is now a survivor of the era in which it defined itself in terms of the project of the *historical* development, affirmation, and inculcation of national culture.[33]

Readings suggests that the production and dissemination of culture has been replaced in the post-historical university by the pursuit of excellence as its 'legitimating idea', with the Enlightenment grand narratives of truth and emancipation being superseded by the liberal capitalist grand narratives of efficiency and profitability. Furthermore, whereas the production and dissemination of culture was achieved in the Enlightenment university through research and teaching, excellence is ensured through administration. For Readings, the promotion of the business values of excellence, administration, efficiency and profitability spell the ruin of the university as an academic institution.

Excellence

On the face of it, the pursuit of excellence might appear to be a noble aim and a sound principle of legitimation, and the idea of the 'University of Excellence' might appear to be almost tautological. However, Readings makes the point that, unlike culture, 'excellence' is in itself an empty signifier bereft of any ideological intent, a unit of measurement rather than something to be measured. The concept of excellence can therefore be applied to justify almost any aim. For example, an excellent course might be defined by an academic as one that has very high standards that many students fail to reach, or, conversely, it might be defined by an administrator as a course with a very low attrition rate that retains most of its students.

In order for excellence to function, it needs to be operationalized in terms of a quality or quantity. The University of Excellence has generally opted for the latter approach, and defines excellence in numerical terms. Thus, excellence in teaching is often measured by the number of first-class degrees awarded to students or by their attrition rate, and excellence in research is determined by the amount of grant income obtained or the output of published papers. This view of excellence as a *quantity* rather than a *quality* brings it into the realm of efficiency, profitability and administration.

However, as soon as quantity becomes more important than quality; as soon as universities are judged according to the number of students who obtain good degrees (where 'good' is defined numerically as a 'first' or an 'upper second') rather than the quality of the educational experience; according to the numbers of papers published in journals with high 'impact factors' (that is with large numbers of citations) rather than according to the quality of those papers; as soon as outcome becomes more important than process; then the principles of the Enlightenment are undermined and the entire edifice of the university begins to teeter. The aspiration towards excellence, seen in the mission statements of so many universities,[34] can only be demonstrated through a crude quantification of targets that is the very antithesis of the quality to which these universities previously aspired.

Administration

Perhaps even more worrying, Readings suggests that, in the 'bureaucratic corporation' that the university has become, administration has taken over from research and teaching as the means by which excellence is to be delivered. This is only to be expected, since whereas the concern with culture focuses on the *content* of what is to be researched and taught, the excellence agenda is more concerned with defining, operationalizing, measuring and comparing the *standards* of researching and teaching. Thus 'excellence names a non-referential principle that allows the maximum of uninterrupted internal administration'.[35]

Readings' thesis that the administration of excellence has replaced the dissemination of culture as the prime concern of the university is best demonstrated by examining what counts as quality in teaching. Readings tells of how, in 1993, a Canadian weekly news magazine attempted to rank all universities in Canada using its 'measure of excellence', which quantified teaching in terms of student–teacher ratio, the numbers of lecturers with PhDs, and so on. When Teaching Quality Assessment (TQA) was first introduced in the UK in the 1990s, it relied upon a very similar crude form of quantification of excellence, where points were awarded for such numerical targets as time taken for the student to progress through the system, student retention rates, course completion rates and graduate employment data. The implication was that the excellent lecturer was one who efficiently administered the student through the system in such a way that facilitated the 'quality' targets of the university. It could be argued then that Teaching Quality Assessment was concerned little with either teaching or quality, but rather with administration and quantity.

In recent years, TQA has been replaced in England by institutional self-evaluation under the auspices of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), which is responsible for ensuring that mechanisms and procedures are in place for each university to monitor and assess its own quality. As the change in title suggests, the remit of the agency has shifted from the direct *assessment* of teaching quality to the indirect *assurance* of general quality and standards through the monitoring of the systems and structures in place in each institution. The QAA describes its quality assurance role as follows:

> Institutional review addresses the ultimate responsibility for the management of quality and standards that rests with the institution as a whole. It is concerned particularly with the way an institution exercises its powers as a body able to grant degrees and/or other awards. It results in reports on the degree of confidence that may reasonably be placed in an institution's effectiveness in managing the academic standards of its awards and the quality of its programmes.[36]

Educational excellence is therefore achieved and demonstrated through the effective *management* or *administration* of quality and standards rather than by directly attempting to assess quality itself. Institutional review is concerned, for example, with an examination of *procedures* put in place by the organisation for the review of academic programmes rather than with the actual programmes, and with *management* of student assessment *processes* rather than directly with student assessment. There has clearly been a shift in focus and responsibility for the delivery and assessment of excellence in teaching from the academic to the administrator. The delivery of excellence has been replaced by the administration of excellence, where excellence is itself defined in terms of quantity rather than quality.

Efficiency and profitability

The advent of the liberal-capitalist University of Excellence has also witnessed the introduction of market values into the education system, not least in that undergraduate education in England and Wales is no longer free at the point of delivery. This has, without doubt, had an effect on attitudes of undergraduate students, who are far more aware that they are, in a sense, customers with consumer rights and expectations about what they are purchasing. When they pay to enrol on a course, it is possible that many students do not wish to purchase the educational experience and some do not even wish to exchange their cash for the knowledge identified in the learning outcomes; they are mainly interested in the academic credits awarded on successful completion. This assertion will be further examined later in the chapter in relation to the knowledge economy.

The research agenda of the university has also become inextricably linked to finance and profit. Whereas external grants have always been important as a source of funding for research projects, the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), introduced into the UK in the early 1990s,[37] elevated grant income to one of the major indicators of quality. Along with the impact factor of the journals in which research papers are published, the quality of the research conducted by an academic department is measured by the amount of grant income awarded. This has led to a situation where academics feel compelled to take on projects *not* because they have a particular interest or expertise in the subject or methodology, not even necessarily because their university might make some money out of the project, but primarily because, in the post-historical bureaucratic corporation that the university has become, grant income is a major criterion used to assess research quality, and excellence is therefore, to some extent, measured by profit margins, much as it would be in any corporate business.[38]

The pressure to compete for multi-million pound research grants has necessitated the formation of large multidisciplinary research teams that resemble Fordist production lines, where each member has a small, specialised job and rarely gets to see the big picture. Academic research has become a technology, an information machine driven by the ethos of efficiency and administration rather than intellectual craftsmanship, the desire for knowledge and the building and testing of theory.[39] The university is therefore moving away from the values of the academy towards the rules and rigours of manufacturing industry and the production line. Emphasis is increasingly on throughput rather than process, on research funding *in* and research papers *out*, and on quantitative measures of quality and 'excellence'.

The knowledge economy

It could be argued that the corporate University of Excellence is simply a logical response to what Drucker[40] has referred to as the knowledge

economy. In its original form, Drucker's thesis refers to a post-industrial shift away from manufacturing towards the service industries. This shift can be seen quite readily in the University of Excellence, where many of the 'pure' disciplines and subject areas have been replaced by various 'applied' courses ending in the word 'studies,'[41] which take a 'pick-and-mix' approach to traditional arts and science subjects and which have their sights set firmly on the graduate employment market. However, the knowledge economy also refers to the growing importance of knowledge as a commodity, and this shift clearly has implications for universities, pulling them away from the 'culture business' of the Enlightenment project, and even away from the 'education business', and locating them firmly in the 'business business'. As Robin Usher points out: 'If knowledge is the currency of the new economy, universities are inevitably involved in its production.'[42]

Inevitably, the adoption of market values at the very core of the university has been at the cost of traditional academic activities with less tangible outcomes that cannot be exchanged or bartered in the knowledge economy. In a climate where Drucker's equation of knowledge with finance has been taken to its (il)logical conclusion, wisdom has (to paraphrase T.S. Eliot) been replaced in importance by knowledge, and knowledge has subsequently been replaced by information as the most flexible and liquid currency of the academy. The effects of this shift in values can be seen both in the teaching and the research missions of the University of Excellence.

Teaching and the knowledge economy

Teaching has traditionally been considered the core function of the university, at least in the UK. The mediaeval university was established to provide training for the Church and the professions, and the focus on teaching was retained in the early Modern Universities of the nineteenth century. This is certainly the sentiment expressed by John Henry Newman in his book *The Idea of a University*, published in the 1850s, where he claims, in the opening sentence of the Preface, that a university is:

> a place of *teaching* universal *knowledge*. This implies that its object is, on the one hand, intellectual, not moral; and, on the other, that it is the diffusion and extension of knowledge rather than the advancement.[43]

Gordon Graham has argued that, with a handful of exceptions, this focus on diffusion rather than extension of knowledge has continued to the present day, and that 'British universities exist, in large measure, to educate those who register in them as students, and depend heavily upon the support of the public purse as the provider of university education.'[44] However, this view would be regarded by many contemporary writers as somewhat eccentric, and it is widely accepted that the postwar years, from 1945 to the mid-1970s,

saw 'an important shift away from teaching and towards research', to the extent that 'knowledge itself was seen as the primary product of higher education, not students'.[45] We have already seen that the market for knowledge is being replaced by a need and desire for unprocessed information, and even, in an age where information becomes out-of-date at a rapid rate, for the ability to *generate* information; that is, for empirical data-collection skills.[46] This shift in market demand from knowledge to information, to information generation has been accompanied by a shift in the educational remit of the academic from teaching to learning, to learning to learn.

In fact, there is nothing new about the modern educational focus on 'learning-to-learn'. As Readings points out, the German philosopher Johann Gottlieb Fichte claimed in 1807 that the purpose of university education is not to transmit information but to encourage critical judgement: 'What is thus taught is not facts but critique – the formal art of the use of mental powers, the process of judgement.'[47] However, it could be argued that the University of Excellence has 'bought in' to the learning-to-learn agenda for political and economic, rather than pedagogic, reasons. On the one hand, it gives the impression of an institution at the cutting edge of educational technology, where students are 'self-directed' and classrooms are 'virtual', and where learning is controlled and organized by individual students to suit their own needs. On the other hand, student-directed learning has the added benefit of allowing academics additional time to pursue the more profitable and more highly regarded activity of research.

This somewhat corrupted version of self-directed learning calls to mind George Ritzer's thesis of 'McDonaldization'.[48] For Ritzer, the masterstroke of the McDonald's restaurant chain was its success in persuading customers to act as their own waiters and even to clear up their own mess. From the perspective of McDonaldization, the self-teaching student is merely an extension of the self-serving customer. Another key component of McDonaldization that we might wish to consider in relation to the teaching mission of the University of Excellence is the redefining of excellence in terms of a *consistent* and *reliable* product, even if that product is, in fact, mediocre in quality. Thus, for McDonald's, an excellent burger is one that tastes exactly like one bought at any other McDonald's restaurant anywhere else in the world, rather than a burger that tastes better than those offered by their competitors. Similarly, internal consistency is becoming the major criterion for judging the quality of university teaching. It is, of course, tempting to apply Ritzer's thesis to other aspects of the University of Excellence such as 'self-auditing', where the university does the job of the external auditors and where it is possible to meet mediocre and educationally insignificant 'standards' in an excellent way.

We might expect, therefore, that the students' perspective of what is on offer in the University of Excellence is somewhat at odds with the mission statement of the promotion of excellence. As we have seen, the focus on

self-directed learning, coupled with the introduction into English and Welsh universities of the up-front payment of fees, has called into question just what it is that students are paying for. In a situation where most university courses have been modularized and each module allocated CATS points,[49] it is tempting for students to regard universities as little more than *bureaux des changes*, or what Zygmunt Bauman refers to as 'credentials and certifying agencies',[50] where they are able to exchange their fees for academic credits that can later be converted into hard cash in the form of access to paid employment. As Bauman points out, 'It is the universities, after all, who remain the sole institutions entitled to encrust the individual know-how with public validity, and thus with an exchange value.'[51] Such a situation has benefits for the university as well as for the student, since most university departments have almost unlimited CATS points at their disposal but very little hard cash.

Research and the knowledge economy

Ernest Boyer, in bemoaning the decline of scholarship in north America, points out that research is a recent but rapidly developing activity in the university, and that the term did not in fact enter the vocabulary of higher education until the 1870s in the UK, and 1906 in the USA.[52] Whilst this might well be true, it is somewhat naive to suppose that it is research itself, rather than the word, that has only recently become a component of academic activity. Thus, Newman in the mid-nineteenth century refers to 'scientific and philosophical discovery' in place of research; and prior to Newman, before the term 'science' took on its current empirical experimental meaning,[53] researchers were referred to as 'natural philosophers'. It could be argued, then, that what Boyer is actually objecting to is the rise in importance of a particular *type* of research, of empirical scientific experimentation in place of older notions of scholarly intellectual inquiry.

Another way of looking at this distinction is to differentiate between 'pure' and 'applied' research. Graham makes the case that 'pure science is not the acquisition of *knowledge* for its own sake, but rather the pursuit of *understanding*'.[54] This might well be the case, but we saw previously how the early positivist social science researchers eschewed understanding (*Verstehen*) in favour of a far more pragmatic and applied emphasis on explanation (*Erklären*), that is on the generation of empirical facts and the establishment of scientific laws. Whilst Graham argues convincingly that the product of pure research (enrichment) is no less valuable than the output of applied research (usefulness), he also points out that there is an unfortunate tendency to confuse enrichment with prosperity and therefore to judge pure research by the wrong criterion.

Perhaps partly as a result of this confusion, the shift towards a corporate business ethos in higher education in the years following the Second World

War has played a large part in the demise of pure research and non-empirical scholarly activity and the corresponding growth and importance of applied scientific research as the dominant activity in the University of Excellence. Certainly, the knowledge economy has demanded a shift, in Newman's words, from the 'diffusion' to the 'advancement' of knowledge, and if the corporate university is now expected to be productive, then research-based empirical knowledge and information would seem to be the obvious output.[55]

In a setting where the generation of research findings is driven by economic demands as much as by the desire for the 'advancement of knowledge' and where output is valued more than process, we might expect there to be a growing emphasis on the writing and publication of research papers as a key indicator of production. As early as 1963, the bio-scientist Bernard Forscher wrote a letter to the journal *Science* in the form of a parable or cautionary tale in which he compared researchers to brickmakers and theorists to builders 'who constructed edifices, called explanations or laws, by assembling bricks, called facts'. He concluded:

> The brickmakers became obsessed with the making of bricks. When reminded that the ultimate goal was edifices, not bricks, they replied that, if enough bricks were available, the builders would be able to select what was necessary and still continue to construct edifices. It became difficult to complete a useful edifice because, as soon as the foundations were discernable, they were buried under an avalanche of random bricks. And, saddest of all, sometimes no effort was made even to maintain the distinction between a pile of bricks and a true edifice.[56]

Forscher's point was clear: he felt that the production and publication of research findings was taking precedence over using those findings to develop the nascent discipline of bio-science, and that any possibility of constructive development was 'being buried under an avalanche of random bricks'; indeed, that piles of bricks (research findings) were being mistaken for actual buildings (the construction of knowledge and theory). In the intervening years, the situation has become far worse, and much of the blame (at least in the UK) can be laid at the feet of the series of Research Assessment Exercises (RAEs) conducted since the early 1990s. Arguably, scores obtained in the RAE have come to be seen as the defining criterion of academic quality, resulting in disproportionate value being placed by the academy on brickmakers (empirical researchers) at the expense of architects and builders (theorists and scholars).

Other effects of this turn to research have been a rampant, but very conservative, journal-publishing industry, resulting in an unbalanced and, arguably, unhealthy state of affairs in which not only we have more research findings than we know what to do with, but perhaps even more pernicious

and dangerous, the values and standards of the research laboratory take precedence over those of the academy, to the extent that many believe that the values of the laboratory *are* the values of the academy. For example, the application of 'rigour' is seen as extremely important in experimental scientific research, where the precise and rigid application of method is rightly regarded as an essential guarantor of reliability. However, it is now common to invoke the concept of rigour when making judgements about scholarly work of *all* kinds, so that rigidity, inflexibility and the blind and unswerving application of method are coming to be seen as more important qualities in an academic than flexibility, reflexivity and independent judgement.[57]

The imposition of the values and rules of science on the academy as a whole is sometimes referred to as scientism, which has been defined as 'the belief that science, especially natural science, is much the most valuable part of human learning – much the most valuable part because it is much the most authoritative, or serious, or beneficial'.[58] The German critical theorist Theodor Adorno had previously presented a more extreme version of this argument by claiming that the method of science has become not merely the *most authoritative* route to knowledge and truth, but the *only* route. Thus:

> the appeal to science, the rules by which it functions, the absolute validity of the methods to which it owes its development, together constitute an authority which penalises free, untrammelled, 'untrained' thinking and will not allow the minds of men to dwell on matters that do not bear the stamp of its approval.[59]

This, in turn, prompted Jürgen Habermas to define scientism as 'the conviction that we can no longer understand science as one form of possible knowledge, but rather must identify knowledge with science'.[60]

Habermas's fear that all knowledge has come to be defined in terms of science and the scientific method is borne out in the thesis put forward by the medical doctor Raymond Tallis.[61] Tallis begins with the introduction into medicine in the 1940s of the double-blind randomised controlled trial as 'the only truly robust method for obtaining good evidence', and then attempts to argue that a similar approach to gathering evidence should be employed throughout the arts and humanities. It is, perhaps, instructive to quote him at length:

> The lack of appropriate quantitative methods to acquire the data necessary to underpin descriptive general statements and to ensure the validity of causal explanations . . . lies at the heart of the present crisis in the humanities. In an age in which it is increasingly expected that general statements should be supported by robust evidence if they are to command credence, the humanities are in danger of being simply

> anachronistic, acceptable only to arts graduates who have known no better and are unacquainted with adequate methodological discipline.[62]

But, as Tallis points out, there can be no such 'robust evidence' for many arts and humanities disciplines, and even where the possibility exists, for example in 'cultural history', the cost and trouble of acquiring such data would preclude their collection. Thus, in contrast to 'the cautious clinical scientist', Tallis asks, 'Why [in the humanities] are the quacks – with their instant diagnoses and instant cures – in the ascendant? Why does being a rotten scholar peddling exciting ideas attract tenure rather than scandal?'.[63] Ultimately, then:

> large-scale empirical statements – such as are made by many cultural theorists and historians – have to be underpinned by properly designed large-scale empirical enquiries . . . If one does not have the means to acquire the data to support higher-level generalisations, one should avoid them. In short, if you can't substantiate statements, don't make them.[64]

If Einstein had adhered to this principle, his revolutionary thought experiments on relativity would never have been published. If taken to the extreme, Tallis's injunction would rule out entire disciplinary fields such as theoretical physics and literary studies. Whilst Tallis's equation of non-empirical speculation with 'rotten scholarship' is at best sensationalist and at worst patent nonsense, it nevertheless provides an extremely graphic example of the way that the values, standards and attitudes of laboratory science have come to impose on the academy as a whole.

The demise of scholarship

This colonization of the academy by science and scientists was first noted by Martin Heidegger during the 1930s. He pointed out that science was coming to be defined purely in terms of research, that research was in turn defined as rigorous adherence to methodology, and that methodology was constantly adapting to technological advances in data-collection methods. Ultimately, he predicted, the institution of the university would become defined by and subservient to the demands of science as research, and those who work in universities would be shaped and moulded by the same demands.

> Hence the decisive development of the modern character of science as ongoing activity also forms men of a different stamp. *The scholar disappears.* He is succeeded by the research man who is engaged in research projects. These, rather than the cultivation of erudition, lend to his work

> its atmosphere of incisiveness. The research man no longer needs a library at home. Moreover, he is constantly on the move. He negotiates at meetings and collects information at congresses. He contracts for commissions with publishers. The latter now determine along with him which books must be written.[65]

By the 1980s, the enormous increase in empirical research activity anticipated by Heidegger and described by Bernard Forscher in his brick-making analogy was being translated into very real changes in the roles and aspirations of academics. An extensive survey across the USA of attitudes and practices in all spheres of higher education led Ernest Boyer to echo Heidegger's words with the observation that 'basic research has come to be viewed as the first and most essential form of scholarly activity, with other functions flowing from it'.[66] Boyer contrasted this 'restricted view of scholarship'[67] with the traditional view of 'a variety of creative work carried on in a variety of places, and its integrity was measured by the ability to think, communicate and learn'.[68] In the intervening years since Boyer described 'basic research' as having become the dominant form of scholarly activity, a *Gestalt* switch between foreground and background has occurred to the extent that scholarly activity is usually now regarded as a (rather lowly) form of research. For example, the definition provided for the Research Excellence Framework (REF), which has had a huge influence on academic planning and strategizing in the UK, subsumes scholarship under the broader remit of research, and defines it as 'the creation, development and maintenance of the intellectual infrastructure of subjects and disciplines, in forms such as dictionaries, scholarly editions, catalogues and contributions to major research databases'.[69] This shift confirms the view expressed earlier that the primary activity of university academics, at least in the UK, is no longer scholarship but research. Thus, in response to the REF definition, some UK universities are offering a 'scholarship' career pathway for those academics who are not meeting the research publication requirements of a 'full' lectureship.[70] As Andreson points out, the terms 'research' and 'scholarship' have for some time been used to distinguish between the people who really do the research and the rest who merely need to keep up with it.[71]

As we might expect of a definition that is intended primarily as a way of operationalizing and measuring research 'quality', the REF definition of scholarship relates it to specific types of published outputs, and as such it would appear that the majority of university academics would probably engage in little or no scholarship during their entire career. Furthermore, by narrowing down what counts as scholarly output to contributions to dictionaries, catalogues and databases, scholarship has *by definition* been more or less removed from our scholarly journals. For the purposes of the REF, then, scholarship is a subset of research, and not even a very important or valuable

one. Seen in this way, the job of the scholar is to follow behind researchers, tidying up their loose ends, summarizing their findings into catalogues and databases, and acting as general housekeepers to the 'intellectual infrastructure'. In the space of 50 years, we have gone from a situation where scholarship was so foundational to academic life that it was simply taken for granted, to one where the eminent UK educationalist Ronald Barnett is able to pose, without any hint of irony, the question: 'Can scholarship be taken seriously in the contemporary university, or do the contemporary discourses and ideologies of the university squeeze it out?'.[72]

The university in ruins

Since Readings charted the demise of north-American higher education in the early 1990s, the development of the corporate University of Excellence has spread and intensified. I have attempted in this chapter to argue that both the teaching and research agendas of the post-historical university have, in recent years, become distorted by the need to participate and compete in a global financial market. This has led to a shift from *culture* to *excellence* as the validating principle or (to employ the predominant corporate language) the 'mission statement' of the university; from *truth and emancipation* to *efficiency and profitability* as the 'big stories' or grand narratives that the university tells in order to justify and pursue its mission; and from researcher and teacher *accountability* to *administration and accountancy* as the means of maintenance and evaluation of the effectiveness of the mission.

For Readings, this turn to the corporate values and practices of the business world has, as the title of his book suggests, left the university in ruins. Whilst he spends the majority of his book detailing the nature of the decline of the university, the final two chapters are devoted to how we might 'dwell in the ruins' in a way that involves neither 'militant radicalism' nor 'cynical despair'. Unfortunately, Readings was tragically killed in an air crash in 1994 as he was making the final revisions to his book, leaving his wife and colleague Diane Elam to 'complete the revisions on which Bill was working, taking his notes and our many conversations as my guide'.[73] Readings' prescription for dwelling in the ruins of the university is thus somewhat brief and sketchy, and we can perhaps only guess at where his thinking and writing would have led him.

In the remainder of this book I intend to use some of Readings' ideas and speculations as a starting point, a blueprint, for how those of us who are not content with the demands made upon us by the post-historical University of Excellence might create a space where a community of scholars 'could think the notion of community otherwise . . . where the impossibility of such models can be thought'.[74] This can be seen as an appeal for a space within the ruins for radical self-critique in which 'to make the destruction of existing cultural forms by the encroachment of the open market into an opportunity

for Thought rather than as an occasion for denunciation or mourning'.[75] The aim of this book, then, is not to denounce or to mourn the passing of the modern Enlightenment university, but to suggest ways in which the resources of the University of Excellence, which has come to replace it, can be subverted to provide an opportunity for thought.

Chapter 7

Capabilities for equal participation

Based on the student narratives, I now introduce a list of capabilities for equal participation. As part of the undergraduate project, I worked closely with students and their narratives in selecting which capabilities to include (Wood & Deprez 2015; Crosbie 2013). The list of capabilities includes the following: practical reason; critical literacies; student research; deliberative participation; critical affiliation; and values for the public good. The capability set responds to structural conditions identified as obstacles to equal participation that are grounded both in the accounts of students' struggles and achievements at university. The aim of this chapter is to design capability praxis for higher education environments where students are vulnerable to unequal participation because of the intersection of resource scarcity and structural inequalities. From a decolonial lens, these capabilities could be incorporated into epistemological and institutional transformation in higher education.

From exclusion to capability development?

Before introducing the principles underlying this praxis, I briefly review an individual narrative to frame the application of these principles within the context of student experiences. In the preceding chapters, Techniques' experiences demonstrated how unequal access to resources and misrecognition worked clustered together to constrain his freedom for equal participation (Wolff & de-Shalit 2007; Fraser 2009). He entered university as a first-generation student from a working-class family and did not have the freedom to pursue his aspirations. Even though he demonstrated critical awareness in response to unfair structural arrangements, he did not have sustained opportunities to resist institutional inequalities while struggling to adapt to academic requirements and worrying about money for food, textbooks, transport and accommodation. Besides first-year developmental modules, which were misaligned to his academic or social needs, in his experience the institution did not offer other accessible support structures. If these structures were available, Techniques did not know about them and was not able to convert them into equal participation. He was also not connected to student leadership networks and struggled to gain recognition as

a valued member of the institution. Although he networked with a youth development agency, he did not have the support or resources to develop these connections into valued functionings. Despite changing his degree course, he lost his bursary and was forced to leave the university without completing his degree. How could the university have reallocated resources, opportunities and pedagogical arrangements to enable Techniques to convert his agency, resources into capabilities for equal participation? At what point in his trajectory could appropriate resources or support have been made available to enable participation? What should pedagogical arrangements have looked like to give Techniques the freedom to cultivate the capabilities he needed for equal academic participation? Given the significant resources that were spent to fund his tuition and living costs during these three years, could there have been more enabling alternatives that would have allowed him to leave the institution with both a recognised qualification and the capabilities needed to achieve his aspirations to contribute to the public good?

The praxis developed in this chapter responds to these questions. It proposes a capability-informed pedagogy that could address the constraints to equal participation faced by Techniques and other first-generation and socioeconomically vulnerable university students. The chapter is organised as follows: the first section briefly defines my conceptualisation of praxis; the second section focuses on a minimum threshold of basic resources required for the conversion of resources into capabilities; and the third section outlines the six capabilities for equal participation.

Designing capability praxis

Given the evidence of constraining and enabling arrangements for participation identified by students, how could these principles be translated into practice in university pedagogy? The six capabilities in Table 7.1 were selected in participation with students as we analysed their narratives (Deneulin 2014; Pick & Sirkin 2010; Smith, Sheppard, Johnson, & Johnson 2005). Building on the principle of education as freedom outlined in Chapter 3, this model of praxis operationalises six capabilities for pedagogical arrangements, with reference to the student narratives I used on Freire's definition of praxis as a simultaneous processes of 'reflection and action directed to the structures to be transformed' (Freire 1970: 120). Drawing on this convergence of reflection and action, I conceptualised praxis as capabilities that enable students and lecturers to collaboratively redesign pedagogical arrangements for academic capability development (Hart 2015, personal communication; see also Waghid 2001).

Another aspect of Freirean pedagogy that aligned to this design is the focus on egalitarian practices that think critically about hierarchies between students, lecturers and institutional structures (Freire 1976). Freire and other critical pedagogy scholars maintain that the purpose of less hierarchical arrangements is

Table 7.1 Capabilities emerging from student narratives and literature

	Capability	*Evidence in narratives*	*Evidence in literature*
1	*Practical reason* Making well-reasoned and informed choices; becoming an independent and critical thinker	Valued opportunities to be challenged and to have access to rigorous learning environments; students resisted 'dumbed-down' pedagogy	Walker 2006; Wilson-Strydom 2015
2	*Critical literacies* Incorporating student resources into pedagogical environments; confidence to speak and contribute	Valued opportunities that incorporated existing individual resources and capabilities; discipline-specific opportunities for writing, reading, thinking and speaking	Hart 2012; Pym and Kapp 2013; Leibowitz 2011
3	*Undergraduate student research* Undergraduate student research to promote agency and ownership	Valued the opportunity to be involved in research aligned with aspirations, which increased ownership of the learning process	Appadurai 2006; Neary & Winn 2009; Wood and Deprez 2012
4	*Deliberative democracy* Participatory platforms for engagement with the broader university community	Valued opportunities to be listened to by lecturers and management, and consulted in decisions about pedagogy and curriculum, and democratic processes in the classroom	Meier 2008; Wood & Deprez 2015
5	*Critical affiliation* Affiliation as social networks, recognition, identity and belonging	Valued supportive affiliation with faculty and peers and to be recognised as members of the academic community	Walker 2006; Wilson-Strydom 2015; Fraser 2013
6	*Values for the public good* Commitment to social change through community engagement	Valued opportunities to contribute to community engagement and to form aspirations for the public good	Wilson-Strydom & Walker in press; Boni & Walker 2013

to expand students' freedom for critical education (Burke 2015; hooks 2003; Siry & Zawatski 2011). The outcome of this praxis would be policies that enable equal participation for vulnerable students. Instead of imagining a 'perfectly just university', these capability-informed practices work pragmatically towards the ideal of a just university (Sen 2009).

Resources and pedagogy

A foundational aspect of a capability-informed praxis is a threshold of material and academic resources required for equal participation. The narratives suggested that even when arrangements were enabling, students without financial resources for transport to campus, for instance, were less able to convert resources into capabilities or functionings. In this way, the absence of financial resources acted as corrosive disadvantage that decreased students' freedom for equal participation (Sen 1999: 10; Wolff & de-Shalit 2007). When students had to find work part-time or find alternatives ways to raise income, their fragmented attention was misframed as apathy, boredom and academic disengagement (Bozalek & Boughey 2012; Fraser 2009).

Pedagogy emerged as an important starting point for resource distribution since for some commuter students, classrooms and tutorials were the only places where they had regular contact with staff and other students. Yet the classroom has been side-lined as 'most institutional efforts have been situated at the margins of students' educational life' (Tinto 2012: 5; see also Engle & Tinto 2008). By reinstating the classroom as the central point of engagement, lecturers committed to an egalitarian ethic could use the opportunity to redesign arrangements so that vulnerable students benefit more equally from existing academic resources. For instance, interactions in the capability-informed classroom could become catalysts for debates and information-sharing.

In practice, this requires lecturers, peer allies and support staff who are committed to engaged pedagogy and public deliberation at a pedagogical and institutional level. For instance, if knowledge related to issues of resource scarcity is more effectively integrated into pedagogical practices and curricula, it could be possible to create an informational database and communication platforms that would help the institution identify and support students who are excluded due to resource insecurity. Another practical implication would be a stronger collaboration between academic teaching staff and student support services.

To address resource scarcity, lecturers could also create platforms to identify student needs, while being sensitive to the fact that some students will need more resources to reach the same level of participation. In this way, classrooms could be critical spaces to identify students who require more academic resources, while avoiding a deficit approach to 'less-prepared' students. For instance, while access to a textbook is critical, even if a student is able to afford a textbook, he might require sustained, discipline-specific lecturer and tutor input to convert the contents of the textbook into capabilities for critical academic participation (Nussbaum 2011). When these resource clusters were available, for example in Condorrera's narrative, it created a fertile environment for her to convert knowledge resources into academic capabilities. But when these resource clusters were not available, capability development was compromised and functionings were precarious and unsustainable, as Techniques described in his narrative. For this reason, it is crucial to ensure the alignment between financial and academic

resources required for equal participation, because the stakes are higher for students with fewer resources.

Another short-term intervention to address resource insecurity is to ensure that students know where to find free resources such as good-quality MOOCS, online books, legitimate downloadable articles, accessible academic blogs, reputable and good quality news sources, videos, and other content with a Creative Commons licence. While participants valued these resources, they reported that lecturers mostly focused on rushing through curricula instead of facilitating access to knowledge resources that could benefit students with fewer resources and opportunities. An important caveat is that pedagogical practices and teaching staff can only play a limited albeit important role in redistributing knowledge resources. Once resource scarcity has been identified, the university would need to ensure that available resources are then distributed to meet the needs of vulnerable students. Individual efforts are unsustainable without resource distribution for the most vulnerable students at an institutional level, which depends on a commitment to resource investment from the state (Bozzoli 2015).

Capabilities for equal participation in pedagogy

I now turn to the six capabilities that emerged during the longitudinal research. These capabilities are a pedagogical response to inequalities identified in student experiences that constrained their freedom to participate equally. These capabilities have been identified as alternatives to the constraining arrangements, which include:

1 Practical reason
2 Critical literacies
3 Student research
4 Deliberative participation
5 Critical affiliation
6 Values for the public good.

These broad capability clusters have a number of possible functionings embedded within each cluster. For instance, the capability for critical literacies would include a number of corresponding capabilities associated within discipline-specific communication and research practices required. Specific capabilities cannot be determined without consulting students and knowledge experts within disciplinary fields. Therefore, although the capability development below suggests practical steps that students and staff could take to challenge inequality, this is not a 'problem-solution model' for unequal participation (Boughey 2010). Instead, the capabilities reflect principles of justice to be negotiated in consultation with students to reflect diverse pedagogical and discipline-specific contexts.

These practical proposals reflect the contributions of student narratives while also drawing on the normative language of the capability approach

which moves from judging a situation towards a 'certain type of action to transform that situation' (Deneulin 2014: 47). Although the evidence focuses on both pedagogical and institutional arrangements, the praxis focuses particularly on conditions within teaching and learning. In resistance to a deficit approach to pedagogy, these capabilities challenge hierarchies, encourage critical thought, facilitate democratic deliberation, and align with values for the public good.

Practical reason

The capability for practical reason was identified as an opportunity that all participants valued, but that was thinly spread across pedagogical arrangements. From a capability perspective, practical reason is defined as 'being able to form a conception of the good and to engage in critical reflection about the planning of one's life' (Nussbaum 2002: 41–42). The definition has been expanded in relation to higher education as: 'Being able to make well-reasoned, informed, critical, independent, intellectually acute, socially responsible, and reflective choices. Being able to construct a personal life project in an uncertain world. Having good judgment' (Walker 2006: 128). In relation to the transition from high school to university, practical reason is '[B]eing able to make well-reasoned, informed, critical, independent, and reflective choices about post-school study and career options' (Wilson-Strydom 2015: 115).

When students become clients in massified institutions, an important task is to identify the student less to be rewarded by the system, recognised as a producer of knowledge, to achieve her aspirations or to cultivate the capabilities that enable participation in the world as a critical citizen. From a transformative perspective, practical reason would enable a student to interrogate 'beliefs, statements, and arguments' that create uncritical acceptance of authority and systemic arrangements (Nussbaum 2006: 388). Instead of being silenced, marginalised students would claim platforms for agency and voice in response to structural injustices (Bozalek & Boughey 2012; Pym & Kapp 2013). Practical reason in higher education would allow students the freedom to become producers of knowledge, in resistance to student as consumer:

> [I]f students are to become critical members of, and contributors to, the discourse, rather than instrumental reproducers, they have to be allowed the time and space to engage with the messy process of exploring (through talking, reading and writing) who they are (and who they are becoming) in relation to the authoritative voices in the field.
>
> (Kapp & Bangeni 2005: 114)

Student narratives confirmed that in some cases, pedagogical arrangements perpetuated an uncritical approach when lecturers taught students how to memorise and regurgitate knowledge instead of enabling intellectual autonomy. In particular, participants reported that pedagogical arrangements offer few

opportunities to seek alternatives to rote learning, which some students experienced as negative, demotivating and less likely to encourage deep engagement with learning. Instead, some developmental modules taught generic 'study skills' that encouraged students to summarise and memorise information for assessment. As part of curriculum transformation, lecturers could cultivate classrooms where students have the freedom to convert resources into critical engagement with knowledge. Achieving practical reason depends on a university curriculum that 'enhances the capability of students to develop as independent and critical thinkers' (MacFarlane 2012: 724).

An equal distribution of academic resources means that pedagogy should not be 'dumbed down' because students have not yet developed access to academic discourses. Instead, lecturers could cultivate practical reasons for vulnerable students by mediating complex knowledge instead of assuming that students do not have the potential to learn (Lawrence 2002; Pym & Kapp 2013). Instead of being subjected to low expectations, lecturers could be aware of homogenising messages about student ability and provide a supportive environment to cultivate critical freedoms (Walker 2006; Wood & Deprez 2012). Access to strategic information is important to help students negotiate the university space (CHE 2010). Lecturers could use their authority, social capitals and pedagogical spaces to share strategies about how to navigate intellectual culture and support structures (Walker 2006).

Critical literacies

The capability for critical literacies builds upon practical reason as forms of expression such as the confidence to speak publicly and the freedom to read and research outside the boundaries of prescribed course material. Being critically literate includes the ability to distinguish between corporate marketing and independent sources of information, while being able to make sense of your world without undue coercion by religious or academic influences, social media or other social structures (Nussbaum 2010; Gee & Hayes 2011). In higher education, it means being aware of bias embedded within curricula, such as embedded stereotypes about race or gender that are normalised within disciplinary content. A critically literate student would be able to offer sound reasoning for the choices she has made using a diverse variety of sources, including own experience, academic texts and informal sources of knowledge.

Literacy remains a contentious debate in higher education research. While the new literacies movement enabled a theoretical shift away from conventional text-based practices as the standard measure of literacy, there is still much emphasis on student 'illiteracy' with its emphasis on generic language-based practices (Bock & Gough 2002; Gee & Hayes 2011; Henderson & Hirst 2007; Hurst 2015; Jacobs 2005; McKenna 2010).

While all the participants were second-language English speakers, accessing knowledge was not a general deficit of grammar or vocabulary. Rather students

need access to the complex academic disciplinary discourses, including theoretical concepts and ways of writing, thinking, reading and speaking specific to their degree courses, which did not improve with the additive language course offered by the bridging degree programme (Leibowitz 2011; Eybers 2015; Boughey 2010):

> [B]ecause limited proficiency in the dominant language often co-occurs with inadequate mastery of the written academic register, it is easy to understand why many educationists refer to difficulties with the additional language as the problem, when it is only one among the many challenges facing multilingual students
>
> (Leibowitz 2005: 676)

Since the pedagogy, curriculum and assessment prescribed by a literacy course were described or perceived by students as disconnected from the academic requirements of their mainstream programme, participants felt that they were not able to transfer competencies from the literacy course to their mainstream modules. At the same time, participant responses confirmed that decontextualised language skills did not develop critical capabilities (Boughey 2010). Instead of pedagogy that is designed around 'formalized, monolingual, monocultural, and rule-governed forms' (Gee, Courtney, Cope, & Fairclough 1996: 61) critical literacy should be 'creating access to the evolving language of work, power and community, and fostering the critical engagement necessary for [students] to design their social futures and achieve success through fulfilling employment' (Gee *et al.* 1996: 60). It would be important to 'work with' the literacies that students bring to the classroom, while keeping in mind that the literacies required by workplaces are different from the academic literacies required for academic study, which lecturers who have not worked in the field may not be as familiar with as academic researchers (Leibowitz 2011).

In response to this limitation, I included critical literacies as a capability based on the analysis of student literacies throughout the research project. While there was some evidence of critical engagement with knowledge, this was thinly spread across the narratives. At the same time, there was almost no evidence that pedagogical conditions were encouraging students to develop critical literacies that acknowledged student resources, identities and capitals. If these opportunities existed, participants did not have the freedom to convert these resources into critical academic capabilities. In response to this absence, opportunities to develop critical literacy could be expanded and embedded within disciplinary practices. In practice, the development of critical literacies could incorporate students' multilingual resources in order to enhance access to disciplinary knowledge (Newfield, Andrew, Stein, & Maungedzo 2003; Pavlenko & Blackledge 2004; Paxton 2009; Stein 2000). In this way, critical literacy could design curricula using the knowledges, cultures, languages and identities that diverse students

bring to the university (Cross & Carpentier 2009; Crosbie 2013; Gandin & Apple 2002; Leach & Moon 2008; Meier 2012).

Instead of producing students who comply with uncritical pedagogy, curricula and assessment practices, developing this capability for literacy could also enable students to recognise and respond constructively to constraining arrangements. Across narratives, students described the function of university education to prepare them for the existing labour market. The primary purpose of a degree was to enable formal employment and an income; students described little evidence that education had a critical, transformative function.

In a normative sense, critical literacies could serve the purpose of:

> enhancing the ability of the individual autonomously to realize, understand, recognize, articulate and act towards or follow their own formed (through education), informed and reasoned values through deep discussion, sustained engagement and critical scrutiny of a range of perspectives among fellow students, client groups and knowledge resources.
>
> (Vaughan & Walker 2012: 506)

Another practical function of critical literacy could develop understanding the complex and ever-shifting power relations underlying systems of knowledge (Gee 2005). In this way, instead of generic skills development, critical literacies would make explicit the normative content of disciplinary and popular texts. Critical access to complex multimodal reading, writing, speaking and listening skills would weave critical literacy into the identity work of becoming an independent thinker and 'to negotiate norms, values, attitudes and beliefs different from their home discourses' (Pym & Kapp 2013: 274).

Student research

Students valued the opportunity to approach learning as research (Appadurai 2006; Neary & Winn 2009; Smith-Maddox & Solórzano 2002; Brown 2009; Hunter, Laursen, & Seymour 2007; Siry & Zawatski 2011):

> *In the sessions we had, Talita would give us questions, and then she would say we should go and research with it. Today I am able to do my own research and I can say I am in a better position* [Pedagogy colloquium].

Undergraduate research has been found to improve the quality of learning, particularly in the development of critical academic skills, while also enabling an active approach to learning (Neary & Winn 2009: 198; see also Neary 2010). Undergraduate research was also found to address the dichotomy between scholarship and teaching and challenges the 'traditional archetypes of teacher and student with a collaborative investigative model', while using a mentorship based model of teaching and expanding students' analytical and communicative skills (Healey & Jenkins 2009). Positioning students as collaborators also has the

potential to increase retention rates for students who are at risk of drop out (Taylor & Wilding 2009), while student participation in curriculum development showed that 'meaningful engagement requires a revision of the culture and processes of university curriculum decision making' (Carey 2013). Instead of a passive approach to learning, undergraduate research could help students to engage in the production of knowledge (Hordern 2012; Guertin 2015), while involving student researchers in cognitive, personal and professional development (Hunter *et al.* 2007). Other studies showed that students were more likely to engage with learning when lecturers used collaborative learning techniques (Ewald 2007; Fielding 2001; Seale *et al.* 2015; Schlicht & Klauser 2014).

These findings confirm the value that students attached to collaborative opportunities throughout the duration of our research project. For example, although Techniques was disengaged from academic content in some of his subjects and struggled to pass assessment, he articulated well-reasoned and socially engaged aspirations for education targeting vulnerable youth. Based on the findings above, it is possible that if he had been given more engaging and active forms of learning, together with a basic threshold of resources, he could have developed an approach to learning that may have increased his chance of equal participation. Moreover, Kea reported that being involved in research helped her think critically about her role at the university and as a future graduate:

> *I became empowered in that I realised that the project was about the struggle to success. I used to talk more and listen less. It improved my confidence . . . I gained the skill of becoming a researcher, and I am proud to say that I am now a researcher.*

The transfer of capability development from the research platform outside the classroom also helped create a pedagogical environment where students expanded their freedom to engage with knowledge and cultivate reasoned academic voices. In this way, the research team played a role in cultivating conditions that benefitted their capability development, as Clarice described:

> *And after the first few months, we spoke to each other more, we interacted more. The class just became a place where, that's where you always wanted to be. 'Cos you felt like you're not just being given a lecture, and then you leave, you haven't asked questions or you haven't interacted [INT 3].*

Deliberative participation

The fourth capability that emerged in connection with equal participation was a participatory platform for consultation and decision-making to address 'the need for greater institutional engagement with students in order to address their needs' (Manik 2014: 148). The freedom for deliberation operationalises the importance of education as freedom developed in the conceptual framework.

Despite institutional barriers, limited resources and unjust practices, I argue that a participatory approach could create conditions that expand the freedom for equal participation. I define the three aspects of participatory freedom as 1) a rigorous process of participation that works to 2) increase access to critical knowledge and 3) expands student agency and opportunity freedoms (Sen 1999; Deneulin 2014; Crocker & Robeyns 2010; Drydyk 2008). For example, instead of generic skills interventions designed to remediate literacy deficits, students and lecturers could engage in a consultative process to co-design a pedagogical approach to academic literacy aligned with students' mainstream disciplinary knowledge and their existing literacy resources to increase opportunities for critical learning (Boughey 2010; Leibowitz 2009).

Recognising student agency as ownership and active engagement (Crocker & Robeyns 2010) within pedagogy could reframe education as a *process* of freedom for expanded capability development. I draw this conclusion based on findings in the student narratives that a lack of consultation and decision-making decreased students' commitment to learning. Participants reported arrangements that reflected un-participatory approaches to education that decreased individual agency and isolated students from decision-making processes related to their academic development. It was also evident across student experiences that when pedagogical arrangements were imposed onto students without consultation, the potential benefits and perceived value of resources were diminished. Moreover, participants took a less critical and more passive approach to learning when arrangements were devalued and perceived as coercive.

Instead, participatory classrooms could offer students the freedom to engage in processes of decision-making as well as opportunities to achieve valued outcomes (Sen 1999: 291). In this sense, capability praxis would create pedagogical spaces that model democratic processes. For example, a deliberative process of consultation could determine how to make these structures accessible to individual students and to negotiate a fair distribution for the most vulnerable. Sen writes that 'the freedom to participate in critical evaluation and in the process of value formation is amongst the most crucial freedoms of human existence' (Sen 1999: 287). Student experiences confirmed their need for flexible processes that enable them to re-negotiate modules that are misaligned to their academic needs (Walton, Bowman, & Osman 2015). Instead of being alienated from learning, it would have been helpful if Clarice had had access to a participatory platform that did not compromise her academic performance or push her to leave the institution. Her participation could have been enhanced if she had had more freedom to participate in choosing modules and designing the structure of her course.

Finally, participatory parity could enable students to actively challenge unequal arrangements. Lecturers could enable students to negotiate and design constructive ways to challenge arrangements that are not conducive to learning which reflects an ethical responsibility to create pedagogical environments in collaboration with their students, where students feel free to engage with knowledge,

ask questions and cultivate reasoned academic and individual voices: 'Current student protest is a direct consequence of the manner in which the university governance has underestimated proper consultation with students and other constituencies of our universities' (*Mail & Guardian* 2015).

Importantly, Freire writes that '[d]emocracy and freedom are not a denial of high academic standards. On the contrary, to live an authentically free life means engaging in adventure, taking risks [and] being creative' (Freire & Freire 1992: 34). This freedom should be available to all university students regardless of the constraints that they face.

Critical affiliation

The fifth capability is the opportunity for critical affiliation, which I define as a form of social support with staff and other mentors, while being critical of hierarchies within these support structures. Across the divergent disciplinary communities reviewed in Chapter 2, the opportunity to become integrated as part of a challenging and supportive learning community was a requirement for epistemological access, recognition and the development of a learning disposition (Tinto 2014). Another crucial point is that students' perceptions of whether they are valued members of the university community have an impact on their engagement with learning, and even on decisions to leave the university (Tinto 2014: 9). From a social justice perspective, it is worrying that students like Naledi were unable to convert academic resources into the critical affiliation associated with learning (Leibowitz 2009; Leach & Moon 2008):

> *Before being on the research team my idea of getting a degree was just to get a degree, go work. . . . Before being on the team, it was just going to a class for two hours, dragging my feet [INT 3].*

Naledi's experience of her department was alienating and meant that she moved between home and campus without the opportunity to make friends, access support or participate in enriching opportunities. This degree of isolation was not conducive to equal participation; for this reason, students like Naledi should be given priority when opportunities for capability development are allocated across the student cohort. In practice, this would mean reviewing selection criteria to include students who are not given the same opportunities for capability development, or proving access to alternative platforms for capability development. On the other hand, while Condorrera faced challenges associated with poverty, there was convincing evidence to suggest that she was integrated as a valued member of the university who benefitted from available academic and social resources and opportunities, in contrast to other participants. Evidence of her participation was found in the fertile range of capabilities and functionings that she reported during the project. In follow-up interviews, Condorrera was pursuing a Master's degree.

Further research would need to establish how many students remain on the margins of university life without opportunities to establish critical pedagogical connections with lecturers and peers. According to student narratives, it would be important to determine the extent to which constraints created by resource scarcity, alienation and discriminatory practices converge in the experiences of commuter students in non-selection courses. In student narratives, it was evident that commuter students facing resource scarcity were particularly vulnerable to weak forms of institutional affiliation, which decreased their access to networks and opportunities for academic capability development.

I have framed this capability as a critical version of affiliation because it should not only enable students to cope with the academic and social side effects of exclusion, but also increase constructive and collaborative alternatives to structural challenges. The critical function of affiliation would extend beyond social support to include platforms to critique less enabling student–staff interactions. Although some participants had been socialised into a school culture with exaggerated hierarchies, the narratives showed that they valued opportunities for collaborative alliances with faculty. Instead of alienating authority structure, classrooms can challenge the alienation, fear and silence created by strong academic hierarchies. Creating alliances emerged as an important condition for engaged classrooms. Student narratives revealed misunderstanding between students and faculty based on deficit assumptions around class, race, gender, ethnicity and language. Instead of silencing conflict, lecturers can use their authority to challenge stereotypes and use conflict as opportunities to develop critical consciousness. Lecturers could then create a pedagogical climate to resist institutional power structures while educating students about how different forms of power and potential for collaboration permeates relationships between people.

Keeping in mind the importance of affiliation in capability lists for higher education, the absence of opportunities for meaningful affiliation across the student body is a remediable institutional failure. I have identified critical affiliation as a capability that can be cultivated within pedagogical settings by fostering a sense of affiliation that strengthens students' confidence and agency and enables 'the development of social connectedness, identity and agency [which] strongly assists academic success' (Pym & Kapp 2013: 278; Gachago *et al.* 2014). Recognition could be cultivated by students' contribution to the teaching and learning environment:

> It is part of our task to help [students] to work reflexively, to reflect on current priorities, and develop future goals that are meaningful to them. They have engaged in agentic ways in the past. We provide them with the time and space to reflect on how and why they have engaged in particular subject positions rather than others, and to consider how those roles may or may not change in the future.
>
> (Pym & Kapp 2013: 281)

In practice, critical affiliation could also nuance lecturers' assumptions around poverty, schooling and experiences of female, working-class and African identities by focusing on the life histories of individuals (Janse van Rensburg & Kapp 2015; Marshall & Case 2010). At the same time, instead of encouraging interpersonal competition for resources or recognition, lecturers could encourage cooperation amongst students by steering away from a sole focus on measurable outcomes. This could mean taking an active role in identifying vulnerable students who have less confidence to demand attention and support, as Condorrera pointed out:

> *But I think if [lecturers] see something that can benefit us, it's better if you tell us in time. Because we are still learning and we want to move forward [INT 2].*

Affiliation embedded within pedagogical arrangements could take into account students' need for opportunities for mentorship, regular feedback sessions, the development of self-esteem and voice, and platforms for communication that emerged in the data. Although social and emotional aspects of learning are often neglected in the classroom, a critical praxis would create a platform that distributes these aspects more equally (Christie *et al.* 2008: 579; Pym, Goodman, & Patsika 2011; Nussbaum 2010). The narratives suggested that vulnerable students who have regular opportunities to connect with lecturers and peers expanded their freedom to participate.

As illustrated throughout the research, students converted the opportunity to listen to the lives of others into narrative imagination when the visibility of suffering in the lives of their peers cultivated empathy. The capacity to imagine the lives of other people involves 'developing students' capacity to see the world from the viewpoint of other people, particularly those whom their society tends to portray as lesser, as "mere objects"' (Nussbaum 2010: 45).

Values for the public good

The final capability for equal participation is the cultivation of values for the public good. This capability reflects a normative stance which argues that the purpose of education is not only to empower individuals with knowledge, but also to address local and global injustices (Boni & Walker 2013; Nussbaum 2010; Walker 2006; Wilson-Strydom 2015; Walker & McLean 2013). The capability approach is founded upon *ethical individualism*, which translates into an examined life with concern for others, which could lead to individual actions that enhance collective well-being. For this reason, capability praxis would enable individuals to convert education into capabilities and functionings that expand their freedom to live an ethically engaged life. This means 'conceptualizing education as an active space that may enable an individual to learn and to develop their values and agency goals' (Vaughan & Walker 2012: 496; see also Walker

& McLean 2013; Boni & Walker 2013; Deneulin 2014). The long-term measure of equal participation would be well-being achievement that benefits individuals, protects the natural environment, and decreases inequality, in alignment with the values of equity, sustainability, participation and productivity (Alkire 2005). As such, this is a long-term vision of human development that incorporates education as a site where values for the public good can be cultivated. As I discussed in my introduction, these values would extend the function of education as a private commodity or a driver of national economic growth.

A focus on cultivating socially just values could challenge instrumental discourses associated with higher education:

> According to Aristotle . . . we learn to be virtuous by acting in virtuous ways, we learn to live well by living well. We then need to ask what we are all learning to become and be as we currently 'live' and 'do' in our schools, colleges and universities; through discourse we end up producing the kind of education system desired by government policy makers, while non-market values get squeezed to the margins.
>
> (Walker 2012: 391; see also Walker & McLean 2013).

From a human development perspective, pedagogy should enable a platform to nurture the ideals of sustained interventions to social justice and values that enable students to convert educational resources into 'social and moral consciousness' (Wilson-Strydom & Walker 2015: 18). The role of capability pedagogy would be to incorporate social justice values that prioritise the well-being of people and the environments into curricula. In the 1997 White Paper, the following policy statement connects the role of higher education to the public good alongside the knowledge-driven and human development functions of higher education:

> To contribute to the socialisation of enlightened, responsible and constructively critical citizens. Higher education encourages the development of a reflective capacity and a willingness to review and renew prevailing ideas, policies and practices based on a commitment to the common good.
>
> (MoE 1997: 4)

Institutions have the potential to provide resources and to shape agency and values (Vaughan & Walker 2012: 499). From a Freirean perspective, students who learn mostly by parroting information are unlikely to develop critical consciousness (Freire 1970; see also Gasper 2013). This requires mentorship from peers and faculty who are committed to modelling ethical, value-laden practices and knowledge(s) in pedagogical spaces. Michael Sandel argues that people who have not been given the opportunity for ethical action may have difficulty cultivating ethical ways of being (Sandel 2010).

Yet, while most participants valued opportunities to address social inequality, they were disillusioned by the disconnection between curriculum and social justice aspirations. Although students valued opportunities to contribute to community projects they were confused by the mixed signals sent by the institution. Some participants reported that they were being socialised into the idea of individual success and personal development without alternative views of what success might mean. For example, Kea was frustrated that she was being taught how to 'work for someone else' instead of being taught how to start her own business. Clarice, Aziza and Naledi were overwhelmed by inequality in their families and communities, but did not think they had the freedom to develop capabilities that could help them convert information into social transformation. The pedagogical challenge would be to create pedagogical and institutional practices that provide opportunities for individual capability development despite resource constraints faced by first-generation students.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have outlined a basic resource threshold as the means to capability achievement and six capabilities as foundational requirements for a capability-informed praxis relevant to socioeconomically vulnerable, first-generation university students. These capabilities also bear relevance to students who are not first-generation, and who face different vulnerability. Previous chapters have outlined the necessary conversion factors for freedom to achieve. The capabilities are intended to reflect enabling pedagogical arrangements in which students would be able to convert available academic resources into equal participation. These capabilities would have to be publicly debated and empirically tested using a larger and more representative sample of the first-generation student cohort to establish their relevance and applicability, which is beyond the scope of this book. Yet, based on the findings and corroborated by evidence in literature, I propose that these capabilities could be applied to diverse pedagogical contexts in consultation with student cohorts who face accumulative resource scarcity and misrecognition in higher education.

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