"Senior Staff Members' Perceptions of Organisational Culture and Quality in Higher Education Institutions in England."

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ABSTRACT

This thesis sets out to examine the two major concepts of organisational culture and Quality Management (QM) in English Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) by investigating the attitudes of senior staff.

The development of QM in commercial, industrial, local government and higher education contexts is chronicled and analysed. The proposition, that emerging QM approaches fail to take account of the diversity of cultures which exists in HEIs, is formulated.

In order to examine this proposition, two phases of research were undertaken with senior managers, senior administrators and senior academics. The first phase of the research made use of depth interviews and document analysis in seven particular HEIs. The second phase research involved canvassing the views of senior staff in a larger number of HEIs.

The research supports the general findings from the relevant literature that there is diversity of organisational culture between and within HEIs. In addition, the literature and research highlight a noticeable shift in emphasis towards outcome rather than process measures, to fitness *of* purpose rather than fitness *for* purpose and towards standards rather than quality. Thus, there is a tendency for the emerging QM approaches to be more absolutist and less relativist than was the case with Higher Education Funding Council for England Quality Assessment. The empirical research tends to support rather than refute the proposition.

The complexity of organisational cultures in HEIs, and the consequent disjunction with the emerging QM approaches, is illustrated through the construction of a three dimensional model. This new model adds the dimension of the three stakeholder groups to Dopson and McNay's (1996) model of universities as organisations. In addition, the new model suggests several areas that merit further research.

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the use of Quality Management (QM) systems increased significantly in a wide range of organisations in the United Kingdom. There are financial, legislative, competitive and marketing reasons for this significant increase (Bowie and Owen, 1996). QM is often seen as a method of reducing costs and making the organisation more efficient. In many cases, legislation requires certain organisations to establish a quality system. Also, the development and accreditation of a quality system is perceived as a means to competitive advantage and this perception encourages an organisation to emphasise its quality systems in its marketing plans (Wilkinson et al., 1998).

As a Principal Lecturer in the higher education sector specialising in organisational behaviour and human resource management, I am interested in the recent applications of QM approaches in Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs). One special area of interest is whether QM models, which have been used in the business and commercial sector, are being applied to universities and colleges and institutes of higher education. If so, are those applying these approaches assuming that such models are easily transferable from a private sector to a public sector and from a product to a service context? I am interested in exploring whether such a transfer is problematic and if account is taken of an organisation's culture. This provides the focus of the research question.

This thesis adopts a chronological approach, reflecting the manner in which QM has developed and progressed. Such an approach aids analysis of the various changes that have occurred during the period of five years part-time study by the author. The period 1995-2000 encompassed most of the life of the Higher Education Quality Council (HEQC) and has seen its replacement by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) that has a considerably wider remit. As QM in higher education is such a dynamic and rapidly changing issue, a cut-off point of 31st January 2000 has been selected with no literature, research or developments being considered after this date. The submission date for this thesis was 31st March 2000.

Initially, definitions of quality are evaluated and then the discussion concentrates specifically on QM systems and structures in commerce, industry and local government. Comparisons and links are then sought between generic notions and the conceptions and perceptions of QM in Higher Education. There is an attempt to evaluate QM as a management process and its relevance at a time of political, economic, social and technological change. Its impact on the customer, the organisation and the employee is also examined. In addition, as fitness for purpose is a popular definition of quality, the various perceptions of the purpose of Higher Education and HEIs are explored.

All of the foregoing leads to the formulation of a proposition which is based on the premise that emerging QM approaches, although used with varying degrees of success in a variety of private sector organisations (Bolton, 1995), fail to take account of the diversity of cultures in HEIs. A discussion of empowerment, organisational culture and cultural change is needed before this proposition can be examined effectively. The research methodology is discussed fully and then profiles of seven fieldwork HEIs are constructed in order to explore the proposition. These profiles are developed, in part, through the use of generic and HEI-specific models of organisational culture that facilitate a structured examination of culture which leads to the identification of major similarities and differences between the fieldwork institutions. Further examination of the proposition is provided by an analysis of questionnaire responses from senior managers, senior administrators and senior academics in a broader range of HEIs.

Throughout this thesis, QM is taken to encompass a variety of quality issues; quality assurance, quality assessment, quality audit and quality enhancement (Dale, 1999). In higher education, QM can be studied at two specific levels. At a national level in England, it is now the responsibility of meta-level co-ordination bodies (van Vught and Westerheijen, 1993) such as the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). The QAA is responsible for conducting institutional and subject reviews and assessing and commenting upon, amongst many other issues, the quality of teaching and the suitability of HEIs' Quality Assurance systems. At an institutional level, each HEI has its own QM systems and structures that are determined, to an extent, by its own preferences. However, HEIs do have to work

within constraints imposed by the meta-level co-ordination bodies. Institutional QM systems are designed to address strategic and operational matters such as academic planning, the monitoring and review of academic programmes, the validation and re-validation of award-bearing programmes and quality enhancement.

In order to examine and analyse QM at both these levels, the detailed review of a wide range of literature is complemented by, and informs, fieldwork in different types of HEI. This fieldwork seeks through semi-structured interviews, questionnaires and document analysis to ascertain the views of the Higher Education Quality Council (HEQC), QAA and HEFCE and of senior managers, senior administrators and senior academics in HEIs. Senior staff were selected to comment on issues such as the purpose of Higher Education, definitions of quality, tensions between managerialism and professionalism and the impact of quality audit, assessment and review. This was because of their greater access to information and the likelihood that they had a deeper understanding of these issues. It is also likely that they have greater experience of these matters than their middle and junior-ranking counterparts. In order to render the fieldwork more manageable, the initial research is restricted to a detailed study of only seven HEIs.

As well as conducting interviews with a range of staff in the selected HEIs for the initial research, interviews with "expert witnesses" are also used in order to supplement the information and ideas discovered by a thorough review of recent QM literature. Such witnesses include a consultant on Quality Assurance, a Director of an Academic Standards Unit of an HEI that is not one of the seven sample institutions, and a senior member of QAA.

There are numerous stakeholders in Higher Education. However, this thesis concentrates on the perceptions of senior staff in HEIs to ensure that the focus of the work is sufficiently narrow to allow depth of analysis. It is acknowledged that there are other very important stakeholder groups – central government and students in particular. This thesis does consider and analyse the part played by groups such as these in the development of QM in Higher Education. Nevertheless, it is the responses of senior staff

in HEIs to quality issues that have been shaped partly by such stakeholders that is of special interest.

When contemplating the rôle of the various stakeholder groups in Higher Education QM, it is apparent that issues of quality are so broad and interdependent that the perspectives of students and the impact of central government, for example, could be the subjects of separate theses.

The debate about quality in English higher education has held prominence for approximately the last ten years and has centred on various definitions of this term by stakeholder groups and customers and their views on the purpose of higher education. There are a variety of opinions that exist between the polar extremes of those who consider that higher education should focus on the needs of the economy and society and those who believe that HEIs should concentrate on fostering learning for its own sake (Clayton, 1998).

One of the purposes of this dissertation is to make a contribution to the on-going debate about organisational culture and quality in higher education by considering and analysing the perspectives of senior staff in HEIs.

CHAPTER ONE - QUALITY MANAGEMENT: VARIOUS APPROACHES

When defining quality, it is helpful to consider two distinct issues. Firstly, there is the design of the product or service and the extent to which this meets the needs of the customer. Secondly, there is the level of conformance; the degree to which the product or service that is produced or delivered matches the design (Hill, 1991).

With both the above issues, "fitness for purpose" is a key notion in the quality debate. However, as Oakland (1993) notes, this is an occasion when there is a great deal of ambiguity. Quality is very much dependent on the customer's perception of it. He gives the example of a wrist watch. A wrist watch, which keeps perfect time, will be a quality item for the customer who purchases it for this purpose. Another customer might not be concerned about the wrist watch keeping perfect time if the watch is to be worn primarily as a piece of jewellery. In this case, the purpose is different and an attractive watch that did not keep precise time would be good enough for the person's purpose.

The perception of the customer is crucial in any consideration of quality. When examining the notion of quality as it relates to services, Zeithhaml (1987) argues that it is defined as the customer's judgement about the particular service's overall excellence or superiority. In taking this notion further Gronroos (1988), amongst others, considers that service quality is the difference between the customer's perception of quality and the customer's expectation of the service. This difference can be expressed as the following equation,

Customer's perception - Customer's expectations = Quality

The methodology for the subjective "measurement" of service quality is based on gap analysis which endeavours to gauge this gap between perceptions and expectations (Parasuraman et al., 1991).

Quality Management can be viewed from six different perspectives (Bowie and Owen, 1996). There are legislative issues if there are occasions when particular quality standards are required by law. The competitive dimension means that quality management is

required if an organisation is to survive in the market place. Thirdly, quality management is used as a marketing tool to differentiate a particular product or service from others. Some organisations adopt an aesthetic approach, regarding QM as a means of improvement in order to satisfy the demands of its members. QM is seen here as having an intrinsic value. A fifth approach to QM is one that emphasises reliability. As a product or service becomes more complex, so the need for reliability becomes more important. Finally, there is the financial dimension. QM is a means of cutting costs and assisting the organisation to become more efficient.

QM is a concept that is based on a range of philosophies and approaches developed in the business sector by quality "gurus" from the United States of America and Japan. Juran and Deming are credited with utilising QM techniques to rejuvenate the United States' armaments industry when it was in an economic trough just after the Second World War (Beckford, 1998). This rejuvenation was achieved largely through the use of group problem-solving techniques such as quality circles, statistical process control and an emphasis on continuous improvement. Internal customers within the organisation were seen to be just as important as external customers (Lawler, 1994).

In the early 1950s, the leaders of Japanese manufacturing companies were well aware that their goods were generally shoddy in comparison with those of their international competitors. There was a realisation that great improvements would be required if Japanese companies were to compete in the developing consumer goods market and that these improvements would have to be made within the constraints of the existing limited resources. Japan's over-crowded four main islands had relatively few natural materials and resources (Micklethait and Wooldridge, 1997). When Juran and Deming went to Japan their QM ideas were welcomed and they coached leaders of business and industry, emphasising the notion of quality and employing the ideas and skills of all the workers in the organisation. It was an organisation-wide approach involving managers and shop floor workers which aimed at producing improved performance whilst simultaneously driving down costs. Their QM techniques helped to improve significantly and dramatically the quality of Japanese consumer goods (Galgano, 1994). In the 1980s, Deming and Juran were re-discovered in their home country of the United States of America and Peters in

particular (1982, 1987, 1988) promoted their ideas with a series of books and articles on excellence. Motorola were in the vanguard of companies taking action on QM. Indeed, Motorola were one of the first winners of the Malcolm Baldridge National Quality Award (Ripley and Ripley, 1992). Companies such as Motorola, Ford and Xerox have been amongst the most enthusiastic supporters of QM, believing it to be a vital tool in the battle to gain and retain ascendancy in world markets (Golhar and Ahire, 1995).

By the mid-1980s, European countries in general, and Britain in particular, began the search for a new management order which would help them cope with the significantly increased rate of change, fierce competition from countries such as Japan and the challenge of European Union in 1992. Many Japanese companies were increasing their market share as a result of their concern for producing high quality products, continuous improvement (*kaizen*) and the reduction of waste with a consequent lowering of costs (Flood, 1993). Generally, managers in both the private and public sectors turned to QM as a means of addressing these challenges (Lessem, 1991). An approach to management that was initiated in the United States military sector, and then developed largely by Japanese business and industry, has come to be used in the British public sector.

In 1979, just four days after taking office as Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher appointed Sir Derek Rayner from Marks and Spencer to establish an Efficiency Unit to develop and sustain continuous improvement in government departments. This Efficiency Unit reported that the systems and processes of government departments lacked the flexibility and autonomy enjoyed by their private sector counterparts (Osbourne and Plastrik, 1997). Ultimately, privatisation was used in many cases in an attempt to improve the efficiency and the quality of the service delivery. Throughout the period of Conservative government from 1979 to 1997, the private sector was seen to be a model of efficiency and quality which public sector organisations should follow. This "re-invention of government" had been occurring at a similar period in the United States (Osbourne and Gaebler, 1992; Osbourne and Plastrik, op. cit.).

However, this notion did not have universal support in either the United Kingdom or the United States. Mintzberg (1997 p. 77), for example, stated that,

> Above all, say many experts, government must become more like business. It is especially this notion that I wish to contest. ... Do we want government departments behaving like a toothpaste company and hawking its products?

Previously, at a 1995 meeting of the Academy of Management, he had cautioned that management theories which extolled private sector approaches should have a skull and cross bones stamped on them together with the warning "not to be taken by the public sector" (Mintzberg cited in Micklethwait and Wooldridge, 1997).

Mintzberg considered that in the public sector there were clients rather than customers who expected a professional service and that the concept of citizenship and citizens' rights and expectations were most influential in any transaction between clients and a government department.

As with many other management concepts, defining Quality Management is fraught with difficulties. This is largely because the various interpretations of quality are based on different assumptions. For example, Crosby's (1984) view of the concept is based on the notion of getting it right first time. There is an assumption here that it is always desirable to get it right first time. There is no recognition that there are circumstances when much can be learnt by not getting it right first time and through the subsequent re-working.

There is a lack of agreement about the nub of the concept of quality and there are a variety of perceptions as to the meaning and usage of the word. Although QM is now an approach commonly used in private and public sector organisations and commercial, industrial and service sectors, the problem of its application is greater in a service sector organisation such as an HEI where measurement is more problematic because of the degree of intangibility which exists (Hayward-Farmer, 1988). This intangibility is due in large part to the lack of a clearly identifiable product as is the case in manufacturing industry. Research by Speller and Ghobadian (1993) suggests that QM in public service is most developed in low public contact services where Quality Assurance (QA) using ISO 9000 registration is appropriate and suitable. However, their analysis of the British Standards Institute sources indicates that ISO 9000 is less suited to high contact services such as that which exists between lecturer and student in HEIs. Here attitudes,

competence, training and development are major factors in the determination of quality. In certain service sectors where there is high contact, such as a "fast-food" restaurant, there is a degree of control over the relationship between the customer and the sales assistant. The nature of the transaction and the service required is relatively unambiguous, unlike the core activity of education in HEIs. In this case of a high contact service where there is little ambiguity in terms of what is expected from a service, QA can be employed effectively.

There are various forms of QM which range from the more mechanistic approaches associated with ISO 9000 - which provides a national standard in terms of an organisation's purchasing, defect identification and complaints systems - to more expansive interpretations of Total Quality Management (TQM). These latter forms of QM encompass customer-orientation, organisational culture and staff and organisation development. TQM was particularly popular in the 1980s and early 1990s and some organisations successfully emphasised the prerequisite development of a flexible, team-based organisation (Morgan, 1997). However, the fact that many TQM schemes did not succeed in bringing about these changes in organisational culture and organisation and staff development probably explains the 70% failure rate of TQM in organisations during this period (Morgan, op. cit.).

Pirsig (1976) argues that quality is not something that is tangible and immediately identifiable. Instead, it is an event or process and when considering the quality process he discerns a continuum in QM ranging from objective to subjective perspectives. In his seminal book "Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance", he gives the analogy of motorcycle maintenance as a mechanistic, objective approach and motorcycle riding as a more discursive, subjective perception. Quality embraces both a narrow definition of fitness for purpose which derives largely from the manufacturing sector and also a much broader wide-ranging approach which is founded upon the customer's interpretation of it (Franklin, 1992).

Crosby's (1984) interpretation is towards the mechanistic end of the quality continuum as he equates TQM with conformance. Quality is viewed as consistency and is about the compliance of the product itself: does the product or service conform to requirements,

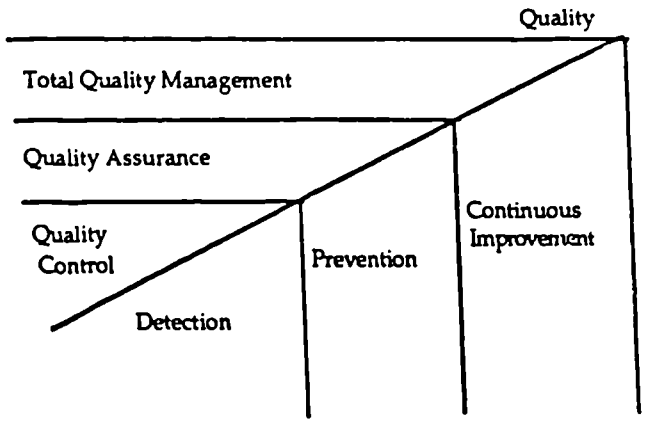


FIGURE 1: Ways of Considering Quality in Education.
Source: West-Burnham, J. and Davies, B. (1994)

does it look as portrayed in the advertisement and will it do what the customer has been led to expect and is the promise of the product or service fulfilled? Essentially, he is saying that efforts need to be made to eliminate non-conformance. Non-conformance can be regarded as the difference between what is achieved and the optimum level of performance. Quality Assurance (QA) addresses the issue of product non-conformance and is not an attempt to identify and remove poor products after they have been made (see FIGURE 1). Instead, the aim is to prevent them from being produced in the first place by focusing on processes and emphasising prevention rather than cure (Walsh, 1990). Excellence is achieved when there are "zero defects" and "things are right first time" (Crosby, op. cit). "Zero defects" require that the product or service conforms to the specification and is always free of defects. It is the task of management to create an organisational climate and culture in which employees are committed to doing the job right first time.

Quality can be related to the fitness of purpose of the product or service. This approach raises the questions of whose purpose and how is fitness assessed? Taking the fitness of

purpose perspective, QM can be described as the process to improve customer satisfaction continuously by means of quality-led, company-wide management (Wilkinson and Witcher, 1991). It is the customer who determines quality because the customer requires and looks for characteristics in the product or service that are important to him/her. Deming (1986) and Peters (1987) regard quality as something which can only be defined in terms of the person who is the judge of quality. The implication for quality assessment is that it is the customer's perception of quality that has to be assessed.

> Everyone doing their best is not the answer. It is first necessary that people know what to do (Deming, 1986 p.x).

Having discovered what customers require, it is then a matter of ensuring the consistent quality of incoming resources and the involvement, commitment and skills of the workforce through training. It is then that an organisation is able to provide a consistent product or service that meets customers' needs (Deming, op. cit.).

As has been seen, the organisation's goal, and what people in the organisation need to do, is determined by customer demand. The customer then receives a quality product or service that lives up to expectations that are based on what has been agreed and what (s)he is prepared to pay. ISO 8042 (formerly BS 4778) articulates this particular definition of quality in the following way:

> ... the totality of all the features and characteristics of a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs.

Customer-orientation requires the service-provider to be not just sympathetic but empathetic. Even greater emphasis on the importance of satisfying the customer is placed by Hand and Ploughman (1992, p. 26) who state that quality management involves,

> ... delighting the customer by consistently meeting and continuously improving on his requirements.

The customer can either be internal, that is another member of the same organisation, or an external customer who is someone outside the particular organisation. For example, in the context of higher education, a student is an external customer of a course director who, in turn, is an internal customer of the HEI's audio-visual aids department that provides

him/her with audio-visual equipment and tapes. These form part of a course's teaching and learning strategy (see FIGURE 2).

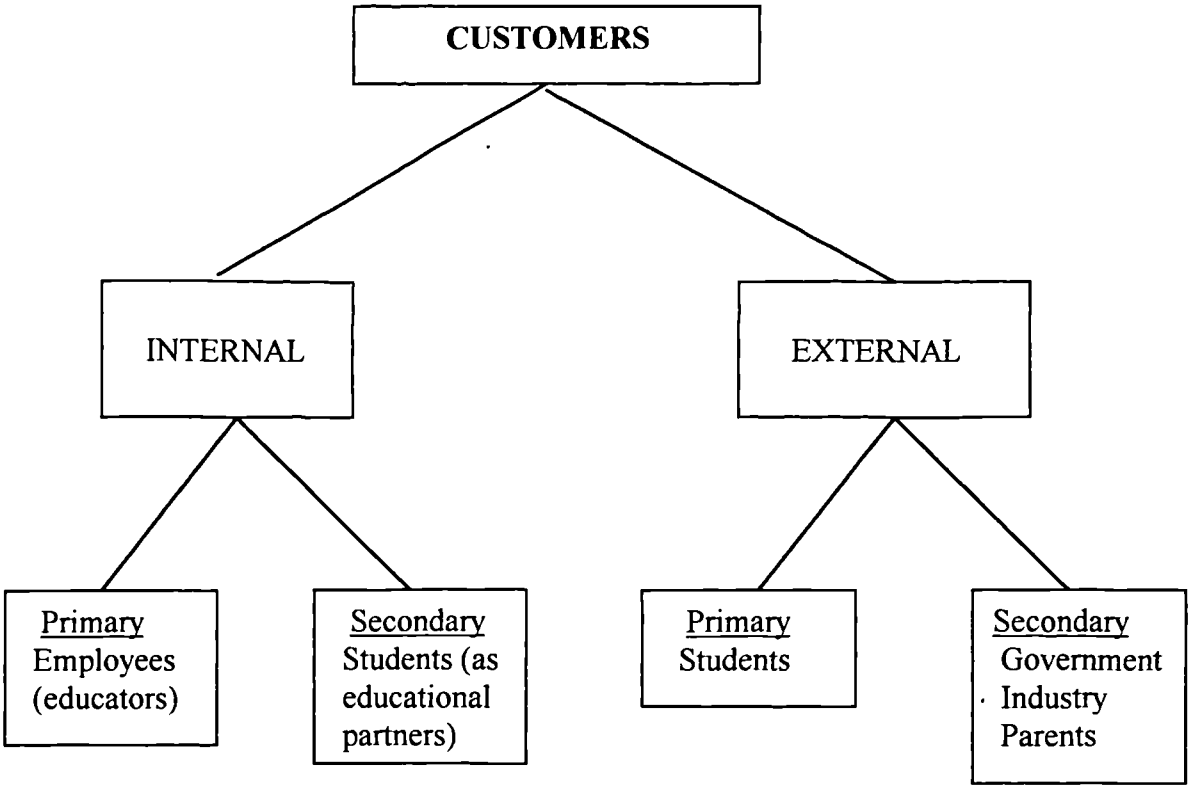


FIGURE 2: Higher Education Customers.
Source: Kanji, G. and Tambi, A. (1999)

When using the term customer, there is an important distinction between the client and the consumer. The former is a person who buys a product or service and the latter is a person who receives the goods or service. In higher education, there are many consumers who pay the fees for courses, which they attend. There are also clients who pay the fees for others who attend courses. An example of a client would be a corporate client such as the Government, a local education authority or a business that funds members of the organisation to undertake undergraduate, postgraduate or professional studies. Often the two terms are used interchangeably although it should be borne in mind that, although the client might be satisfied, this will not necessarily be the case with the consumer.

Similarly, there could be situations where the consumer is satisfied whereas the client is not.

As well as producing a product or service which delights the client and the consumer, QM requires an organisation to be in a particular "state of health"; one in which all its functions and activities meet the customers' requirements and, at the same time, reduce costs. In addition, the organisation needs to develop a climate within which employees are willing and able to provide products that customers will find to be of particular value (Ciamba, 1991). Thus, QM involves organisation development and staff development. It is an attitude of mind as much as it is a system or process. Indeed, QM can be considered to be a philosophy which underpins the development of an organisation's strategy to secure long-term quality improvement rather than just satisfy short-term expediency (Sallis, 1993).

Chartham Papers' definition of QM typifies many organisations' interpretation of the approach,

> We will provide products and services which meet the agreed requirements of our internal and external customers, first time, on time, every time (Rigby, 1998).

Kwik-Fit emphasise the importance of the customer even more,

> We aim to give 100% customer delight 100% of the time (Kwik-Fit Mission Statement, 1998).

These two mission statements represent two of the numerous approaches to QM. The mission of Chartham Papers involves meeting agreed customer requirements and is an exemplar of Oakland's (op. cit.) conception of quality. The mission of Kwik-Fit talks of delighting the customer and implies that quality necessitates exceeding customer need. Kwik-Fit's interpretation of quality is more nearly based on Hand and Ploughman's (op. cit.) definition.

Quality approaches and standards need not be restricted to products and services. "Investors in People" (IiP) involves a public commitment by senior management in business organisations, public services, schools and colleges to develop its employees in

order to achieve its objectives. Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) have been keen to promote IiP in part because the number of organisations which embark upon the IiP journey affects the Performance Related Funding which they receive from the Department of Education and Employment (Investors in People, 1994).

An organisation which "signs up" for IiP is required to review regularly the training and development needs of all its employees and then take the appropriate action. IiP evaluates the investment in training and this is intended to lead to improved effectiveness. An organisation undertakes self-diagnosis and draws up an action plan designed to meet the IiP national standards for effective investment in people. Favourable assessment by assessors leads to an award and the organisation becoming an "Investor in People". Either triennial reviews or lighter touch and less detailed annual reviews are employed to ensure that the organisation strives for continuous improvement.

The Malcolm Baldridge Award in the United States involves a holistic approach to QM and also focuses attention on the human resource aspects. The award emphasises the issues, which are more qualitative than quantitative. A total of 1000 points can be awarded to an organisation under the seven headings of leadership, information and analysis, strategic quality planning, human resource, quality assurance, quality results and customer satisfaction (Cook, 1992). Similarly, the European Quality Award seeks to acknowledge those European organisations that have a Total Quality Management approach that contributes to fulfilling the expectations of their customers and employees. This award was initiated in 1991 and winners have included Rank Xerox, BOC Limited, Milliken, Ericsson and IBM (European Foundation for Quality Management, 1995).

There is also the charter approach to quality that Harvey and Green (1993) argue is based on the notion of value for money. This particular quality scheme is restricted to public service organisations such as police, fire and ambulance services, local and central government agencies and departments, hospitals, universities and colleges. Up until 1998, "Value for Money" was one of nine criteria that had to be satisfied if the Charter Mark was to be awarded. In 1999, the title of this criteria unit was changed to "Effective Use of

Resources". Charter Mark awards are managed and administered by the Cabinet Office and are reviewed every three years (Charter Mark, 1999).

Charters switched the emphasis from the "provider" to the "consumer" with the former having to take account of the needs of the latter. There is a clear, unambiguous statement of what will happen. For example, the Rail Passenger Charter includes the punctuality standard: "90% of trains to arrive within ten minutes of scheduled time." However, it should be noted here that this is the provider's interpretation of what consumers need. After all, one would have expected consumers to want all trains to arrive within ten minutes of scheduled time. Although there is a very firm statement of standards, these standards can be related more to expediency and the abilities of the provider than to the needs of consumers. With the provider establishing the standards, there is a temptation to limit or reduce the targets so that they are more easily achieved. However, charters are focusing increasingly on the needs of consumers with the ten 1999 awards criteria including consultation and involvement, the encouragement of access and the promotion of choice and the provision of user satisfaction (Charter Mark, op. cit.).

Definitions of Quality in the Higher Education Sector

Harvey and Green (op. cit.) provide a useful framework for attempting to define quality by suggesting that quality can be viewed as perfection, as transformative, as fitness for purpose or as value for money. These four different definitions of quality will be discussed below, particularly in the context of quality in higher education.

a. Quality as Perfection

This is the traditional, classic notion of quality that equates it with excellence (Harvey and Knight, 1996) with the product or service being consistently flawless (Rowley, 1996). In the higher education sector, it was HEFCE that endeavoured to identify excellence. Indeed, "excellent" was one of the three original assessment categories HEFCE used when inspecting a particular university or higher education college department. Although the

present Quality Assessment Agency (QAA) review involves assessment on a four-point scale across six discrete aspects of higher education, the notion of perfection still exists. Just as a Rolls Royce car is universally regarded as a "quality" car because of the standard of its components and the high standard of the engineering and finishing, so it is possible for a college or university to be viewed in the same way. During the second half of the twentieth century, when the number of universities and colleges increased significantly, it is likely that in this period the Oxbridge colleges have been regarded as analogous to Rolls Royce cars (Green, 1994).

b. Quality As Fitness for Purpose

Fitness for purpose requires that the product or service fulfils a customer's needs, requirements or desires. These requirements should be clearly articulated by the customer (Rowley, op.cit.). In Higher Education, teaching quality is concerned with teaching effectiveness and teaching efficiency. Teaching effectiveness is linked to the meeting of course aims and objectives: teaching efficiency to the resources that are used in order to meet the stated aims and objectives (Williams and Loder, 1990).

The achievement of these goals should also involve the efficient use of resources for teaching and support services. Thus, quality can be viewed as requiring the definition of worthwhile learning goals and then enabling students to achieve them. Goals are articulated at a general institutional level through an organisation's mission statement and at a more precise academic level through a particular programme's aims and objectives.

The Charter for Higher Education (1993) is one of the many charters that make up the Citizen's Charter. This Charter promises students clear and accurate information about courses, course entry requirements, grants that are available, how they will be taught, how they will be assessed and the quality of provision and facilities. However, it is simply a statement from government about what students should expect from HEIs. It has no legal force *per se* but it could lead to an increase in the use of litigation by students against HEIs (Alderman, 1996).

The Charter for Higher Education states clearly the responsibility of universities and colleges to be,

> ... more aware of the need to deliver high-quality services, responding to the needs and demands of customers (DfE, 1993 p.1).

When the Charter was launched, regular audits by the HEQC of the quality assurance systems of universities and colleges were reported and, by these means, students and potential students have the necessary details to make informed decisions about which college or university to attend. HEQC audits were complemented by regular HEFCE reports on the quality of education in particular subjects. Now there are just QAA review reports although the remit of such reports is more far-ranging than the combined HEQC and HEFCE reports because they cover subject reviews, subject standards, QA systems and institutional reviews. Students have a right to this information and also they have a right to expect prompt and efficient service. The Charter clearly outlines the complaints procedure should students wish to complain about a university or college. These complaints may be dealt with through a university's or college's internal complaints procedure. Serious complaints, which cannot be resolved by these means, can be passed to someone outside the organisation such as a senior judge. Complaints are passed to the QAA if they are specifically about misleading information in a prospectus and cannot be resolved within the institution concerned.

c. Quality as Value for Money

Quality is assessed in terms of return on investment or expenditure. If the same outcome is achieved at a lower cost then, as a consequence, the customer has a quality product or service (Rowley, op.cit.). With the annual cost per student falling from just under £7,000 in 1989 to £4,400 in 1996 then, according to these terms of reference, an increase in quality can be deduced (The Times, 1997). The notion of accountability is central with this accountability being predicated upon the need for restraint in public expenditure in order that Britain can remain competitive in world markets (Harvey and Knight, 1996). Public services are expected to be accountable to their funders and, in the higher

education sector these include HEFCE, the Teacher Training Agency (TTA), the Health Authorities and Local Education Authorities (LEAs) who contribute to student fees. Overall, the cost of running Britain's HEIs is more than £6 billion per annum (The Times, op. cit.). Thus, accountability in terms of assuring value for money is generally to the government through the HEFCE, TTA, LEAs and the Health Authorities. However, where there is self-funding, accountability is directly to the student.

Thorne and Cuthbert (1996) argue that the notion of value for money is far more complex in the higher education sector than in commercial or other service provider settings. They give the example of the sale of a tin of baked beans where the customer gives money in exchange for this product. Both buyer and seller can easily evaluate what they receive and whether the exchange represents value for money. Exchanges in the higher education sector are far more complex and ambiguous as, in addition to the customers paying fees (directly or indirectly) for help towards achieving a particular award, they may also be offered personal and intellectual growth. However, this requires that the customers supply high levels of motivation and commitment in addition to the money.

d. Quality as Transformation

QM can be viewed in broader terms by taking a transformative and qualitative view of change (see FIGURE 3). It involves a change in form from one state to another, just as water can be transformed into ice (Harvey and Knight, op. cit.). There is an exploration of how a service can transform the consumer by enhancing and empowering him/her. In the context of higher education, de Vries (1997) considers that an academic's view of quality involves the transformation of a student in such a way that (s)he achieves "graduateness". De Vries argues that academic staff claim that they should have sole jurisdiction on all matters relating to academic standards.

Quality is defined by the Government as the effect it has on students in terms of value added. This value or level of enhancement is measured by the degree to which the service has developed the knowledge, abilities and skills of the students (HMSO, 1992). As

students undertake undergraduate and postgraduate courses to develop these attributes and obtain a qualification, quality is - once again - about meeting what the Government perceives as the students' needs.

Harvey and Knight's (op. cit.) satisfaction survey undertaken in 1995 suggested that the students' learning experience was central to any perception of quality in HEIs. Lecturers'

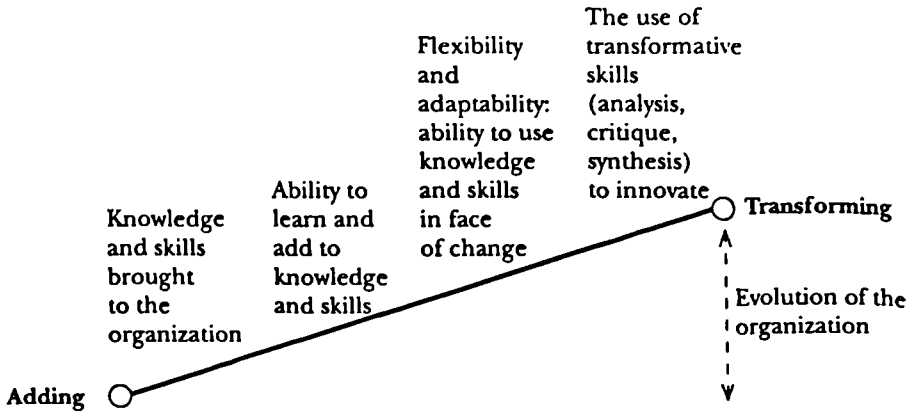


FIGURE 3: Quality as Transformation
Source: Harvey, L. and Green, D., 1993

professional associations argue that the ability of any institution of higher education to achieve this quality is constrained by external funding. They claim that in the seven years from 1987 to 1994 student numbers in further and higher education have risen by 60%, yet staff numbers have not risen proportionately. This has led to a deterioration in staff/student ratios from 1:8 in 1970 to 1:17 in 1990 (Annan, 1999) and a consequent rise in class sizes. Rust (1997) claims that class sizes were on average, in 1996, 50% bigger compared with the situation in 1986. In stressing the need for adequate resources, Bradley (1994) argues that,

> ... the flames of inquiry, tolerance and excellence require hard cash and supportive education policies. Innovative research needs money; university staff and students need accommodation, library resources and laboratory equipment. Everyone needs time, a commodity that is being squeezed out of the system by the increasing bureaucratic and financial demands imposed by government education policies (p13).

The case of the lecturers' professional associations is that the above reductions in expenditure have led to a reduction in the quality of lecturer/student interaction because of

a significant decline in small group and tutorial teaching. Lecturers' increased workloads mean they are less likely to be readily available to counsel and advise students on either academic or personal matters. Also, quality is affected adversely as library, computer and other central facilities are less able to cope with demand. The deterioration in quality is considered by lecturers' professional associations as a function of the government's concern over value for money when it should be considering injecting money for value. Quality requires the provision of an appropriate level of funding to keep student/lecturer ratios at a relatively low level and to expand and develop support services such as college and university libraries (NATFHE, op. cit.). Overall, NATFHE are arguing that quality is, in large part, dependent upon unit of resource funding. Although the income of HEIs rose by 11% from £10 billion to £11.1 billion during the period from 1994/5 to 1997/8, student numbers increased by 13%. When total inflation of 9.5% during these three years is taken into account, NATFHE claim that there was a real decrease in resources per student of 11.5% (Wilson, 1998).

By making use of Harvey and Green's four different interpretations of quality, it is clear from the data supplied by the lecturers' professional associations that they consider the government's quality approach to be concerned largely with value for money. Harvey and Knight (op. cit.) argue that QM has been used by government, to a significant degree, as a means of reducing costs and increasing the centralisation of control. Barnett (1994b) broadly agrees with this assessment claiming that the government has gone beyond the concern about value for money, which characterised the 1980s, to a desire to influence the culture and composition of higher education. However, these writers are members of the academic community and one might well expect them to support this form of "conspiracy theory" as a response to the government and QM in HEIs. It could be argued that, as the government is the main client of higher education through its indirect grant-aiding of students to varying degrees, it is reasonable that it should have the right to exert this influence. Differential funding which favours certain disciplines, such as science and engineering, has been one of the methods employed to effect changes in the composition and culture of HEIs.

As well as relating quality to levels of funding, Bradley (op. cit.) also points out the cost and the debilitating effect on higher education of the whole quality audit and quality assessment process. The lecturers' professional associations have questioned whether the burgeoning of costly and time-consuming quality audits and assessments are leading to an improvement in quality (AUT / NATFHE / NUS, 1993). A manifestation of the massive growth in quality audit and assessment in the university sector was the estimated use of six tons of paper for QM procedures and £250,000 worth of photocopying per year (MacLeod, 1994). Whilst regarding it as entirely proper for universities to be accountable for their teaching and treating the students as customers, many lecturers consider that the two quality procedures at that time - HEQC audit and HEFCE assessment - led to a considerable waste of time and consequent inefficiency (NCUP, 1994). On the other hand, despite all of the above, it is claimed that the administration and management of quality assessment accounts for less than 0.5% of the annual cost of the teaching function in colleges and universities (CHES, 1994).

Supporters of more mechanistic approaches have argued that it is impossible to manage what cannot be measured (Horovitz and Jurgens Panak, 1992; Oakland, 1993). Measuring quality in terms of value added can be as mechanistic and relatively straightforward as is the case with "zero defects" and "getting it right first time". A student's starting academic value can be seen as the qualifications with which (s)he enters the institution of higher education. Thus, the extent of the transformation of a student can be seen as the value added by the HEI. This can be calculated by deducting this input value from the output value - the final degree result. The use of such a simple calculation tends to suggest that the value-added approach to quality is more straightforward and unproblematic than it really is.

The qualitative nature of the value that is added leads to problems of measurement. In Higher Education, the service the lecturer provides for the student is less clear-cut because the development of learning is rather more open-ended than the service provided in the "fast-food" restaurant. It is also a relationship where, unusually, the consumer is subject to criticism from the service provider. This criticism is in the form of regular academic assessment (Barnett, 1992a).

Berry et al. (1985), by means of gap analysis, have endeavoured to increase the extent to which services can be assessed by using the five service dimensions of physical facilities, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. Models of assessing service quality will be looked at in greater detail later. Nevertheless, defining quality in service industries in general and Higher Education in particular is problematical and debatable (NATFHE, op. cit.).

The transformation in education not only involves developments which can be measured in terms of examination performance but it also often involves cognitive transcendence with the provider "doing something to the customer rather than just doing something for the customer" (Harvey and Green, op. cit., p.24). Generally, there is an unambiguous, instrumental relationship between service provider and customer. However, particularly in an educational context, quality is holistic and based on a more subjective perspective (Pirsig, op. cit.). Developing critical thinking might well be regarded as a desirable outcome resulting from the transformation of a student and an indication of value having been added. However, although possible, it is very difficult to assess the improvement in a student's ability to think critically, analyse and hypothesise (Torrance, 1992). Oral examinations such as *viva voce* may be used but assessments are qualitative rather than quantitative and thus more likely to be subjective than objective. In addition, as Pring (1992) points out, learning is an incremental process and not something that can be defined in absolute terms. With knowledge being acquired slowly over a period of time, it is sometimes difficult to be sure when and how it has developed. Deming (1986) argues that quality of lecturing is related to bringing about changes in students' attitudes by giving them direction and inspiration. However, he acknowledges, along with others, that the measurement of these attitudinal changes is problematic. Such problems with measurement mean that it is difficult to cite attitudes as a desired learning outcome or include them as "level descriptors".

The four categories of quality highlight the wide range of views as to what constitutes quality management in higher education. Despite these varying definitions of quality, it is clear that QM is regarded as one of the ways of bringing about radical change to create

effective, flexible and high quality systems for course structure, course delivery frameworks and for curriculum development (TEED, 1990). QM is part of a change strategy designed to help HEIs cope with customer-led, rather than producer-led, markets and to respond rapidly to the perceived demands of customers.

Harvey and Green's four definitions of quality illustrate different ways of interpreting the concept. However, whatever definition or blend of definitions is chosen, gauging the quality of an HEI requires an assessment of certain key educational processes and outcomes. Essentially, quality is concerned with undertaking certain processes well and improving quality involves carrying out those processes better. In higher education, attention centres on assessing particular activities and their outcomes. These include, for example, a judgement about how well the institution is managed, its financial position, the employment secured by its graduates, its research profile, the physical environment provided for the students and the extent to which students have achieved personal and intellectual growth (Bowden and Marton, 1998).

Standards

The terms "quality" and "standards" are often used interchangeably although there is a difference in what they purport to measure. A dictionary definition of standards is that they are "something to which all should conform" and "the degree of excellence required for a particular purpose" (Oxford English Reference Dictionary, 1995). Standards are outcome rather than process measures and are far more absolutist than most measures of quality. They involve the identification of particular specifications against which a service or product can be measured (Bank, 2000). They allow for a clear and unambiguous judgement about whether a product or service is "up to standard". Many QM systems and approaches, such as ISO 9000 series and benchmarking, make use of specific standards (Bank, op. cit.).

SUMMARY

It is very important to be absolutely clear what is meant by quality. Fitness for purpose is the most common definition of quality both in commerce and in the public sector. However, it is just one of four major general definitions. Perfection is another. In order to demonstrate how what is defined as quality significantly influences its assessment of it, these two particular definitions can be applied to two cars; a Rolls Royce and a Mini. With the definition of fitness of purpose, both these cars would score highly on any quality rating. However, if perfection is taken as the sole definition, then only the Rolls Royce would be regarded as a high quality vehicle.

QM was developed largely in Japan and the United States of America before being applied in the United Kingdom. There are different interpretations of the concept of Quality Management which range from mechanistic and rigid approaches that have been applied in an industrial context to a more people-orientated and discursive approach. More mechanistic QM schemes include ISO 9000 series and those based on the structure provided by the European Foundation for Quality Management whilst Investors in People is an exemplar of a more flexible, people-orientated approach. QM schemes originated in private sector industrial environments and were then adopted by service industries. In the United Kingdom, when Margaret Thatcher was Prime Minister, the adoption of QM in public sector service organisations was encouraged when private and commercial companies were cited as models of good managerial practice to be followed.

Many writers, including Mintzberg, warned of the dangers of applying QM schemes developed in manufacturing industry to public sector service industries. A major reason for their concern was that they claimed there were far fewer tangibles in the service sector and that this made it more difficult to gauge quality. In higher education, it was argued, the problems were even more pronounced as the transactions and the service relationship between lecturer and student were more complex than that between most other service providers and their customers. Higher Education involves cognitive transcendence with the provider doing something *to* the customer as well as doing something *for* him/her. As

lecturing involves the facilitation of personal and intellectual growth, this leads to more problems when applying gap analysis in an attempt to gauge quality.

Within organisations, there is often disagreement about the most suitable blend of QM approaches. However, there appears to be consensus that "fitness for purpose" is regarded as a key underpinning element of a quality product or service. Harvey and Green's four different interpretations of quality provide a useful framework for analysing the varying views of the major stakeholder groups involved in higher education. Different stakeholder groups varied in the emphasis that they placed on quality as perfection, fitness for purpose, value for money and transformation.

Increasingly, QM has been linked closely to particular standards. These standards impose more specific and absolutist quality measures of products and services.

As will be seen in the following chapter, commercial and industrial organisations also interpreted quality in different ways and this interpretation determined, to a large extent, the particular QM systems and structures that were established.

CHAPTER TWO - QUALITY MANAGEMENT IN COMMERCE, INDUSTRY AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Concern for quality derives from external pressure and internal concerns and QM has been heralded as bringing in a new management order that helps organisations and their employees to survive and flourish at a time of great change. The late twentieth century has been described as an age of unreason (Handy, 1995), a period of discontinuous change (Drucker, 1989) and a time of chaos (Peters, 1987). The turbulent environment, to which these management writers allude, provides the economic and social context for an examination of QM approaches in commerce and manufacturing, service industries and local government.

QM aims to "delight the customer" (Peters, op. cit.) and continuously improve customer satisfaction. As well as the customer benefiting from QM, the employer also gains. In commerce and manufacturing industry, QM has come to be seen as a means of gaining and maintaining competitive advantage (Peters, op. cit.). Before the application of QM methods, service industry organisations such as those found in banking and insurance followed the Fordist industrial model of mass production techniques, which stressed uniformity, hierarchical authority and technical control. This was based on centralised decision-making (Schlesinger and Heskett, 1991; Hollinshead and Leat, 1995). However, customer disaffection through indifferent or unhelpful employees, poor growth and relatively high employee turnover were all manifestations of a system which was very often ineffective and lacked customer orientation. With QM has come a new model of service, which stresses the relationship between the customer and the front-line worker. Recruitment and training are seen as crucial for the development of committed, competent employees and this implies a significant investment in the human resource (Schlesinger and Heskett, op.cit.).

The use of "intelligent technology" has required changes in organisational structure and the relationship between management and employees (Zuboff, 1988). The impact of these changes on employees will very much depend on which form of QM is adopted. Reich (cited in Lessem, 1991) posits two options which he terms the "hands path", which is based on competition, and the "brains path", which embraces co-operation. With the

former, there is an emphasis on automation and the reduction in labour costs. However, the second path stresses the need to retain and retrain the labour force in order to prepare them for greater flexibility, creativity and responsibility for decision-making. This "brains" approach to QM has the attention to employees' job security as a key element in the process because it is seen as a prerequisite to securing the commitment of employees. Reich's Harvard Business School colleague Zuboff also supports this option, regarding it as the way to develop a committed workforce and a learning organisation; one which is in a position to benefit from a quality-conscious organisational culture (Lessem, op. cit.).

Total Quality Management

TQM is a quality process system, which is designed to satisfy customer requirements continuously at the lowest possible costs by channelling the capabilities and efforts of everyone in the organisation. It is defined by ISO 8402 as,

> ... centred on quality, based on the participation of all its members and aiming at long-term success through customer satisfaction, and benefits to all members of the organisation and to society (ISO, 1994).

It relies on developing a total quality culture where everyone in the organisation thinks about quality and acts to achieve it (Kanji and Asher, 1993). Practical means of achieving this culture include changing the people in the organisation through recruitment and/or redundancy programmes and moving staff within the organisation to break up old sub-cultures and create new ones. Intensive induction programmes and training can also be used to change employees' attitudes and the style adopted by its managers (Wilkinson et al., 1998). It takes fitness for purpose as its definition of quality, which is built in rather than brought about through inspection. The aim is to complete processes correctly at the first time and this is how the cost savings accrue (Wilkinson et al., op. cit.). It is estimated that there are nearly a thousand versions of TQM, each of which places varying emphasis on the four major underpinning principles; fitness for purpose, reflecting customer wants or needs, anticipating customer desires and the use of statistical process control.

QM can help organisations to cut costs and improve their market share. The McKinsey Management Consultancy in the United States calculated the possible cost efficiency gains that could accrue through the use of TQM. For example, it reckoned that the percentage of purchase cost spent on the purchasing process itself could be reduced from 3.3 to 0.8% and late deliveries could be cut from 33% to 2% (Heller, 1997). In the private sector, TQM is credited with having brought about the recovery of manufacturing organisations such as Xerox (The Economist, 1992a) and helped Motorola to achieve a defect rate of just 3.4 per million components manufactured (The Economist, 1992b). At Xerox, teamwork was encouraged by management and employed as the means of achieving, through collaboration, significant improvements in product quality. Coupled with this use of teamwork was intensive training designed to help staff to understand and meet customer demands and take responsibility for quality (Bhushan and MacKenzie, 1992). Motorola, Xerox, IBM and Texas Instruments are all Baldridge Quality Award winners that have improved their business performance and market position through the use of TQM ((Lozier and Teeter, 1996). Systems and team structures were introduced to Toyota's Derby car factory that ensured that all members of the workforce are consistently adding value and enhancing quality. The factory is relatively uncluttered and this assists employees to focus on high-quality production. There are very few parts awaiting assembly. Instead, a Just-in-Time inventory approach means that assembly workers only have about an hour's worth of stock to hand and this is stored most conveniently close to them on shoulder-high shelves (Micklewait and Wooldridge, 1997).

British Steel has used TQM and has received general acclamation by moving from a position of record-making losses to one where it is regarded as one of the UK's world-class businesses (Johnson and Scholes, 1993). The introduction of TQM (actually called Total Quality Performance at British Steel) was achieved with the trade unions' co-operation in 1987. The initial quality improvement gains in the late 1980s have been sustained by its membership of the European Foundation for Quality Management and the complementary use of the Investors in People scheme (Wilkinson et al., op. cit.).

In the service sector, British Airways cut costs (Management Today, September 1992) and Barclaycard adopted a Total Quality Management approach through their "Quality

First" process. Over 1300 non-conformances were identified and the subsequent remedial action led to savings of £3.1 million (Cook, 1992). Largely as a result of TQM, in 1996 American Express was able to achieve a 11% return on sales because its customers were more satisfied with the service provided (Heller, 1997). Also, British Telecom made use of the continuous improvement that is central to TQM to achieve in just a few years a 90% reduction in service failures (Heller, 1997). Sir Tom Farmer, the managing director, has expanded Kwik-Fit from purely a vehicle parts fitting group by entering the vehicle insurance and breakdown markets as well. He subscribes to the TQM notion of "customer delight" and his commitment to the customer is articulated in the Kwik-Fit mission statement that promises to seek and achieve 100% customer delight. After a Kwik-Fit customer has called in to a forecourt to have a new tyre, shock absorbers or an exhaust system fitted or arranged insurance or vehicle breakdown cover, (s)he is telephoned, thanked for the custom and asked how the service can be improved. Every day 5,000 customers are contacted in this way and the responses show a 98.2% satisfaction rate and, of the remaining 1.8%, only 0.5% are dissatisfied. Any reasons for dissatisfaction are investigated fully and remedied because *kaizen* (continuous improvement) is central to the company's philosophy. Through the use of TQM, Kwik-Fit has been able to enter the insurance services market in 1995 and, three years later, return an annual profit of £7.5 million (Edwards, 1999; Farmer, 1999).

Some former public sector organisations in Britain have used QM to help transform their operations and enable them to cope with competition from other organisations in their markets. Royal Mail management had a very poor reputation that was based on price rises, unpopular cost-cutting moves such as the removal of Sunday collections and very heavy losses during the 1970s (Heller, 1993). From 1987, an effort was made to compile detailed information on the organisation's performance. As Horovitz and Jurgens Panak (1992) argue, measuring various aspects of the stages of production or the delivery of a service enables an organisation to have a heightened awareness of service quality, focus effort, monitor progress and quantify achievements. The data collected by Royal Mail identified the dissatisfaction felt by many of Royal Mail's customers and customer feedback led to re-organisation and re-structuring into business units which enable Royal Mail to focus more clearly on customer needs. Overheads were cut by a reduction in head

office staff numbers from 2200 to 160. Training was concentrated on the front-line employees, performance-related pay was introduced for managers and clear targets were set. First-class postal deliveries achieved the day after posting rose from 74.5% in 1989 to 92% in 1993 when 96% of Post Office Counters customers were served within five minutes, with an average service time of just over two minutes. Profits during this four-year period rose from £166 million to £247 million per annum. Royal Mail's managing director at the time, Bill Cockburn, saw these improvements as just the start of a process designed to improve the organisation's reputation and enhance its competitive capabilities (Heller, 1993). Royal Mail now boasts that virtually all first-class mail is delivered by the next day and that it is considered as Europe's most reliable and effective postal service provider (Heller, op. cit.). It is now closer to fulfilling its mission statement that states, "Royal Mail is to be recognised as the best organisation in the world distributing text and packages" (cited in Brown, A., 1997 p.154).

These reported successful applications of TQM need to be viewed in relation to research that points to some of the failings of TQM. Kearney (1992), in association with the Institute of Management, found that 80% of TQM programmes had failed to demonstrate any conspicuous signs of success. The London Business School study by Cruise O'Brien and Voss (1992) rated the UK companies which were using TQM very poorly against the United States' Baldridge awards criteria for excellence. Also in 1992, the Economist Intelligence Unit (Binney, 1992) conducted research in fifty-six European organisations and discovered very high levels of cynicism about some of the TQM programmes that had been introduced. However, although the above research is indicative of the progress of particular TQM schemes in the early 1990s, Wilkinson et al. (op. cit.) point out the need to be aware of some of the methodological weaknesses of this type of research. These include the use of relatively small samples and a concentration on large organisations.

In local government, Brent Council in north-west London made use of TQM in the early 1990s to seek to transform its image from "Barmy Brent" to "Quality Council". Its mission statement of "... aiming to be simply the best local authority in the country" underpinned this intended transformation and then the philosophy and systems of TQM were applied to a range of its processes (Wilkinson et al., op. cit.).

Quality initiatives in local government such as the one in Brent were based on three distinct approaches to quality management under the consecutive Conservative governments from 1979 into the 1990s (Bennington and Taylor, 1992). Firstly, there was the 'New Right' approach based on market forces and customer choice that was favoured by the Conservative central government. The underpinning philosophy was economic positivism and philosophical individualism and Compulsory Competitive Tendering was an example of a quality improvement mechanism based on these values. The second broad influence identified by Bennington and Taylor (op. cit.) was the 'New Left' approach adopted by certain Labour-controlled councils such as Islington during this period. This approach was used in addition to the 'New Right' approach that was enforced by means of legislation. It was based on the empowerment of the citizens of a particular area and made use of neighbourhood forums, consumer research and complaints policies. There was a great concern for consumer rights and an emphasis on positive attitudes to community problems. Its use of the term 'consumer' rather than the New Right's 'customer' suggested a different focus in the attempt to achieve improvements in the quality of local government services. The third and final approach discerned by Bennington and Taylor was the overarching one of 'New Managerialism'. Unlike the other two, this approach was devoid of political ideology, concentrating instead on the effective management of local government services. A manifestation of 'New Managerialism' was quality improvement initiatives that provided guarantees of service standards such as the customer care provided by front-line staff, the comfort of waiting areas and the response time for replying to letters and levels of information.

Benchmarking

Benchmarking is a systematic QM tool which involves "... the search for industry-best practices that lead to superior performance" and "... it is an on-going process of measuring and improving services and practices against the best that can be identified world-wide" (Codling, 1992 p.7). Thus, the major aim of benchmarking is to identify, develop and then sustain best practices and optimum performance (Bullivant, 1994). Often, to achieve

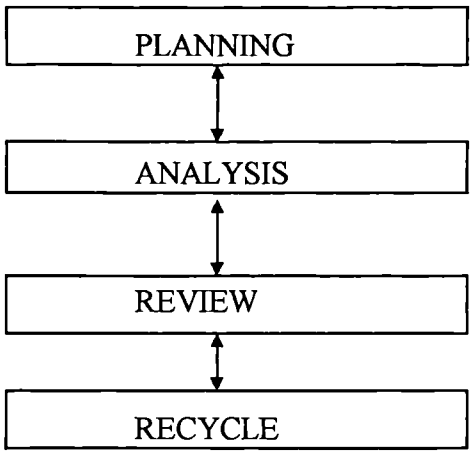
this aim, organisations will join together to form 'benchmarking clubs' that provide a forum for the benchmarking of particular common practices (Woolf et al., 1999). Benchmarking is regularly used in conjunction with TQM to achieve continuous improvement. In non-managerial terms, a benchmark is a surveyor's mark cut in a wall, indicating a precise measurement. This precision is reflected in Beckford's (1998) understanding of the term in a management context. He notes that the first step is to identify those elements of a product or service to benchmark and then compare the performance characteristics of particular organisations against this standard. Often benchmark standards are derived from customers' requirements.

Beckford also claims that benchmarking is often an exercise in organisational humility because it requires participants to recognise that others can accomplish a particular process cheaper, quicker and more accurately than they are able. Benchmarking often utilises the approaches more commonly associated with time and motion study such as the disaggregation of an overall task into its component processes. Each discrete process can then be benchmarked against the same process in a similar organisation that has a higher level of performance. This is known as functional benchmarking (Oakland, 1993). Functional benchmarking was used by Cummins Engines to compare their existing processes with those of the Komatsu engine company in Japan. For a number of years, Komatsu had produced engines efficiently and effectively at a relatively low unit cost. The review and subsequent changes to Cummins Engines functions through benchmarking were major reasons why they reduced their level of working capital by 25%, reduced delivery times and doubled their market share in a little over two years (Codling, op. cit.).

Oakland (op. cit.) discerns three other types of benchmarking: internal, one department compared with another in the same organisation; competitive, direct comparison between organisations competing in the same market; and, generic, a comparison of a particular business process in a whole range of different organisations which are responsible for a variety of products or services. Derwentside District Council benchmarked many of their processes against the best practice achieved by existing or potential competitors. Through the use of benchmarking the Council was able to compete most effectively for contracts

under Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT) and, subsequently, achieve "Best Value" through the efficiency gains and improved service achieved (Beckford, op. cit.). Since 1997, the change of national government has led to the emphasis in local government shifting away from CCT to the pursuit of "Best Value". This includes the notions of the participation of all staff, added value and the search for the best outcome (Flynn, 1997).

Whatever form of benchmarking is used, a flow chart is the blueprint for the mechanistic procedures to be followed:



In order for benchmarking to exert long-lasting influence, an organisation needs to address issues other than simply improving its processes. As with TQM, organisational culture and values have to be such that the contribution of the particular QM tool is acknowledged throughout the workplace (Mannering, 1996).

Business Process Re-engineering

Lloyds Bank made use of Business Process Re-engineering (BPR) to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and the quality of work in their "back offices". BPR is based on the notion of reinvention and adopts a "zero-base" approach to organisational re-design. Nothing is taken for granted, all existing practices are evaluated thoroughly, and there is an attempt to find more efficient methods of completing a process or cutting out a stage

or stages of a production or service process. BPR involves changing the way people in an organisation think, enable, deploy, organise, motivate and manage (Champy, 1995: Hammer and Champy, 1995). The intended outcome is an improved product or service for the customer and significant cost reductions for the organisation. Although the approach focuses on processes, its success is dependent on improving outcomes such as decreased costs, less wastage and higher profits.

At Lloyds Bank, there was dissatisfaction with the existing system of working that involved relatively large numbers of staff and the generation of numerous pieces of paper. It was felt that these existing practices were not adding value nor were they enhancing the quality of service to the customer. In 1992, a Service Quality Improvement Programme was introduced and, by mid-1995, the time to process new accounts had been halved, the number of errors had been reduced significantly and the overall operations accounting costs were reduced by a third. These improvements were made largely through increased automation with, for example, the increase in the use of Automatic Teller Machines. The machines tended to be quicker and more reliable than their human counterparts that they replaced. However, the improvements in efficiency and quality of service did require the reduction in the number of branches from 2100 to 1800 during this period. Also, middle managers suffered from the efficiency savings with a reduction in the number of area managers from 80 to 41 (Micklethwait and Wooldridge, 1997). Although the reduction in the number of branches and managers led to considerable cost savings, it could be viewed as worsening the service to those customers who then had to travel further to a branch of Lloyds Bank.

BPR involves a radical and ruthless approach to work practices. Hammer and Champy (op. cit.) argue that its relatively low success rate is caused by organisations using BPR to adjust ways of undertaking tasks rather than re-thinking and re-engineering. They claim that any semblance of faint-heartedness will cause the approach to fail and, as a consequence, the anticipated quality improvements will not accrue.

Service Excellence

Terms such as TQM and BPR are not so common in the QM terminology of organisations as they used to be. Service Excellence has become more prominent. Essentially, it makes use of notions of customer awareness, continuous improvement and the re-appraisal of processes that were associated with TQM and BPR. First Direct was the 1998 Management Today/Unisys Company of the Year in the financial services sector. In a rapidly-changing and fiercely competitive sector of the economy, 90% of First Direct customers that were interviewed said that they were either very or extremely satisfied with the service provided. First Direct achieved this very high satisfaction rating through involving customers in the design of new products and services, observing their competitors very closely, avoiding transferring customers from one department to another and regularly canvassing customer expectations (Management Today, 1998).

Concern with quality, it is argued by Deming (1986), is in the interest of the employees as it can lead to greater job security. Improved quality means that there is less re-working in a manufacturing organisation and far fewer complaints in a service organisation. This, in turn, leads to reduced costs and productivity gains. Consequently, the organisation captures a larger share of the market with its better quality and lower priced product or service. This "virtuous circle" is completed with increased market share fuelling the demand for labour. As will be seen later in this chapter, not everyone agrees with Deming's notion of a "virtuous circle".

Investors In People

In 1993 the Investors in People UK company was formed to develop and market a national standards scheme. In that year this company launched the "Investors in People" (IiP) programme. The programme involves a people-orientated QM approach that was managed by local Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs). From the late 1990s

Business Learning Links companies took over this marketing and administrative rôle. IiP is concerned with,

> ... raising the performance of an organisation through the effective development of staff - from boardroom level down (Kent Training and Enterprise Council, 1993 p.ii).

A major aim of this programme is to ensure that all members of the organisation are aware of its mission statement and are working together to achieve the mission. In order to achieve this aim, IiP seeks to engender the integration of human resource management with the overall organisational objectives. There are twenty-three indicators against which evidence from an organisation is collected and assessed. After a review in 1999, some minor amendments to the scheme were proposed which were due for implementation in the following year (IiP, 2000).

Developers and managers of the IiP programme have claimed that it has improved individuals and organisations by - amongst other things - increasing job satisfaction, improving the effectiveness of training, increasing sales and market share and reducing costs. Companies who are "Investors in People" include Unilever Research and they reduced administrative costs by £500,000 in 1991/2. In the same period, W H Smith (Retail) - another "Investor in People" - increased sales by 8% (Investors in People, 1992). It is also credited with the ability to influence organisational culture. One of the objectives of the scheme is to make all employees aware of the organisation's mission (Investors in People, op. cit.). This clarity of purpose can assist in cultural change by providing all members of the organisation with unambiguous, attainable goals and informing them speedily and clearly if these change. It also points up the changes that are required to achieve these. The IiP programme cannot, by itself, guarantee that all members of the organisation are aware of and understand the mission. Similarly, there can be no guarantee that IiP will assist in bringing about cultural change. Nevertheless, if managed effectively and sensitively, it can be a catalyst for this change.

ISO 9000 Series

ISO is a non-governmental organisation established in 1947. ISO is not an acronym. "Iso" derives from the Greek meaning equal. Its mission is to promote international standardisation in the areas of intellectual, scientific, technological and economic activity. ISO is based on standards which are documented agreements containing precise criteria to be used as guidelines in order to ensure that products, processes and services are fit for purpose. The international standards are designed to increase the reliability, efficiency and effectiveness of products and services (ISO, 1999). The International Organisation for Standardisation is based in Geneva and is a federation of national standards bodies, one from each country. The British Standards Institute (BSI) is the United Kingdom's representative (ISO, op. cit.). Tens of thousands of business organisations throughout the world are making use of ISO 9000 series as a basis for QM. One reason for seeking ISO 9000 series accreditation is that many government agencies and some private companies do not accept tenders for construction work, for example, from organisations that are not accredited (Becher, 1999).

The ISO 9000 series quality management system, like Investors in People, leads to accreditation for organisations that meet the stated requirements. Success depends upon conformity to a set of defined standards. Often these standards for particular processes are determined by the organisation that then follows established procedures, constantly monitoring progress to assure conformance. The organisation is subject to external audit when seeking accreditation and also to random and unannounced visits once accreditation has been achieved.

The emphasis on conformance with the attendant slogans of "get it right first time" and "zero defects" (Crosby, 1984) illustrate the links with Scientific Management (Taylor, 1947). Failure to conform is considered to be an aberration that is to be avoided at all costs.

The British Standards Institution and ISO 9000 series (formerly BS 5750) have been heavily criticised in a report by the Science and Engineering Policy Studies Unit. The

report claims that quality assurance is run by the assessors, certifiers, consultants and accreditors and not by its customers. The report argues the systems that have developed around ISO 9000 series are bureaucratic, unwieldy and not at all user-friendly. These systems need to be reviewed and overhauled as otherwise they will continue to be synonymous with high costs and over-bureaucratisation (SEPSU, 1994). Becher (op. cit.) also notes the criticism that the procedures engender a high level of paperwork. There is also the danger that ISO 9000 series will be subject to the economic law of diminishing marginal returns due to the ever-increasing number of organisations achieving certification. When the vast majority of organisations in a particular sector have achieved ISO 9000 series certification, the possession of such an award no longer provides a competitive edge (Management Today, 1997).

Perhaps the most serious criticism is that if ISO 9000 series is implemented unimaginatively, it can consolidate current practice rather than encourage continuous improvement. In effect, it can inhibit the development of a high quality product or service rather than promote it. The problem for those that follow accreditation schemes is that they are more likely to focus on the present and the past than to pursue innovation, because the establishment of standardised processes and procedures allows little scope for experimentation. This is recognised within accreditation schemes such as the ISO 9000 series, which promotes continuous improvement, but the focus can be limited (Sterman, 1994). This is because the refinement of existing processes may be sufficient to meet the accreditation requirement, whilst experimentation with new ways of working may be stifled by the drive towards consistency and away from variability.

Reasons for failure have often centred upon shortcomings of implementation, such as poor communications, and lack of management commitment (Sterman, op. cit.). These can reflect the dichotomy in managerial thinking referred to by Argyris and Schon (1978) as the contrast between espoused theory and theory in use.

A more recent study (Bowie and Owen, 1996) of 458 Scottish manufacturing companies concluded that there was no evidence of a clear link between quality initiatives and improved financial performance. By using performance indicators such as turnover per

employee, profit margin, profit per employee and return on capital, the researchers claimed that the relationship between costs and benefits in relation to quality initiatives was generally unfavourable.

Commercial and industrial organisations were the first to recognise the advantages that could accrue from QM. Service industries soon followed with an appreciation that the improvement of quality could yield numerous benefits (Bank, 2000). However, measurement of service quality, although possible, is more problematic than is the case with product quality because the former is less tangible and more heterogeneous (Dolchin and Oakland, 1994).

Heskett et al. (1990) argue that quality in a service industry is the difference between the service provided and the service that the customer expected. The gap between service provision and service expectation can be measured by means of "gap analysis". On the basis of detailed research using questionnaires and focus groups with various commercial service providers, five underlying factors were discerned. These were tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy (Berry et al, 1985; Parasuraman et al., 1985; Zeithaml et al., 1990). Tangibles include the equipment and the appearance of the staff involved in the service. Reliability is gauged by the dependability and accuracy of the service and responsiveness involves the willingness of staff to be helpful. Assurance is concerned with staff competence and trustworthiness. Finally, empathy is used as a measure of staff communication and their understanding of customers' needs. On the basis of these five variables, a measure of service quality known as SERVQUAL was established (Zeithaml, op. cit.). When SERVQUAL and gap analysis were implemented, it was found that often the reasons for the gap between customers' expectations and their perceptions of service quality were due to lack of effective teamwork, the inappropriate fit of employee to the job or poor lateral communication amongst employees (Billing, 1998).

Many of the advantages of QM accrue from the empowerment of staff. Empowerment is the process by which power is redistributed and decentralised with employees enabled to

take greater control over their work environment and increase their contribution to the development of the organisation - as individuals and as members of a team. It also requires the creation of an "empowered organisational culture" where employees at all levels of the organisation are trusted to make decisions (Clutterbuck, 1994). This change in culture is achieved, in part, by adopting organisational practices that have the effect of distributing power, knowledge, information and rewards throughout the organisation (Lawler, 1995). Such a cultural change is central to the quality process because it aids the development of teamwork. Staff are not a loose collection of individuals but are members of a team who are trusted by management (Ripley and Ripley, 1992). Also, effective teams require the active involvement of senior management. It is the quality of this relationship between team members and their senior managers that is crucial (Morris and Haigh, 1996). Service organisations which have given staff greater autonomy when dealing with complaints have generally found that these complaints have been resolved more quickly, more amicably and at a lower cost. For example, when Ford of Belgium allowed its dealers to handle all complaints without a cost limit, there was a 75% drop in complaints to Ford's Head Office and a reduction in settlement costs (Cook, 1992). A further example of "customer recovery" is British Airways' standard response to complaints about luggage damaged by members of its staff. A stock of the most common luggage is kept (bought by British Airways in bulk and thereby achieving highly-discounted unit prices) and managers are empowered to replace damaged items on the spot. Customers are spared the inconvenience, distress and frustration of having to make a claim and then purchase their own replacement luggage. They are also left feeling well-disposed towards a British Airways' manager who has dealt with a problem efficiently and effectively (Goldsmith and Clutterbuck, 1997).

In addition, empowerment reduces members of staff's feelings of helplessness and can alleviate their fear of insecurity by locating decision-making at the lowest possible level in the organisation. In turn, this can mean that less supervision of staff is required, employee satisfaction is improved, employee turnover and absence is reduced as an individual's and a team's sense of self-determination is enhanced. An increased level of employee discretionary power can be a major reason for job satisfaction (Clutterbuck, op.cit.). Indeed, in an educational context, Sallis (op. cit.) argues that teachers and

lecturers will only support a QM approach if they are sufficiently empowered. It is only then that staff will work together towards the goal of putting customers first.

This emphasis on customer-orientation leads to the customer gaining many benefits, such as a higher quality product or service with the consequent increase in satisfaction. In turn, this encourages repeat business, increases demand and reduces the costs to the product or service provider of non-conformance (Hill, 1991). There is goal congruity as customer and the organisation, by means of QM, are more likely to have their needs met.

Empowerment appears to have a good deal to offer both employers and employees. However, employees do not always welcome it. There are many possible reasons for this including an unwillingness to be empowered or a fear of change. There could also be employees' underlying scepticism and cynicism over employers' motives for empowerment, suspecting it to be part of a cost-cutting exercise under the guise of delayering and empowerment (Clutterbuck, op. cit.).

This scepticism and cynicism has been fuelled by incidents such as in 1991 when the BT telecommunications company implemented QM. The Chairman had his salary related to profits and quality and subsequently received a 43% increase, bringing his salary to £536,000 per annum. This was accompanied by staff "downsizing" which led to the loss of 29,000 jobs. Whether this "downsizing" was a consequence of QM or coincidental, the effect was a marked deterioration in employee morale and greater fear of redundancy for those that retained their jobs (Flood, op. cit.).

There can also be the suspicion amongst staff about an organisation's motives for striving for the award of IiP or ISO 9000 series. Some employees might consider that their organisation is simply interested in obtaining a plaque for the entrance hall (Faulder, 1998).

The attitudes and varying employee perspectives on empowerment can be summarised by reference to TABLE 1.

TABLE 1: Employee Involvement and Quality Management: Contrasting Perspectives
Source: Wilkinson, A. et al. (1998)

POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
education	indoctrination
empowerment	emasculation
liberating	controlling
delayering	intensification
teamwork	peer group pressure
responsibility	surveillance
post-Fordist	neo-Fordism
blame free culture	identification of errors
commitment	compliance

Another potential problem with QM is that it does not necessarily achieve its desired outcome and deliver to the organisation all the gains listed earlier. Lawler (1995) reports on the Florida Power and Light Company who were one of the first Total Quality Management companies in the United States. Indeed, up until then they were the only non-Japanese company to have won the Deming Award for total quality. However, they abandoned TQM after two years because it was found that the obsessive focus on quality led to an inability to react sufficiently quickly to change and a spiralling of quality bureaucracy costs. An overall evaluation showed that, although Florida Power and Light Company's customers saw some improvement in their services, these improvements were not significant enough to offset the costs and the effort involved in their QM programme. The 1990 Baldridge Award winner, Wallace Company, subsequently found itself in severe financial difficulties because of their poor business performance and filed for protection against its creditors just two years after receiving the award (Bulletpoint, 1994). As has been seen earlier, similar problems exist in the UK. A study of over a

hundred British companies showed that only about 20% have considered that their QM programmes had contributed to profitability (Binney, op. cit.). However, it is possible that the lack of success of these British companies is due to factors other than QM. These factors could include poor general management or flawed strategic judgement as it is difficult to isolate a particular variable and to link cause with effect (Wilkinson et al., op. cit.).

Gill and Whittle (1992) adopt a cynical stance when evaluating QM. They link QM with Management by Objectives (MbO) and Organisation Development (OD), considering them all to be consultant-driven approaches to organisational improvement. The cyclical nature of such approaches lead to progression from a high enthusiasm phase, a high activity phase and then a period of disillusionment. They argue that MbO is in terminal decline, OD is in this third stage of development and QM is in the first "adolescent" stage and is now the preferred way of "managing by panacea" (see FIGURE 4). It is implied that QM has more to offer management consultants than their clients (Gill and Whittle, op. cit.).

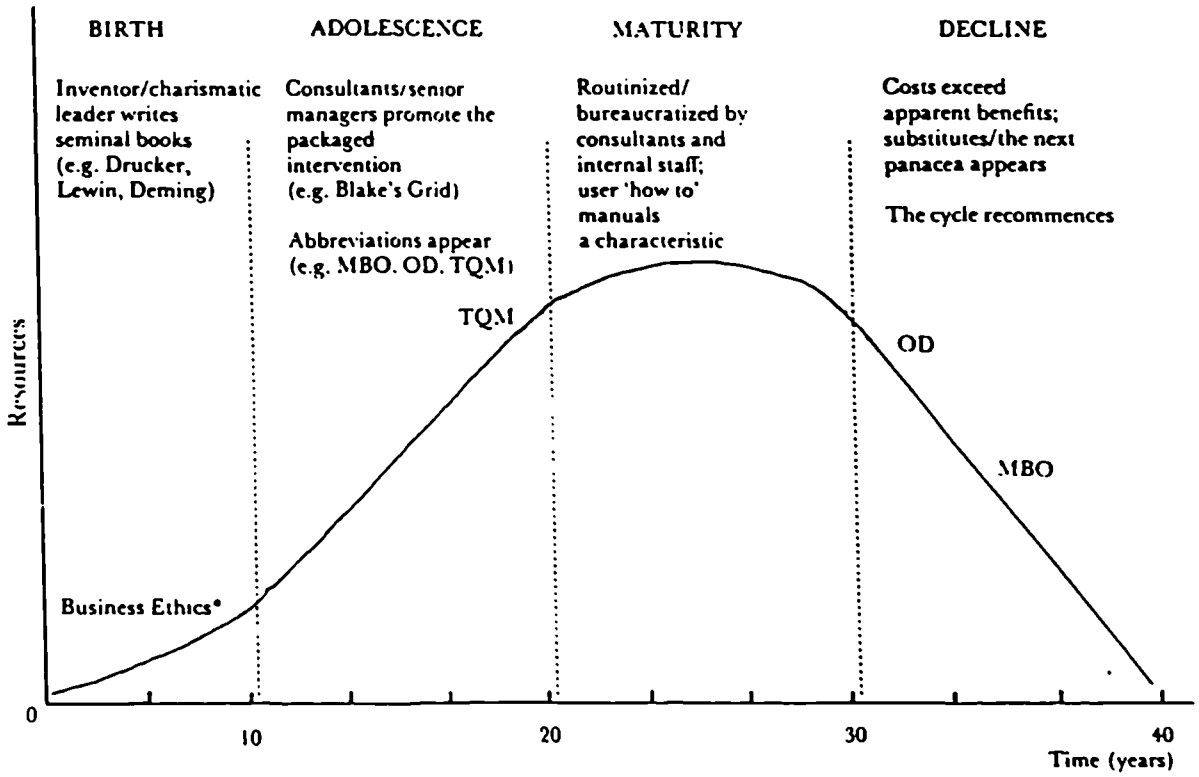


FIGURE 4: Life Cycle of Quality Management Schemes
Source: Gill, J., and Whittle, S. (1992).

It is claimed (James, 1992) that QM can offer employees job security as markets are consolidated due to the production or delivery of a reliable product or service that is required by the customer. It is also claimed that it offers job enrichment. In part, this is a consequence of empowerment that leads to greater employee self-esteem and self-development.

Although it has been argued that QM can ensure job security, a case can be made that the delayering which often accompanies it can limit career opportunities and possibly threaten job security. The Royal Mail case study discussed earlier is an exemplar of delayering and "rightsizing". Cost reduction is an important component of QM for an organisation and its customers and this was achieved by Royal Mail through significant staff reductions at head office. In service industries such as postal deliveries and education, labour costs can be as high as 80% of total organisational expenditure and thus any serious attempt to reduce costs needs to be targetted at the human resource. If greater use is to be made of team working and staff are to be empowered and freed to make decisions at their level in the organisation, the organisational structure has to be less hierarchical and much "flatter". This flattening of the structure gives employees far more "headroom" and facilitates quicker and more effective communication. Although the organisation gains from greater flexibility and responsiveness and a more fulfilled and committed workforce, the reduction in the number of hierarchical layers reduces the opportunity for traditional career advancement from one level of the hierarchy up to another (James, op. cit.). Thus, delayering and empowerment can lead to a significant reduction in commitment and motivation as career prospects become more limited. This particular reduction in motivation will, of course, only apply to those employees who are seeking career progression.

There is a danger of believing that getting the systems and procedures right is sufficient. This ignores the "human side" of work and management (Hutchins, 1992). Certain QM approaches make use of algorithms and flow charts and this suggests the presence of elements of Scientific Management. The rigid system of Evaluate, Plan, Do, Check and Amend with its emphasis on Statistical Process Control recommended by Oakland (1993), Total Systems Intervention (Flood, 1993), Crosby's (1984) fourteen steps for

quality improvement and the Investors in People Strategic Business Results triangle (see FIGURE 5), all imply in their various ways that there is one best way of achieving improvements in quality.

FIGURE 5: The Quality Triangle
Source: Investors in People (1992)

Crosby typifies this approach to QM,

> All work is a process ... You receive inputs to your work from other people, other functions, other suppliers. Then you apply your process to it. Your job changes that input in some way and that results in the output. So you've got input, process and output (Crosby, 1984 p.108).

A "check list" approach may be appropriate in an industrial setting where the product quality is, to a large extent, dependent upon the activities of machines. However, even here the value of a check list is questionable. In the service sector, activities are far more dependent on people. It is more difficult to eliminate errors by people than is the case with machines (Barnett, 1992a) and people, like only the most sophisticated and advanced machines, learn from their mistakes. As people learn from, and develop through, making mistakes, it brings into question whether Crosby's notion of "right first time" is appropriate for people-based processes as it is for machine-based processes.

Deming (1986, p.11) considers it to be "a meaningless slogan" in whatever context it is applied.

There are comparisons that can be made between mechanistic QM and Scientific Management. There is the common underpinning assumption that organisational processes can be improved through systematic analysis - follow the steps or the arrows on the flow chart, do as required and then the objective will be achieved. As with Scientific Management, QM involves a detailed consideration of processes. Frederick Taylor's Scientific Management was rather more explicit in its exhortation of one best way than the systems approaches to QM. Nevertheless, the key elements of Scientific Management - analysing, measuring and allocating work - are clearly present in some QM approaches such as ISO 9000 series, Total Quality Management and Business Process Re-engineering (Willmott, 1998). An important difference between Scientific Management and Quality Management is that QM allows those that are operating the processes to be involved in refining these operations in order to achieve the optimum effectiveness. Unlike Scientific Management, QM does not simply involve the managers doing the thinking and the employees doing as they are told. Instead, a sense of responsibility is developed and employees at all levels of the organisation are encouraged to contribute ideas which can lead to improvements in the quality of the product or service (Wille, 1993).

The key difference between Scientific Management and mechanistic forms of QM is that QM seeks to remove poor quality from a product or service rather than waiting until the product has been made or the service has been given until intervening (Flood, 1993).

To an extent, these more mechanistic approaches can be seen as limiting the employees' autonomy, forcing them to work within a set and established framework. Certainly, the degree to which autonomy is limited is not nearly as significant as is the case with Scientific Management. Proponents of QM such as Wille (op. cit.) claim it has a great deal to offer the employee in terms of increased job satisfaction that is a consequence of empowerment. However, it can be argued that the more mechanistic approaches to QM can atomise and disaggregate the component parts of a particular job and, instead of enlarging and enriching it, can limit the degree of autonomy afforded to the employee

(Macfarlane and Lomas, 1994). Creativity is hampered and limited by an over-concentration on the observable and quantifiable and, as a consequence, there is the demise of qualities such as creativity, quirkiness and creative subversion which were once highly valued by many organisations (Proctor and Powney, 1991). Creativity is a key attribute of a learning organisation and involves "difficult learning" – that is, double-loop as opposed to single-loop learning (Argyris, 1992). Mechanistic QM schemes are likely to focus on short-term, simple, single-loop learning (White et al., 1996). Learning is rarely a simple process and often involves a period of trial and error and learning by doing (Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars, 1993; Binney and Williams, 1995). Challenging the traditional ways of doing things is a route towards the achievement of a creative, innovative and competitive organisation. This prized objective is unlikely to be accomplished by following a series of prescribed steps (Hamel and Prahalad, 1994).

Pedler et al. (1991) provide a useful summary of the argument against mechanistic management approaches,

> Jobs cannot be split into micro-skills and put together again. Most, such as managing, require discretionary, not to say artistic abilities ... People become alienated when treated as measurable, mouldable, purposeless units ...(p.14).

Braverman (1974) argued that Scientific Management was the science of the management of other people's work and a strategy for de-skilling. It was a means of exercising greater control over employees, originally in the context of manual labour but extending to clerical, administrative and managerial work. Essentially, he believed that Scientific Management provided employers with the systems and techniques to supervise staff more closely and provide written statements on task performance. If one accepts the argument that more mechanistic forms of QM can be seen as a form of Scientific Management, then this type of QM can be viewed as constraining rather than empowering. It is also a way in which management can control its work force by establishing a rigid QM behavioural framework which has to be followed. This is when quality assurance becomes rather more like quality control (Tysome, 1994). Organisations are structures of control (Salaman, 1978) and exercising control is one of their legitimate functions. It is the degree of this control that is in question. There has been a long-standing concern that scientific management and mass production could lead to employees being homogenised

and reduced to small cogs in a large machine and this anxiety has been expressed in literature such as Aldous Huxley's (1932) "Brave New World" and George Orwell's (1949) "Nineteen Eighty-four" and Charlie Chaplin's (1936) film "Modern Times".

Ritzer (1993) has continued with this theme of de-skilling. He accepts that the Scientific Management techniques of homogeneity and standardisation have been applied most effectively in "fast-food" restaurants such as McDonalds. McDonaldisation is the process by which the principles of the fast-food restaurant are being applied in all areas of the economy and society. McDonaldisation offers efficiency, predictability and value for money. The use of soft-drink dispenser machines which shut off when a set amount of liquid has been delivered and pre-programmed cash registers which eliminate the need for cashiers to calculate amounts and prices provide this predictability and consistency in McDonald restaurants throughout the United Kingdom. The big value Big Mac Quarter Pounder and large fries, the soft-drink dispenser machines and pre-programmed cash registers have their equivalence in other sectors of society - in hospitals, schools and HEIs, for example. However, the precision and standardisation which leads to these benefits also reduces the skill required by the employee and, Ritzer argues, de-skills and de-humanises the work process.

In a later article when discussing HEIs (Ritzer, 1996), he shows far less concern over the de-skilling and de-humanising aspects of "McDonaldisation". Instead, he emphasises the efficiency that this approach brings, claiming that a university is rapidly becoming just another part of the consumer society. There is educational consumption taking place with students requiring a basic education without extras or frills. He likens the educational service that students want to a consumer requesting a McDonald's "value meal" in a fast-food restaurant. The expectations of students are exactly the same as any other consumers with the basic requirement of high quality courses and good service at a reasonable price. In the United Kingdom it could be argued that the Labour Government's target of a 35% participation rate in higher education by 18 to 21 year olds by 2001 (Richards, 1997) will confirm this sector of the economy as a "mass production industry".

Handy (1997) warns that this concern with efficiency is all very laudable but it does not necessarily mean that it is accompanied by effectiveness. He gives the example of computer booking at cinemas to illustrate this point. Cinema seats for a particular film can be arranged by telephone through responding to computerised questions. After a large amount of telephone key punching the cinema tickets are ordered and the credit card debited. This is very efficient for the cinema but not particularly effective for the consumer who has had to spend time and money on a telephone call.

Many claims are made for QM and how it can deliver numerous benefits to customers, the employer and the employees. It is the concern of this dissertation to focus on senior staff as stakeholders within an organisation and to examine the impact of QM from their perspective. It has been argued above that much depends on the type of QM, with more mechanistic forms presenting many more threats than opportunities to employees.

This theme can be examined further by looking at the appropriate organisational culture as a prerequisite of effective QM. Organisational culture can be considered as comprising intangible features such as the values that serve to guide people's behaviour. Other intangible features include the underlying basic assumptions of the members of an organisation. These are then manifested in the form of artefacts; for example, the decor of buildings, the type of furniture, uniform, organisational logos and notice boards (Schein, 1985; Everard and Morris, 1990).

This type of organisational culture which is essential to the development and sustenance of QM is one where everyone in the organisation, not just the quality controllers, is responsible for quality (Crosby, 1986). A culture that embraces all members of the organisation is vital if high service quality is to be achieved. This is the element cited most regularly by managers as contributing to good customer service (Horowitz and Jurgens Panek, op. cit.). Less mechanistic and more people-orientated QM approaches, such as Investors in People, are likely to thrive where there is a culture that encourages autonomy, responsibility, participation and continuous improvement (Flood, op. cit.). It is by means of organisational culture that employees are made aware of what is required of them. The commitment of senior management is essential if there is to be a change in

organisational culture to one, for instance, where there is an emphasis on achieving a high degree of customer satisfaction. Their commitment can help develop a culture in which employees are willing to play a part in ensuring that a high quality service is provided and the needs of the customers are met. They have a crucial role in implementing QM and developing and institutionalising it. Senior management has to work very hard for a significant period of time if the reasons for, and the value of, QM is to be conveyed effectively. Once this objective is achieved, employees are more likely to draw attention to problems of quality, strive for continuous improvement and look for ways of improving particular aspects of their work (Lawler, 1994). Deming (1986) talks of the need for an organisation-wide transformation in attitudes and the development of a new philosophy. However, culture can take years to develop and change. Organisations often find it difficult to persuade lower and middle management to alter their approach and attitudes and to achieve this cultural change (Develin, 1989). Relevant and appropriate training is vital if an organisational culture conducive to QM is to be developed. Indeed, the QM philosophy can be seen to begin and end with training and education (Ishikawa cited in Hutchins, op. cit.). Quality can be improved through securing staff commitment but this objective also requires careful staff selection and then, to ensure that staff skills are maintained, developed and adapted to respond to the rapidly changing demands of the customer, staff development programmes need to be devised and implemented. Compared to organisations in other parts of the world, those in the United Kingdom have a good deal of ground to make up in terms of training. Japanese companies that have located units in the UK have generally placed greater emphasis on training than other UK organisations. For example, Nissan Motor Manufacturing (UK) has received the IiP award and, in 1991, spent 4.5% of payroll on training. If the salaries of those people being trained are taken into account, the figure is 14% (Wickens, 1992). Harvey-Jones (1988) states that most United Kingdom organisations spend only 1 or 2% of their payroll costs on training.

National cultural factors play a part in how employees respond to attempts to create a customer-orientated organisational culture. Japanese organisations are renowned for the way they have, for many years now, embraced whole-heartedly the notion of customer satisfaction (Pascale and Athos, 1982) and their competitive success in commercial and

industrial markets in the 1970s and 1980s led organisations in the USA and Europe to contemplate the reasons for this success. Japanese national culture is one in which the values of quality, attention to detail and the acceptance of seniority and hierarchy predominate (Lawler, 1995). In Japan, a unitary perspective predominates with the goals of employees being interlinked with those of the organisation (Bratton and Gold, 1999). Lessem (1991) and de Mente (1990) support Lawler's point, arguing that a major reason why Japanese organisations have been so successful in introducing QM approaches is that their society is based on Buddhist and Confucian traditions which stress selflessness, self-discipline and the submission of the individual to group needs. Over a hundred years ago Japan was still largely a feudal society. Extreme diligence and self-sacrifice by workers were key features of such a society and generally these features have remained as Japan industrialised (Sakai, 1990).

In many Japanese organisations the business day begins with *taiso*. This involves limbering up exercises for all staff that are designed to set a co-operative and focused mood for the day. Often these exercises will be followed by a rousing talk from each section leader to his/her section members (The Economist Guide, 1990). Indeed, a Japanese organisation chart does not show individual titles and names as in Britain but instead just shows the collective units.

Loyalty to one's group is paramount and supersedes any self-interest (Mole, 1992). Thus, there is a reciprocal commitment between employees and the organisation (James, 1992). This contrasts with the more pluralist perspective that exists in Britain and where there is often a lack of congruity between employee and organisational goals (Gospel and Palmer, 1993). In Japan, there is also a prevailing attitude that is encapsulated by the term *giri*. An employee has a profound sense of duty towards the organisation and strives to do the best possible work and, at the very least, match the contribution of any other member of the group. Failure to achieve this target results in feelings of shame at having let down work colleagues (Briggs, 1988). All of the above helps to explain why there is more fertile ground for the introduction and development of QM in Japan than in Britain. As cultural factors are a major reason for the success of Japanese industry in terms of QM, it would be unwise to assume that Japanese approaches and techniques can easily be

applied in the UK. After all, where there is a different culture, there is likely to be a different solution (Robson, 1994).

QM involves a blend of process and people-orientated foci. ISO 9000 series emphasises the former and "Investors in People" the latter. Where the Japanese have been successful is in reconciling these two different foci; the Western statistical techniques as exemplified by Deming and the Eastern Buddhist and Confucian philosophy (Lessem, op. cit.). To return to Pirsig's (op. cit.) analogy discussed earlier, the Japanese manage to combine the art of motorcycle maintenance with a Zen philosophy. However, recent events in Japan with the significant financial difficulties of certain well-established companies and banking institutions (Tett, 1999) and record levels of unemployment in April 1999 (Financial Times, 1999b) suggest that the success of their organisations has diminished and their economic performance is no longer the subject of approbation.

SUMMARY

There was a perceived need for QM in the United Kingdom amongst employers because of the general dissatisfaction amongst customers engendered by unhelpful and uncommitted employees. QM concentrated on the processes involved in the manufacture of a product or the delivery of a service. It also concentrated on improving the relationship between the front-line members of staff and the customers.

Employers in the United Kingdom were impressed with the competitive gains made by their counterparts in the Far East. Through using QM schemes such as ISO 9000 series, IiP, Charter Marks, benchmarking, European Foundation for Quality Management and Business Process Re-engineering, United Kingdom (UK) commercial, industrial and local government organisations have also benefited from lower costs, improved quality and increased market share. However, there is some concern that UK organisations have not enjoyed the same levels of success as those in Japan. The great success of Japanese organisations is felt to be largely a function of a national culture that extols the virtues of

team-working, discipline and obedience; cultural factors that are not so readily identifiable in the UK.

It is claimed that more discursive and people-orientated QM schemes such as IiP can help empower employees by redistributing power and allowing them greater input in the decision-making process. However, as QM has developed alongside organisational delayering and downsizing, the greater use of team-working and the reduction in the organisational hierarchy have been viewed by many as a cost-cutting exercise.

The value of more mechanistic QM schemes lies largely in the provision of a clear and thorough system. This is established in order to identify and isolate the key processes, measure the present performance of these processes and establish specific criteria that need to be addressed in order to improve overall quality. However, with more mechanistic QM schemes such as ISO 9000 series and European Foundation for Quality Management, the inflexible, "check list" criteria force employees to work within a tight framework. Rather than empowering employees, these forms of QM limit rather than extend their autonomy. Ritzer extols this form of QM, regarding it as a form of standardisation. There is the provision of predictable, reliable, value-for-money products and services by means of the McDonaldisation of all aspects of society.

Some QM schemes aim to improve quality by providing certainty and precision whereas others seek to achieve quality improvements through the involvement and empowerment of staff. There would seem to a trade-off between standardisation and employee autonomy. In commerce and industry, market advantages are seen to accrue from the consistency of a product or a service. However, there is often a cost to this standardisation in terms of a reduction in employee control over work processing and decision-making. In the following chapter, the impact of QM on organisations in the higher education sector is chronicled, evaluated and analysed.

CHAPTER THREE - QUALITY MANAGEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Quality Management in Higher Education is the complete process that is established to gauge curriculum development, strategic and course planning, resourcing, validation of academic programmes and the monitoring and review of teaching and learning in HEIs (Doherty, 1994). It specifically excludes services such as catering and student accommodation. In summary, quality in Higher Education can be considered as the nature of the students' academic experiences in terms of their appropriateness and how they match up to the HEI's stated aims and objectives of the programmes of study of the HEI (HEQC, 1995a). Within the Higher Education sector, the various stakeholders emphasise particular aspects of quality. Many academics place QM within a context of increasing student numbers without a commensurate increase in funding. This leads to a situation where staff often feel overworked, stressed and demoralised (Brown at al., 1997). They often emphasise collegial, epistemological and professional issues whereas funders of Higher Education stress efficiency, and students and prospective students adopt a consumerist perspective. Employers, on the other hand, are concerned with the quality of the "finished product" (Barnett, 1994a; Thorne and Cuthbert, 1996).

QM is higher education's new meta-discourse throughout most parts of the world (Brennan, 1997) with each country tending to make use of some variant of van Vught and Westerheijen's (1993) five point general model of QM:

1. a meta-level co-ordination body;
2. self-evaluations undertaken within institutions;
3. external peer review;
4. publication of reports;
5. a link to funding.

Examples of national QM co-ordinating bodies in Europe are the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education in England, the Association of Universities (VSNU) in the Netherlands and the Comité National d'Evaluation in France. The locus of power relating to quality assessment can be either centralised or decentralised at various levels; for

example, the state level in Britain and Denmark, the institutional level in Canada and the faculty level in Sweden (Brennan, op. cit.; Bowden and Marton, 1998).

In Britain in the late 1970s and the 1980s, bi-partisan political dissatisfaction with the performance of teachers and lecturers, and the general failure of the British educational system to provide the skills required by British industry, have led to the government intervening far more in the education sector (Burrage, 1994; Taylor, 1994). The establishment of the Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education in 1984 is an example of a response to the growing concern for accountability. As the relationship between higher education and the state has altered with the state taking a greater control of affairs, there has been a shift from knowledge as a process to knowledge as a product (Scott, 1984). As a consequence, HEIs have been exhorted to provide their clients and customers with a product that allows the latter to, "... operate effectively in society" (Barnett, 1994b p.15). The DES had said in 1987 that, although meeting the needs of the economy was not the sole purpose of higher education, the Government would reward those HEIs that fostered links with business and commerce. The following quotation from the Training Agency (1989) points up this product-orientation and the intended and impending colonisation of higher education by business and industry,

> The need for graduates who are in tune with the enterprise culture, who are aware of the needs of industry and commerce, who know how to learn and have had the experience of the world of work ... .

Scott (1995) also argues that recent developments in higher education such as modularisation, elective courses and more specialist degrees are part of consumer-based product differentiation.

Developments in the Higher Education Sector

Students attending Polytechnics, Colleges of Advanced Technology (CATs) and Colleges of Higher Education, if successful, received their degrees via the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) which was established by Royal Charter in 1964. The CNAA had been a development from the National Committee for Technological Awards that was

established in 1955. The first CNAA-approved academic programmes commenced in 1965 (Radford, 1997). CATs had received a boost in 1963 with the Robbins Report which encouraged the creation of more such colleges and, in 1965, there was Anthony Crosland's proposal to create about thirty polytechnics, largely from an amalgamation of regional technical colleges (HMSO, 1966; Barnard, 1971). The CNAA scrutinised the quality of work of the polytechnics and some other colleges. This scrutiny was based on a thorough examination of issues such as programme validation proposals, course documentation, student feedback and staff development. Barnett (1996) argues that it was the creation of the CNAA that heralded the notion of quality assurance in higher education. In the university sector at that time, HEIs had a far less rigorous regime, enjoyed a far greater degree of autonomy and had a significant level of freedom to determine their own standards (Kogan, 1991). Under pressure from the Government in the latter part of the 1980s, universities and colleges - through the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP) - started to consider certain quality issues. For example, the system of External Examination was reviewed, guidance on "Academic Standards in Universities" was issued and universities were asked to reflect upon the effectiveness of their procedures. By 1991, the CVCP had established an Academic Audit Unit to monitor universities' quality assurance procedures (Barnett, 1996).

In the early 1980s, many members of the ruling Conservative party were concerned that previous funding mechanisms, such as that administered by the University Grants Committee (UGC), had been manipulated by the producer interests which it was supposed to oversee (Tapper and Salter, 1995). The White Paper of 1981 issued by the Secretary of State for Education, Sir Keith Joseph, was a response to these concerns relating to the UGC. The UGC was considered to be dominated by academics and their influence was severely reduced by the White Paper that cut university funding in real terms by 11-15% between the period 1981 to 1984. As well as leading to reductions in total university funding, the White Paper used finance to boost subjects such as science, computing, engineering and management and penalise social science subjects that it considered to be somewhat "political" and of relatively little direct benefit to the economy (Walford, 1987). The latter was achieved by a reduction in the allocations to the Social Science Research Council (SSRC). The SSRC was subsequently re-named the Economic and

Social Research Council. By means of the 1988 Education Reform Act, the UGC was abolished and replaced with the Universities Funding Council. This body had considerable representation from industry, finance and commerce with a consequent reduction in academic representation (Dearlove, 1998). Since the early 1980s, there has been a growing emphasis in all phases of the education sector to be more responsive to their customers and consumers - the employers and students. There has been a significant shift away from a higher education system that is provider and subject-driven to one that responds to the needs of the student, employers and the government (purchasing educational services on behalf of the students). HEIs now need to be much more responsive to changes within the higher education market (Hall, 1996).

Also, there has been a drive towards greater accountability and increased value for money as far as taxpayers are concerned. Diana Warwick (1996), Chief Executive of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, considered that the November 1995 Budget led to the most significant cuts in higher education expenditure since 1981. Overall spending in 1996/7 fell by £174 million with a further cut of £12 million in 1998/9. However, there were some "winners", such as Chichester Institute of Higher Education (now known as University College Chichester), which gained a 16.6% increase in funding in 1996/7 compared with 1995/6. One general effect of the reductions was a fall in spending per capita from £4350 in 1995/6 to £4045 in 1996/7. The Standing Conference of Principals (SCOP) in Colleges of Higher Education so deplored these reductions in funding that one of the sanctions it considered in response was withdrawal from national quality processes (SCOP, 1996). Between 1989 and 1994, student enrolments increased by over 50% whereas expenditure per student fell by 30% in real terms (Williams, G., 1997). The Conservative Government believed that,

> ... the real key to achieving cost-effective expansion lies in greater competition for funds and students (HMSO, 1991 para.17).

To assist with the monitoring of accountability, league tables relating to various aspects of higher education were published. A set of six performance indicators were established after discussions between HEFCE, SCOP, CVCP, Higher Education Statistical Agency (HESA), Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) and the Treasury. The six

indicators are the participation rates of under-represented groups, student progression, learning outcomes, learning and teaching efficiency, student employment and research output. Context statistics for each HEI are used to adjust the ratings to take account of the students' backgrounds and the subject mix at that institution. Initially, the tables of performance indicators are being compiled for government departments and not prospective students (Goddard, 1999a). Bahram Bekhradnia, the director of policy at HEFCE, acknowledges the difficulties of comparing HEIs,

> What you measure is value-laden and a particular issue is whether you are comparing like with like. There is considerable diversity in the higher education, from Rose Bruford College to universities like Oxford and Cambridge or Imperial College, London (cited in Goddard, op. cit. p.6).

Nevertheless, he notes that HEIs are very resistant to the concept of performance indicators that are used in most other sectors of the economy. He also implies that difficulties in establishing performance indicators should not be a reason for not using them.

Managerialism and Professionalism

There has been an increase in the level of managerialism in education and this increase has been fuelled by the necessity to do more with less (Warwick, op. cit.; Williams, G., op. cit.). Managerialism is based on the primacy of student throughput with the consequent generation of income. Quality is assessed on the basis of outcomes with value for taxpayers' money being a key factor (Randle and Brady, 1997). It involves the development of a more formal organisational structure with a centralising of control (Holmes, 1993). Managerialism also, a number of writers argue, leads to a reduction in the level of consultation, fewer committees and the concentration of power at the centre of an HEI. This shift in the locus of power has been encapsulated in the phrase "the decline of the professor and the rise of the registrar" (Dopson and McNay, 1996 p.30). Morley (1997) neatly summarises managerialism in terms of the 3 "E"s of economy, efficiency and effectiveness and Government restrictions on public expenditure have exerted pressure on educational institutions to be far more cost effective. Strengthening

management has been seen as an aid to achieving this objective (Scott, 1989). Recent government reforms of higher education have been designed to develop HEIs into business-like organisations (DES, 1985; Shore and Roberts, 1995) and tighten up the relationship between the various academic, administrative, support and ancillary units that make up an HEI. Weick (1988) argues that, before the rise of managerialism, these units were "loosely coupled". Generally, the relationship between the academic and administrative functions, for example, was relatively weak with infrequent contact between academic and administrative staff and only minimal interdependence. Loose coupling allows the staff of an HEI a significant degree of autonomy (Weick, op. cit.) and one consequence of a tightening of the coupling is to increase the visibility and accountability of each unit. This is because the behaviour and contribution of its staff towards the achievement of organisational goals is open to greater scrutiny by the staff of other units.

Lessons in management have been sought from the private sector and then applied to the public sector as the budget-capping of the 1970s gave way to an insistence on commercial models of management in the 1980s (Barnett,1994b). Such commercial models placed emphasis on the value of small business units, a balance between central control and devolution of decision-making and the importance of the quality of a service or product as well as its price (Fielden, 1990). Scott (op. cit.) also views the adoption of the notions of line management as a substitute for those of professional responsibility. The development of line management, together with strategic planning, mission statements, objectives, action plans and performance indicators are examples of the development of managerialism in the educational sector. Trowler (1998) cites modularisation, semesterisation and the use of Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) and Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) for credit accumulation and transfer schemes (CATs) as relatively recent specific manifestations of managerialism in HEIs. Rowley (1997) claims that a re-definition of higher education is taking place. This still includes the intellectual development of students but accountability is no longer restricted to the academic community. There is accountability to the students. With the emergence of a contract culture there has been the establishment of learning contracts and the Students' Charter. Students, as customers, expect lecturers to arrive for lectures on time and to

mark and return work within a reasonable period. Until the creation of HEQC and HEFCE, universities were exempt from external scrutiny (Sharp, 1995). The development of these two bodies and the later emergence of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) reflect the greater emphasis that is placed on meeting the needs of society, the economy and the State. Consequently, there has been an extension of the people and institutions to which higher education institutions are now accountable (NATFHE, 1992).

There is a tension between accountability to central government and other lay stakeholder groups and the academic freedom and autonomy of HEI lecturers relating to curriculum, evaluation and assessment. Generally, this greater concern for accountability has been perceived by lecturers as limiting the extent of their professionalism (Becher, 1994). Professionalism can be viewed as being based on the assumption that lecturers are experts with a mastery over a particular area of knowledge (Jarvis, 1983). There is an underpinning philosophy that they should have a high degree of autonomy and lecturers should be largely accountable to their peers (Rundle and Brady, 1997). The restrictions on professionalism can be seen as influencing organisational culture in institutions of higher education by reducing the previous prevailing dominance of a person culture. The move to greater accountability - as exemplified by course review systems, staff appraisal and research ratings - has tended to narrow the gap between HEIs and other organisations (Barnett, 1994b). As a consequence, the opposition to QM awareness-raising and training is likely to have waned. Overall, the drive for efficiency with the consequent emphasis on greater government control has meant that managerialism has flourished at the expense of professionalism (Thorne and Cuthbert, 1996).

The various issues involved in the debate over professionalism and managerialism are summarised well in TABLE 2:

Barnett (1997b) acknowledges that modern HEIs are large, complex organisations that require firm, clear management in order to provide strategic thinking and to ensure that their mission, aims and objectives are fulfilled efficiently and effectively. However, he gives a

PROFESSIONAL PARADIGM	MANAGERIALIST PARADIGM
Goals and Values • primacy of student learning and the teaching process • loyalty to students and colleagues concern for academic standards **Key assumptions** • lecturers as experts • resources deployed on the basis of educational need • quality of provision assessed on the basis of input **Management ethos** • collegiality • professional autonomy • pluralism	**Goals and Values** • primacy of student through-put and income generation • loyalty to the organisation • concern to achieve an acceptable balance between efficiency and effectiveness **Key assumptions** • lecturers as flexible facilitators and assessors • resources deployed on the basis of market-demand and value for taxpayers' money • quality assessed on the basis of output/outcomes **Management ethos** • control by managers and the market • management by performance indicators • unitarism

TABLE 2 Conflicting Professional and Managerialist Paradigms
Source: Randle, K and Brady, N. (1997)

practical example of how managerialism can be in conflict with certain cherished tenets associated with professionalism. One such tenet is the primacy of critical thought in Higher Education. Managerialism involves the creation of a clear goal that is articulated in an HEI's mission statement and goal congruity is achieved through the use of staff appraisal. As agreement to common goals is sought, so criticism is seen as dissent and, perhaps, disloyalty. There is an expectation that all staff will assist in the achievement of corporate goals and promote the corporate image.

Lecturers as Professionals

In higher education, it is necessary to take into account the notion of professionalism that can lead to some resistance to change. Professionals are usually defined as those people in non-manual, scholarly occupations who have undertaken an educational programme in order to acquire specialised, theoretical professional knowledge. The success in acquiring this knowledge is often demonstrated in examinations (Conze and Kocka cited in Burrage and Torstendahl, 1990). They possess a body of knowledge that others do not and the consumer expects the professional to use this body of knowledge to fulfil his/her needs (Squires, 1990). Becoming a professional involves more than just accumulating and updating a particular body of knowledge. It also requires a special perspective with a characteristic type of thinking (Hammer, 1997). An example of this would be an ethical sensitivity with regard to professional/client relationships. Burrage and Torstendahl (1990) consider that there are four professional faculties - theological, medical, juridical and philosophical - and these have the associated occupations of priest, doctor, lawyer and lecturer/teacher. Lecturers can be seen as commanding cultural knowledge that they then transmit to their students. They can, it is argued,

> ... be considered to be among the élite of modern secularised culture (Siegrist, 1994 p.3).

Indeed, higher education lecturing has been termed the key profession because it provides the initial education for other professions (Becher, 1999). Thus, lecturers often perceive themselves as professionals in the same way as doctors, barristers and solicitors and there is an underpinning dominant person culture (Handy, 1993) which can lead to resistance to extra-professional training initiatives. It can also lead to an unwillingness or inability to deal with incompetent or unconscientious members of the profession.

Lecturers can be seen as operating within a professional bureaucracy that is one of the five types of bureaucracy discerned by Mintzberg (1983). Mintzberg developed a typology of bureaucracies as a result of his research in North American HEIs. The professional bureaucratic form of organisation tends to be common in education and healthcare services and relies on specialists. It affords them a high degree of autonomy.

These specialists are free to develop their skills with only limited interference from outside the profession. Becher (1989) notes that within the lecturing profession there are a number of subject-based "academic tribes" that have their own epistemological territories, artefacts and heroes. This tribal system further reinforces professionalism. However, there is a danger that the discretion and autonomy possessed by professionals leads to them ignoring the needs of their clients, customers and their organisation (Mintzberg, op.cit.).

Any change tends to be met initially by denial (Carnall, 1995) and occurrences of cultural change in HE institutions can be gauged by looking at indicators such as management and teaching styles, the type of student feedback and the willingness of lecturers to give tutorials. If there is to be the appropriate culture for QM, there should be unity of purpose and clear, agreed goals. Academic and non-academic staff should understand the mission statement and they should be committed to its achievement (Hart and Shoolbred, 1993). Also, there should be in existence a culture of continuous improvement with the emphasis not just on external scrutiny but on effective internal action (Harvey and Knight, op.cit.).

Total Quality Management, ISO 9000 Series, the Charter Mark and Investors in People

The Department for Education's White Paper (1991) signalled a significant increase in the degree to which Quality Management impinged upon and influenced the operation and development of universities and colleges of higher education. After the publication of this White Paper, HEIs began to adopt management techniques utilised by the private sector. For example, in 1993 the University of Wolverhampton registered for ISO 9000 series and was concerned to develop a Philip Crosby's "do-it-right-first-time" organisational culture by adhering to the requirements of ISO 9000 series at all times (Crosby, 1984). In August 1994, it became the first university to achieve ISO 9000 series status. This involved registration for all learning experiences, research and consultancy. Promotional material, admission procedures, enrolment and registration, student tracking, attendance and student progress were the major institutional procedures that were systematised and monitored. However, there was a broader purpose for seeking and

subsequently achieving ISO 9000. The university had five sites in the West Midlands and Shropshire and this militated against the establishment of a clear, common culture at all of these sites. Registration was seen as a means of tackling this "innate incoherence" that was identified by its Vice-Chancellor (Storey, 1993). Another broader issue was that the university had, in its Mission Statement, identified its target audience and this included specific groups such as female returners and ethnic minorities. Modular academic courses were seen as the means of addressing the needs of these groups. ISO 9000 series was adopted as a quality management approach which would ensure consistency of lecturing and student tracking as well as establishing clarity about the rights and responsibilities of students and lecturers where there was an academic structure that was both complex and flexible (Doherty, 1995).

Peters and Wills (1998) recognise that ISO 9000 series is open to the criticisms that it requires an inordinate level of form-filling, it is more appropriate in a production than a service environment and that it focuses on processes rather than outcomes. Nevertheless, they argue that the "badge" of ISO 9000 series gives a marketing advantage by acting in the same way as a brand name such as Coca Cola. It assures the customer that the educational service on offer is reliable and will fulfil its promise. Reliability is assured by means of service level statements on student registration, tuition, supervision, marking, graduation, certification and external examination, for example. Where there is service level breakdown, details are logged and action is taken to prevent any recurrence of non-conformance (Peters and Wills, op. cit.).

Yorke (1999) argues that ISO 9000 series could provide effective scrutiny of an HEI's quality assurance systems and procedures, thereby providing answers to the question, "Are things being done right?" However, the mechanistic and standardised nature of this approach meant that it was far less satisfactory at finding answers to the question, "Are the right things being done?"

The University of Wolverhampton was also the first university to be awarded the Charter Mark. Again, this was in 1994 (Doherty, 1995). Additionally, its numerous efforts with QM were recognised by HEQC,

> The audit team wishes to commend the university upon the clarity of its quality strategy, the vigour and determination with which it has been pursued, and the extent to which this appears to be shared throughout the organisation (HEQC, 1994d p.6).

Wolverhampton University, together with Aston, South Bank and Ulster universities, has developed TQM approaches (Hart and Shoolbred, op. cit.; Kanji and Tambi, 1999). Aston University has made use of the notion of continuous improvement (*kaizen*) and, as early as 1987, introduced quality circles as a means of achieving this end. TQM was adopted throughout the University and involved academic and non-academic staff. As well as the adoption of *kaizen*, there was academic restructuring, a great emphasis on customer care and the development of a clear corporate identity (Clayton, 1995).

South Bank University considered that TQM was a means of developing and eventually achieving an organisational culture that was more amenable to change. Teamwork and cross-functional co-operation were used to develop this openness. TQM was seen by their Dean of Educational Development, not as a mechanism to control the level of quality, but rather as a way of motivating staff and increasing their commitment to the students (Chadwick, 1995). Again, there is an emphasis on care of customers and changing lecturers' attitudes towards them.

TQM has been used by HEIs in the United States of America where it has been claimed to have led to greater customer satisfaction, reduced costs, better services and a general improvement in student performance (Kanji and Tambi, op. cit.). However, research conducted by Kanji and Tambi in United Kingdom HEIs in the late 1990s and reported in 1999 showed that use of TQM was restricted to the few modern universities listed earlier. The researchers noted that, overall, there was relatively little interest in the UK with HEIs preferring to use authorship and research as means of improving the quality of the service that they provide. Bowden and Marton (op. cit.) suggest a reason why the concept has generally not found favour with senior managers in HEIs. There is an assumption on the part of supporters of TQM that the "product" of higher education is clear and fixed and that it is simply a matter of controlling the processes involved. However, many senior managers in higher education consider the "product" to be far more complex and

ambiguous. This has led them to question the viability of TQM's transferability from industry and commerce to the higher education sector.

There is a wide range of attitudes concerning the value of TQM to an HEI. These attitudes extend from those members of staff of HEIs who view it as a means of improving product and service quality in the same way that this has been achieved in the industrial and commercial sectors, to those staff who perceive TQM as a form of managerialism that inevitably leads to an erosion of academic autonomy (Harvey, 1995).

The University of Luton became the first organisation in the higher education sector to be awarded Investors in People status. Other HEIs, such as the University of Wolverhampton and Nene College of Higher Education in 1997, have followed their lead and now there are eleven whole institutions that are recognised (UCoSDA, 1998). It is the aim of the IiP Higher Education Forum, comprising Investors in People UK, Universities and Colleges Staff Development Agency, members of the National Council of The National Training Organisations and the Quality Assurance Agency, to encourage the achievement of some element of IiP recognition by 70% of HEIs in the year 2000 (UCoSDA, op.cit.). The Dearing Report (1997, para 47) has also exhorted the achievement of this aim,

> We recommend that, over the next year, all institutions should consider whether to seek the Investors in People award.

The main focus of IiP is to achieve goal congruity so that organisational and individual goals are achieved. From an organisational perceptive, IiP can help with the attainment of strategic objectives and the development of a "learning organisation". However, a recent evaluation of IiP in Higher Education (Thackwray, 1996) questioned whether individual goals were being achieved. The author considered that there was a general lack of flexibility in HEIs to reward staff either financially or non-financially on the basis of their contribution towards the achievement of the organisation's strategic goals. This evaluation suggests that the desired goal congruity is not yet being achieved.

Overall, the response of HEIs to IiP so far could be regarded as disappointing. IiP has not been embraced to the same extent as in the further education sector. Wojtas (1999) suggests some reasons for this including "assessment fatigue" in the higher education sector, a perception that IiP represents a threat to institutional autonomy and a wariness, unlike in colleges of further education, of investigations by outside organisations.

Of course, the "badge" of IiP, the Charter Mark or ISO 9000 series is no guarantee of the provision of a high quality service. For example, this was shown when an analysis of HEQC audits by its former Chief Executive, Roger Brown, revealed that the University of Wolverhampton, a holder of all three awards, was severely condemned for weak quality control practice in its collaborative arrangements with overseas HEIs (Baty, 1998a). Similarly, Sunderland University received the Charter Mark for public sector excellence in 1997 yet, in a recent report by the National Postgraduate Committee entitled "Complaints in Crisis", its student complaints procedure was criticised for being "not good" (cited in THES, 1999d). These examples illustrate clearly that quality management awards are not panaceas that can ensure all aspects of an HEI's activities are of the highest quality.

The Higher Education Quality Council and the Higher Education Funding Council for England

The 1992 Further and Higher Education Act established as a quasi-autonomous non-governmental organisation ("Quango") the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and gave it the responsibility for assessing quality in Higher Education. Also in 1992, the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals established the Higher Education Quality Council (HEQC) to which was assigned the task of auditing HEIs' procedures and mechanisms for monitoring, controlling and assessing quality. This involved examining whether the systematic processes by which an institution assesses, maintains and reports on the quality of its programmes were working satisfactorily. This quality audit purports to address issues of "fitness for purpose" and was not concerned with excellence or whether HEIs or universities meet particular standards. Whether or

not academic standards are met was part of HEFCE's remit and is now the responsibility of the QAA.

The influence of quality management has increased steadily during the last few years and HEIs gradually created Academic Standards Units and/or Committees and devised departmental self-assessments of quality. Initially, this was in preparation for assessments by HEFCE inspectors and audits by HEQC auditors. Often Pro-Vice-Chancellors were charged with the responsibility for overseeing QM. QAA has now taken over both the assessment and audit functions formerly exercised by HEFCE and HEQC.

QM in HEIs has tended to follow a general pattern. Such QM has included students' evaluations of courses. The results of these evaluations, together with lecturer team members' perceptions, the minutes of Programme Management Committee meetings and External Examiners' reports, form the basis of Programme reviews. These reviews are submitted to a body such as an Academic Standards Unit or Committee. The reviews include an Action Plan and the particular HEI's Academic Standards Unit or Committee monitors whether or not the programme team fulfils the objectives of the Action Plan.

Although both HEFCE and HEQC were engaged in activities that were designed to improve quality and thereby protect the interests of students, each organisation had very different backgrounds and remits which influenced their methods of operation and perspectives on Quality Management. Essentially, HEQC recognised the great diversity in higher education and was concerned with institutional processes and undertook quality audits that looked at the fitness for purpose of institutional systems for course programme validation and evaluation. In this respect, the audit was similar to the required procedures for ISO 9000 series. It investigated procedures and mechanisms that could aid the development of quality courses. Its brief included examining course approval, course evaluation and verification and feedback systems. At a more general level, HEQC was determined to enhance HEIs' systems and procedures through publications such as "Learning from Audit" (HEQC, 1994c; HEQC, 1996a) and "Guidelines for Quality Assurance" (HEQC, 1994a; HEQC, 1995b; 1996b).

HEFCE was concerned principally with institutional and departmental outcomes, conducting quality assessments of the teaching and learning in college and university departments. Its Quality Assessment Division helped HEFCE to discharge its statutory duty with regard to quality assurance. Its mission stated that, by working in partnership with the various stakeholder groups in higher education, it would promote and fund high quality, cost-effective teaching and research. It aimed, and still aims, to meet the diverse needs of students, the economy and society. The diversity referred to in the mission statement is most significant as it acknowledged the wide range of provision in HEIs during the period of mass higher education in the late twentieth century. Circular 3/93 provided further detail stating that HEFCE's key function was to,

> ... ensure that all education for which the HEFCE provides funding is of satisfactory quality or better, and to ensure speedy rectification of unsatisfactory quality; ... encourage improvements in the quality of education through the publication of assessment reports (and) ... inform funding and reward excellence (HEFCE, 1993 Section A paragraph 5).

In 1999, it was responsible for allocating approximately £4 billion per year to HEIs in England to support teaching and research. In addition to having the power to reward excellence, HEFCE is able to apply financial sanctions when the quality of education is at the other end of the scale,

> Where education is confirmed to be unsatisfactory, the institution will be ineligible in the first year after the assessment for any funds allocated to the Council for growth. It will also be informed that if the quality does not improve, core funding will be successively or immediately withdrawn (HEFCE, 1993 Section A paragraph 27).

There were no set criteria nor was there a checklist against which to assess quality of teaching and learning. However, because there are numerous definitions of quality (Harvey and Green, 1993), HEFCE stressed specific aspects and details certain features of student learning experience which it regarded as "good practice". A definition of "good practice" emerged and developed from HEFCE reports, focusing on issues related to the need for up-to-date curricula and syllabuses, effective curriculum delivery, a well-organised programme of teaching, appropriate assessment methods and feedback to students and sufficient support for staff and students (HEFCE, 1993). HEFCE aimed to

form very clear judgements about a particular programme area in an institution and to provide a summative evaluation. This evaluation is central to the external accountability process. Such evaluation did involve reference to an HEI's aims and objectives for a particular course,

> ... to judge the appropriateness and adequacy of provision against the stated course aims and objectives: in other words, to what extent is provision fit for the purpose set? (HEFCE, 1993 para. 49)

Thus, as with HEQC, the diversity in the higher education sector was acknowledged. From published reports on HEIs and the subject summaries, HEFCE assessors' comments have focused on issues such as depth of knowledge, range of coverage within a subject, progression, cohesion and relevance (de Vries, 1996). It is clear then that a definition of quality from HEFCE was emerging, one that was related to the fitness for the purpose set for a particular course. Depth, breadth, continuity and coherence of the curriculum were considered as vital in determining whether the course would be fit for the purpose for which it was established. This purpose should be stated unequivocally in the course aims and objectives.

HEFCE Quality Assessment Division's principal task was that of scrutinising the quality of teaching on a subject basis. To help achieve this scrutiny, the assessment initially employed a three-point scale of unsatisfactory, satisfactory and excellent. The majority of teaching sessions were deemed satisfactory but this was seen to be a weak marketing term that did not convey the appropriate message about quality to potential overseas customers (Duke, 1997). It was one of the reasons for the later use of a four-point numerical grading scale for six aspects of HE provision. This numerical scale ranged from one (fail) to four and the six aspects were (i) curriculum design, (ii) content and organisation, (iii) teaching, learning and assessment, (iv) student progression and achievement, (v) learning resources and (vi) quality assurance and enhancement. On the basis of assessment in these six areas, a profile was constructed for a particular institution. The assessment methodology was based on peer review and included the assessment of the student experience and student achievement. Assessors were academic and professional peers in a particular subject with the majority being drawn from United Kingdom HEIs. Other assessors were

from commerce, industry, the professions and private practice. Assessment involved a combination of internal and external processes. The internal process involved self-assessment by an HEI against its own aims and objectives for a particular subject. The external process was a three-day assessment visit conducted by a team of assessors. This assessment team graded each of the six of provision on the four-point scale and approval was given to an HEI's subject provision if all six aspects were graded 2 or above. However, there would be a certain amount of unease on the part of HEFCE if there were more than one grade of 2. For its subject reviews, QAA adopted this methodology for assessments when it took over from HEFCE Quality Assessment Division in April 1997. In 2002, some substantial changes in methodology are due to take effect.

The major purposes of assessment are to provide public information through the publication of reports, to encourage general improvement in provision and to ensure that the public funding provided is supporting education of an acceptable quality.

There is a firm link between funding and HEFCE assessment with the ultimate sanction of the withdrawal of funds if a programme is assessed as unsatisfactory and subsequent remedial action fails to bring about sufficient improvement. Funding arrangements reward quality and institutions are inspected to ensure that the State is getting good value for money. The Government, as a major customer, has made it clear that individual higher education institutions have the responsibility for quality. The Department of Education and Science stated that,

> The prime responsibility for maintaining and enhancing the quality of teaching and learning rests with each individual institution. At the same time, there is a need for proper accountability for the substantial public funds invested in higher education (DES, 1991 p. 58).

The HEQC was established in May 1992 and was paid for by the colleges and universities. Its mission was to,

> ... contribute to the maintenance and improvement of quality at all levels in institutions of higher education in the United Kingdom (HEQC, 1994a p.[iii]).

HEQC was formally independent from Government and, unlike HEFCE, its quality management function was not linked with the funding of institutions of higher education. Whereas HEFCE was concerned with the quality assessment of programme areas in particular institutions, HEQC was involved with the quality audit of the institutions themselves. As members of HEQC were largely drawn from colleges and universities, it conducted peer audits. A particular academic was not allowed to be an auditor when his/her own institution was being audited. The method of the audit was to scrutinise the documents which detailed the way in which an HEI controlled and monitored a number of academic activities (Brook, 1996). The methodology of the audit was similar to that utilised in accountancy. It used sampling, triangulation, trailing and the questioning of a large sample of an HEI's staff in order to ensure that the documentation reflected practice. An HEQC quality audit was defined in the same way as the British Standard 4778 for Quality Audit,

> ... quality audit is a systematic and independent examination to determine whether quality activities and related results comply with planned arrangements and whether these arrangements are implemented effectively and are suitable to achieve objectives.

The audit was concerned with Quality Assurance and the development of systems which clarify institutional roles, enable aims and objectives to be met, involves all staff, specifies standards and acceptable evidence and promotes continuous improvement (HEQC, 1994b). Prior to an institutional audit, the audit team decided what documentation was required and determined a programme for the visit. After the visit, a report was produced and the institution was invited to comment before the report entered the public domain.

A review of the audit reports on the first sixty-two institutions raised concerns about the comparability of degrees from one university or college of higher education to another (HEQC, 1994c). The great variability in the attention to student feedback and the provision of library facilities were two of the reasons given for this variation.

Although there were no direct penalties which HEQC can impose on an institution whose systems are not of an appropriate standard, the Higher Education Charter (1993)

guaranteed students the right to see Quality Audit reports. Also, institutions had to refer to audit reports in their marketing literature. In effect, publicity was operating here as a regulator. Within a year of the report, an action plan was required to address the issues raised in this report. It could be argued that these two factors ensured that the audit reports influenced colleges and universities to such an extent that systems for course validation and evaluation were fit for the purpose for which they are designed. However, it could be considered that HEQC's funding by the colleges and universities which it audited, and the lack of explicit sanctions, limited its ability to do this.

QM in higher education was in its early stages and inevitably there were going to be initial problems. Certain members of CVCP have expressed the view that the HEFCE quality assessment was in need of reform. They pointed to a number of inconsistencies such as the great disparity in the assessments of various subjects. An examination of the first seventy-one HEFCE assessment reports showed that twice as many departments in law and history had been assessed as excellent in terms of teaching provision than was the case for chemistry and engineering departments (Sanders, 1994). This was when a three-point scale of excellent, satisfactory and unsatisfactory was used. They also believed that the ratings were skewed in favour of the traditional, long-established universities and that there was insufficient sensitivity to the differing mission statements of traditional universities, the recently-established universities and colleges of higher education. Their analysis of the assessment reports has led them to call for the checking of the HEFCE's instruments and calibrations (Sanders, op.cit.). Undoubtedly, the procedures of QAA will develop and evolve in the light of experience and in response to evaluations.

HEQC was aware of the dangers of the over-bureaucratisation of the quality monitoring. In its "Guidelines on Quality Assurance" (1994a) the advice was given that a balance should be achieved whereby objectives are met, yet bureaucratic and intrusive procedures are avoided, if at all possible. However, it was not certain whether these initiatives would allay the concerns, suspicion and fears of lecturers about the over-bureaucratisation of the quality process. After all, the education sector has had to contend with an unwieldy assessment recording system for the National Curriculum and paper-bound and bureaucratic portfolio assessment for National Vocational Qualifications (Ferrar, 1991).

Writers such as Davies (1994) warned that QM in education could lead to fewer lecturers interacting with students as the number of quality assurance, quality audit and quality management posts increased and a "quality bureaucracy" was established.

Autonomy and Accountability

The current QM system being established in higher education has been seen by some as a threat to academic freedom with one of its concerns, that of achieving greater efficiency, affecting adversely the independence of academic judgement (Russell, 1994; Tapper and Salter, 1998). Rather than academic institutions having the autonomy to determine teaching methods, the amount of student work, staff research and publications, it is the pervasive influence of HEFCE, HEQC and now QAA that is starting to have a significant influence on all these factors (Russell, op. cit.). However, the notion of a self-regulating community was far more relevant thirty years or so ago when HEIs were élitist and relatively small. Universities in particular, because of their royal charters, were able to establish their own standards and define and judge "quality" (Alderman, 1996). Self-regulation was also more acceptable when a far larger proportion of a university's income was raised either directly or indirectly by the institution itself. Salter (1997) notes that before the Second World War approximately one-third of a university's income was raised by fees, a third through endowments and a third from the state. As the proportion of the last source increased, and that of the first two sources fell, so the argument for greater state influence became more persuasive.

Alderman (op. cit.) considers that a reduction in the autonomy of HEIs has been achieved through a sustained and concerted attack on the traditional organisational culture that stressed the intrinsic value of knowledge and a lecturer's loyalty to his/her academic discipline. However, Bahram Bekhradnia of HEFCE argues that there has not been any loss of academic freedom because an institution has complete autonomy in determining how the block grant, once determined, is spent. Also, the criteria for determining an institution's grant are open and fair (CAF, 1994).

CVCP and SCOP expressed a preference for a revamped HEQC taking over the assessment and audit functions discharged by HEFCE and HEQC. This preference was founded on the desire for a combined system that is based on continued peer review rather than external scrutiny. Such a preference on the part of senior managers of higher education institutions was not surprising. However, much of the opposition to external accountability was due to the perception that HEFCE has failed to respect academic autonomy in its own proposal for a future system of assessment and audit. Proposals for a new quality agency, said SCOP, would involve only token institutional involvement and influence (Santinelli, 1995) .

The Prelude to the New Quality Agency

Certain members of the Joint Planning Group (JPG) that consisted of representatives from HEFCE, CVCP and SCOP voiced such concerns in 1996. When discussing its hopes, expectations and aspirations relating to the embryonic quality agency, it was argued that the agency should be flexible enough to reflect and respond to the wide variety and diversity of HEIs and the dynamic and rapidly changing environment in which they operated (JPG, 1996).

The Dearing Report (1997) stated that there was a need for QM systems and structures that allowed for continued diversity but this should not be used as an excuse for low standards. The expansion in student numbers, and the proliferation of award-granting institutions after the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 that transformed polytechnics into modern universities, had increased diversity. It had also put a strain on the existing HEFCE assessment and HEQC audit systems and, in 1997, presented some difficult challenges for the new agency (Tapper and Salter, op. cit.).

Brennan et al. (1997) provided a very useful summative evaluation of assessment by the HEFCE Quality Assessment Division. Their report, "Improving the Quality of Education: the Impact of Quality Assessment on Institutions", was published in July 1997. The report was based on case studies of twelve HEIs of various types. There were interviews

of one hundred and eighty staff including managers, administrators and academics. There are many similarities between this sample and that of the initial fieldwork research of this dissertation. The objective of the study was to analyse the extent of the impact of HEFCE recommendations after the first two rounds of assessment. The report concluded that 66% of the assessors' recommendations had been acted upon with action more likely when the results were below expectations. Recommendations addressed to the institution were less likely to be acted upon than those directed at subject groups. This was the case with those recommendations that appeared to be insensitive to the HEI's mission. Also, resource-related recommendations were less likely to be acted upon. However, the most interesting finding was that although the methodology of the assessment was based on the fitness for purpose of a subject in a particular HEI, a number of the respondents had concerns about the lack of attention to the characteristics of individual academic disciplines and the mission of their institution. Thus, although HEFCE assessment was designed to be relativist, the report suggested that it was not as relativist as some of the HEI staff would have liked.

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

From April 1997, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) took over the assessment rôle of HEFCE and all the responsibilities of HEQC. However, the full integration of the assessment and audit functions formally discharged by HEFCE and HEQC did not occur until the start of the 1997/8 academic year. QAA was established as a private company, registered as a charity and limited by guarantee. Its board of directors includes representatives from the funding bodies, employers, industry and professional associations. There is a contract arrangement with HEFCE such that the Agency reviews the quality of higher education on HEFCE's behalf. The mission of the QAA is to "promote public confidence that quality of provision and standards of awards in higher education are being safeguarded and enhanced" and its two major briefs from HEFCE were to secure value from public investment and encourage improvements in the quality of higher education by means of the publication of subject review reports (QAAHE, 1997).

It was a blend of the recommendations of the Dearing Report and the HEQC's Graduate Standards Programme (GSP), together with the work of the JPG, which provided the QAA's rationale and operating framework. A key area of agreement between the Dearing Report and the GSP was the view that the new agency should make use of outcomes as well as inputs or processes (Brown, R., 1998). QAA was charged with continuing to oversee quality in terms of process issues and fitness *for* purpose. However, its rôle was extended to embrace outcomes as measured against specific standards. This involved gauging fitness *of* purpose and the Dearing Report recommended the use of benchmarking to achieve this. At its inception, the Agency was given the opportunity to weave processes and outcomes, and quality and standards, in to an integrated and holistic scheme. The following statement accompanying its mission statement summarises QAA's aim,

> ... to promote continuous improvement in the quality and standards of higher education to meet the needs of students and employers and the funders of HE (QAAHE, 1999a).

The QAA's challenge is to develop and sustain a QM system that recognises that there has been an irreversible shift, from an élite to a mass system of higher education, and which satisfies the public that HEIs can teach a very large number of students at lower unit costs and achieve better results. It is making use of standards in order that achievements in HEIs are more transparent and it is easier for the lay person to compare the performance of HEIs (Jackson, 1998a). In essence, standards-based QM is designed to gain and then maintain the confidence of the general public in a diverse mass system of higher education.

To this end, the QAA is asking HEIs to provide clear course aims and objectives to its students, potential employers and the agency. In order to ensure consistency and to provide a framework for the aims and objectives, templates are provided by the QAA. Such templates seek information on the main subjects covered, the academic level, credit points value and the intellectual, practical, personal and social qualities promoted by a particular course. In practice, this would require clear programme specifications that detail intended learning outcomes in terms of knowledge and understanding, key skills, cognitive skills and subject-specific skills (Dearing, 1997). It is acknowledged that the

templates can only be used on courses where the curriculum and learning experiences can be easily identified. When such experiences cannot be predicted with a reasonable degree of accuracy, the template can be replaced in whole or in part by the use of learning contracts and personal progress files (Tysome, 1998a). The QAA is also concerned with the establishment of threshold standards that define minimum acceptable performance. A benchmarking process is being undertaken by groups of subject specialists in order to establish what is to be expected in terms of the curriculum. The benchmark standards relate to learning outcomes rather than content so that it is not the intention to specify exactly what is taught in HEIs. Nevertheless, the use of outcome-based assessment could herald a more prescriptive approach and reflects the desire expressed in the Dearing Report to create national degree standards. The attempt to define specific learning outcomes has led to a revival of interest in Bloom's "Taxonomy of Objectives" (1956) as academic programme planners prepare for the new form of QAA review (Ecclestone, 1999).

QAA anticipates that HEIs will accept these standards by 2001/2002 through the signing of a code of practice (Dearing, op. cit.). The seeking of the acceptance and approval of HEIs demonstrates an awareness by the Dearing Committee that QM cannot be imposed from outside. Quality approaches, systems and structures need to be "owned" by the HEIs. Indeed, ownership is one of the four principles that John Randall, Chief Executive of the QAA, considers should underpin the process of implementing the Dearing Report recommendations. The other three key QM issues are accountability, quality enhancement and a reduction of the burden, as perceived by HEIs, of external scrutiny (Randall, 1997).

The codes of practice are designed to ensure consistency through the universal acceptance of the various subject benchmarks (Dearing, op. cit.). This greater emphasis on particular standards, which is a consequence of the establishment of codes and benchmarks, suggests a reduction in the concern for process issues such as observing lecturers whilst teaching and a commensurate increase in an examination of outcome issues such as students' work. However, the codes of practice will require HEIs to produce Quality

Management documents that firmly address the issues of good practice and the quality of teaching and learning (Tysome, op. cit.).

QAA acknowledges that the benchmarking process is fraught with difficulties, many of which have been uncovered and addressed through the pilot development of learning outcomes in chemistry, history and law (Utley, 1998). It is also accepts that many academics are sceptical about the whole process and do not want to engage with it because they consider benchmarking to be simplistic and without any intellectual basis (Utley, op.cit.). Swain's concern (1997) is that the benchmark standards, which specify learning outcomes, will lead to banal, unoriginal and uninspiring academic programmes. Newby (1999) warned that as benchmarks are to be imposed on HEIs by an external agency such as QAA, they remove ownership from the point of delivery. Norman Jackson (1998a, 1998b), Assistant Director in the Development Directorate of QAA, recognises that gaining agreement on the working practices of HEIs and individual lecturers will not be easy as regulation challenges academic autonomy. As the QAA does not have statutory powers to enforce the regulations, consensus is required. Jackson argues that this will be achieved only by persuasion and by convincing the academic community of the benefits of the new system.

However, Yorke's (1998) pilot study of benchmarking in business studies, computer studies and history suggested that it could preserve academic autonomy in curriculum design if there were no attempt to standardise curriculum content. A later study by Woolf et al. (1999) of a history "benchmarking club" involving five modern universities suggested that subject benchmarking statements would be general and would be flexible in terms of their interpretation. The conclusions from Woolf et al.'s study supported the general findings of the QAA's three subject benchmarking pilot in the latter part of 1998.

QAA hopes to bring about quality enhancement through the use of three major strategies. Firstly, it will make use of subject groups to develop a standards-based quality assurance system. Secondly, it will establish, maintain and support subject-practitioner networks that disseminate good or innovative practice. This dissemination of information will also be achieved through QAA's reports of its quality assurance visits to HEIs (Middlehurst,

1997). Thirdly, the QAA has also been charged with the responsibility of reviewing and then establishing a fair and rigorous complaints system for dealing with complaints against HEIs and providing a pool of accredited academic staff to serve as external examiners and from which HEIs can select (Dearing, op.cit.).

QAA staff will make far greater use of external examiners' reports than previously. The issues raised by external examiners and the responses to their comments by HEIs will form a more explicit part of the review of HEIs by QAA. External examiners would gauge performance in particular academic programmes against subject-specific benchmark standards which are determined by one of over forty subject panels (Sutherland, 1998). This more detailed engagement with external examiners' reports will be complemented by a review of students' work, classroom observation and self-assessment by HEIs (Milton, 1997).

Complementing these processes is QAA's Continuation Audit that will be replaced by Institutional Review. This is designed to determine whether an HEI is discharging effectively its responsibility for academic standards and whether its educational provision enables its students to reach those standards. The audit examines the sufficiency, validity and reliability of the evidence that the HEI uses to demonstrate the effectiveness of its QM systems and structures (Williams, P., 1997). Essentially, the audit process scrutinises how an HEI is guaranteeing its own standards and quality (Williams, P., 1998).

QAA, like its predecessor - HEFCE's Quality Assessment Division - can set in motion sanctions when it considers that an HEI's academic standards are not being safeguarded. In late 1998, QAA stated that improvements in general academic standards at Thames Valley University could be achieved only through the application of "special measures". HEFCE appointed an external review team to prepare an action plan for the university. The university was warned that compliance with this recovery plan would probably be a condition of any future HEFCE grants. QAA is to re-assess Thames Valley University in 2001 to gauge whether the action plan has been implemented effectively (Baty, 1998b).

To recapitulate the rôle of the QAA, it has initiated an approach that operates at several levels. Firstly, there continues to be the HEIs' own systems for assuring the quality of their academic programmes. Then there are the forty-one subject benchmarking groups whose benchmarks assist academic teams in HEIs to determine programme outcome standards. Checks on standards are to be conducted internally by HEIs themselves with guidance provided by national codes of practice and, externally, by means of QAA assessment and audit (Dearing, op. cit.; Jackson, 1998b).

SUMMARY

Bi-partisan concern with the performance of teachers and lecturers in school, colleges and universities led to a greater concern for their accountability and for a curriculum related more closely to the world of work. This was associated with a requirement that HEIs were more responsive to the needs of the consumer (the student) and the client (central government, local education authorities and employers). The corollary of greater centralised control was a reduction in lecturer autonomy. In recent years, the Government has greatly increased its involvement in the debates about the purpose of higher education and value for money. As a major funder of HE, it has sought to make HEIs more accountable and extract better value for money. The demise of UGC and the establishment of UFC reflects this change in the power of the various stakeholders in Higher Education.

Management ideas, models and techniques that were used extensively in business, industry and commerce were adopted by senior managers in HEIs and the increase in lecturer accountability was accompanied by a commensurate increase in managerialism. Managerialism involved greater centralised control through, for example, the use of staff appraisals, action planning and, in certain HEIs, QM systems such as IiP, ISO 9000 series, TQM and benchmarking. The rise in managerialism "tightened" the coupling in HEIs and redistributed power away from academic staff to senior managers and administrators. As a consequence, the person culture that was prevalent in the more traditional HEIs in particular has been under attack.

Some academic staff, senior managers and senior administrators, such as those at Aston, Luton, South Bank, Westminster and Wolverhampton universities, have whole-heartedly embraced managerialism and the accompanying QM approaches. They see it as a means of achieving their institutions' missions, aims and objectives, gaining and sustaining competitive advantage and continuously improving their services to their customers.

External QM bodies such as HEFCE, HEQC and QAA have continually acknowledged the great diversity of HEIs in terms of their missions, aims and objectives and have taken these into account when conducting institutional audits and assessments. However, Brennan et al.'s study of twelve HEIs in 1997 revealed concerns amongst senior staff that the HEFCE Quality Assessment Division had taken insufficient account of HEIs' mission statements when conducting assessments.

The Dearing Report was something of a watershed as it recommended that the new agency – subsequently the QAA – should consider fitness *of* purpose as well as fitness *for* purpose. Dearing was arguing that there should be the assessment of standards as well as quality. Benchmarking was to be how standards were gauged. The thinking of the QAA had been shaped by the HEQC's Graduate Standards Programme prior to the Dearing Report and a key area of agreement between the two was the view the new agency should make use of outcomes as well as inputs or processes. The QAA's "Subject Review Handbook" was explicit about this change. This slight shift in emphasis in QM away from processes (such as teaching quality) towards outcomes (such as students' work) mirrors the curriculum shift from knowledge as a process to knowledge as a product. There has been only a shift in emphasis and it needs to be acknowledged that the assessment of teaching quality still has a substantial presence in the present QAA review.

This greater emphasis on standards can be regarded as a response to the concerns of government and the general public about the performance of HEIs during a period of increasing student numbers, the falling unit of resource and the massification of higher education. Benchmarks were to define general learning outcomes and not curriculum

content. Nevertheless, not all of the concerns of lecturers that this would lead to a national curriculum in higher education have been allayed.

CHAPTER FOUR - VARYING ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT THE PURPOSES OF HIGHER EDUCATION

"Fitness for purpose" is one of the criteria for judging quality (Harvey and Green, 1993). For this reason, it is helpful to consider the purposes of higher education carefully and thoroughly (Goodlad, 1995). Unless and until purpose has been considered, it is not possible to evaluate whether the services of a particular HEI are fit or unfit (Scott, 1999).

Barnett (1994a) argues that the view of the purpose of Higher Education shapes the perception of quality. In turn, each perception of quality is assessed using particular performance indicators. As with a whole range of issues relating to QM, there are widely varying views concerning the purpose of Higher Education. As Kuhn (1970) notes, perception is a subjective phenomenon and there is always more than one plausible way of interpreting reality. It is worth joining this debate as assumptions about the purpose of higher education underpin attitudes towards the appropriateness of QM to HEIs.

Barnett (1992a) polarises the perceptions of higher education into the "communicative" or "academic" view and the "instrumental" view. There has been the growth of more utilitarian attitudes towards HE with academic work experiencing a period of demystification accompanied by a questioning of the notion of "academic guilds" (Henkel, 1997). This move to a more utilitarian approach has been manifested by changes in the discourse in HEIs from the "old discourse" which included issues of collegiality, community, scholarship and 'A' levels to the "new discourse". This new discourse in HEIs (Duke, 1992) includes mission statements, business plans, non-traditional entry, semesterisation, modularity, Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CATs) points, franchising, Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) and Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL). Trowler (1998) provides statistics to illustrate the extent to which these new systems and structures had permeated the higher education sector. By 1993, 65% of HEIs had adopted or planned to adopt semesterisation and, in 1994, 40,000 full-time equivalent students were studying on franchised courses in further education colleges under the direction and supervision of HEIs. Also by this time, nearly 85% of universities had either introduced or planned to introduce a CATs points scheme.

If higher education is seen as a means for individuals to achieve knowledge and satisfy the mind (Barnett, 1990), then such mechanistic QM systems as ISO 9000 series that have been developed in business and commerce will be viewed as inappropriate. Supporters of liberal education argue that mechanistic QM systems identify specific, disaggregated purposes of higher education and then endeavour to "measure" the fitness for these purposes. On the other hand, liberal educationalists suggest that higher education does not lend itself to this atomisation of purposes because the achievement of knowledge and the satisfaction of the mind is more holistic and involves quality as transformation rather than as fitness for purpose (Harvey and Green, op. cit.). The "measurement" of intellectual capital, a major outcome from higher education, is problematic and not easily gauged (Newby, 1999).

However, with an instrumental view of higher education organisations, QM methods will be seen as just as relevant and appropriate in the higher education sector as with any other service.

Key Developments in Higher Education

Until well into the nineteenth century, Oxford and Cambridge were the only universities in England. By 1909, Birmingham, Durham, London, Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Sheffield and Bristol had received their charters. Reading University was founded in 1926. Great activity in the formation of universities during the early part of the twentieth century was matched by a similar period after the Second World War in the 1940s and 1950s when Nottingham, Southampton, Hull, Exeter and Leicester received their charters (Barnard, 1971). These "red brick" universities emulated Cambridge and Oxford Universities in their championing of liberal education (Barnett, 1986) and, in the 1960s, "plateglass" universities - with the exception of the University of Warwick which was located in the industrial area of Coventry - did the same (Wiener, 1985).

The Robbins Committee on Higher Education (1963) detailed four main purposes of higher education. These were to develop in students the necessary skills so that they could

play their part in the division of labour; to promote the general powers of the mind; to advance learning and to transmit a common culture and standards of citizenship.

The notion of liberal education has been paramount in institutions of higher education in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Wiener, 1985; Barnett, 1986) and this notion emphasises the Robbins Committee's purposes of promoting the general powers of the mind and the advancement of learning. Hirst (1965 p.115), one of the main advocates of liberal education, considers it to be,

> ... based on the nature of knowledge itself, and not on the predilections of (students), the demands of society, or the whims of politicians. Liberal education is concerned with developing the mind and helping students to understand their culture.

R.S.Peters (1977) interprets liberal education similarly, saying it is the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake and it excludes knowledge for vocational or utilitarian ends. Liberal education aims to develop an autonomous freethinker who has "a willingness to revise opinions and assumptions" (Peters, op. cit. p.64). There is a search for objective truth and knowledge that involves the freedom to debate critical and/or unpopular ideas without fear of retribution (Barnett, 1990; Russell, 1994). As well as developing particular individuals, liberal education aims to expand, widen and transform the collective mind of a society (Bowden and Marton, 1998). Success of an HEI is gauged by its progress towards the development of students as critical beings who are capable of critical thought, self-reflection and action. This criticality can be achieved in three specific areas; knowledge, self and in the world as a whole. HEIs that encourage such critical attitudes contribute to the achievement of a more democratic society with better informed and more interrogative citizens (Barnett, 1997b). Thus, a prime purpose of higher education is to develop and sustain students as autonomous learners.

The explicit statement of the last three of the four key purposes of HEIs discerned by the Robbins Committee have been seen by Salter and Tapper (1994) as a defence of academic freedom. They go on to say that (p.11),

> ... in the halcyon days when the liberal ideal reigned supreme and unquestioned, no such defence would have been required.

The traditional notion of a university and, by extension, other HEIs is that of a largely autonomous, academic community. Dr Roger Brown (1997), the last Chief Executive of HEQC, believes that this notion is based on the following four basic interrelated ideas:

- the ability of an HEI to control its educational "product" and how it is developed, delivered, assessed and evaluated;
- the perception of an HEI as a community based on the interdependent activities of teaching, learning, scholarship and research;
- the search for knowledge on behalf of society through an HEI's research function;
- the association of an HEI's functions with the wider community.

However, concern over the quality of student learning has become an issue of great public interest and is no longer the sole preserve of the academic community. Notions of liberal education, based on the view that learning should take place without reference to the economic and social requirements of the State, have been under attack (Barnett, 1992b). The start of this attack can be traced back to prime minister Callaghan's Ruskin College speech of 1976 (Maclure, 1989). Later in the 1980s, this new mood in Higher Education is reflected in the comments of Robert Jackson, a former Conservative Minister for Higher Education,

> Our government is creating an alternative paradigm - enabling individuals to purchase services from providers who are independent of government, but which are obliged to be more responsive to the customers thus enabled (cited in McMurtry, 1991).

There is a danger of over-simplifying the debate over the relative merits of liberal education and a more pragmatic and instrumental form of higher education. The Dearing Report (1997 p.77) sounds a warning note,

> ... they (the Dearing Committee) do not find it helpful to make a clear-cut distinction between them.

Pring (1995), like Peters (1977) earlier, is concerned that unhelpful dualisms are created; education and training, liberal education and vocational preparation and academic and professional approaches. Such dualisms over-simplify a number of complex and interrelated notions. He goes on to argue that it is possible to strive for particular vocational outcomes related to a profession yet adopt critical, reflective teaching styles to

this skill and knowledge development that are associated with traditional liberal education. He gives the examples of the training of doctors, pharmacists, barristers, engineers and accountants that combines the elements of education and training. Also, vocationalism is not a concept that has just been developed in the late twentieth century. Oxbridge colleges are now thought of as bastions of liberal education but, in mediaeval times, these colleges and the universities of mainland Europe specialised in particular fields of study. For example, the University of Salerno in Italy was a centre of excellence for the study of medicine and illustrates the vocationalism that existed then (Barnett, 1997b).

Clearly, there are dangers of postulating a rigid polarisation of the two types of higher education. Nevertheless, the debate concerning the alleged decline of liberal education is helpful in understanding recent issues of curriculum development.

Supporters of liberal education, such as Hirst, can be accused of being élitist by resisting vocational education and defending the vested interests of members of academic communities such as universities and colleges of higher education. When discussing liberal education, Inglis (1985) suggests that universities are cosy clubs whose members resist any challenges to the existing academic order. In these academic institutions,

> Quality, appropriated by an autonomous, non-accountable élite ... has been part of the defensive wall behind which ... to hide (Harvey and Knight, 1996, p.1).

In this academic order, pure mathematics and pure science are seen to be far superior to their vocational counterparts of applied mathematics and applied science. Indeed, there is some hostility towards highly vocational subjects such as engineering which are perceived as unintellectual and unacademic (Becher, 1989; Salter and Tapper, 1994). Generally, the applied subjects are regarded – unjustifiably, many would argue - as inferior largely because of the connotations of manual effort. Attitudes such as these have led to this élitist model of higher education being criticised as abstract, arcane and outdated and its supporters riddled with self-interest and indulgence when decisions are made about what was taught (Ecclestone, 1999). Sharp (1995) argues that the Further and Higher Education Act of 1992, with the establishment of HEQC and the greater emphasis on efficiency, challenged the exclusivity of universities in particular. This challenge had begun much

earlier with the rapid expansion in the number of higher education students that followed the Robbins Report.

The Robbins Report signalled HEIs' gradual move away from élitism and exclusivity as the number of higher education places increased and, as a consequence, students with a greater variety of backgrounds and a wider range of career aspirations entered the colleges, polytechnics and universities (Walford, 1987). Radford (1997) notes that the phrase "more means worse" was heard frequently from 1963 during this period of major expansion. Higher Education is now less élitist as a consequence of the expansion in the number of HE student places. In 1962, there were 125,000 students at 25 universities whereas in 1996 there more than a million students at just over 100 universities. In the early 1970s, 14% of eighteen year olds attended university yet in 1996 the figure was in excess of 30% (Leadbetter, 1996). This expansion continues with the proposal by the government to recruit an additional 36,000 Higher Education students in 1999-2000, an additional 61,000 in 2000-2001 and an extra 100,000 in 2001-2. Not only has the increase in numbers diminished the élitist nature of HEIs, but also this trend has been assisted by an increase in the proportion of non-standard entry students. These are students who do not have the usual minimum requirement of 2 'A' levels for undergraduate courses. At Liverpool John Moores University, the proportion of non-standard entrants is nearly 75% (Rust, 1997).

The "more means worse" argument, which originated in the mid-1960s with the post-Robbins expansion, still prevails. In March 1999, at a conference on higher education standards held in London, Professor Kenneth Minogue of the London School of Economics claimed that university education was being destroyed by universalisation. Professor James Tooley of the University of Newcastle supported this view and highlighted certain academic programmes provided by modern universities - football and women's studies, for example - as contributing to falling expectations and standards (Swain, 1999). Stephen Rowland, Director of the Higher Education Research Centre at the University of Sheffield, went further saying that the mass higher education system had led to many HEIs becoming largely institutions of vocational training (Rowland, 1999). Not all conference members subscribed to this notion of "dumbing down". Some felt that largely sensational and over-emotional tabloid newspaper articles had shaped these attitudes to standards whilst others

argued that the higher education curriculum should be relevant to all groups in society (Swain, op. cit.). In other words, it was a case of "more means different" rather than "more means worse". An editorial in the Times Higher Education Supplement (THES, 1999h) weighed in on the side of those who believed that standards were being maintained. It argued that the fact that nearly one in four undergraduates failed to complete their degree programmes (Goddard, 1999b) was unsurprising as increased access was bound to involve the enrolment of a certain proportion of less well-prepared students. Thus, drop out rates would be sure to rise to take account of these students unless standards were lowered to accommodate them. It is worth pointing out that these non-completion rates were not affected by the introduction of student fees in September 1998 as the data relates to the period between 1994 and 1997.

The nature of higher education has changed with, for example, less dependence on the relationship between lecturer and student as large scale lectures, the internet, e-mail and distance learning materials become used to a far greater extent to communicate knowledge. A smaller proportion of students now live on campus leading to the university being less of an academic community than it was in the 1960s and 1970s (Barrett, 1998).

The fourth and final objective of HE, according to the Robbins Report, is to advance learning and transmit a common culture and standards of citizenship. Barnett (1994a), amongst others, argues that this objective has become progressively more difficult to achieve. As HEIs have established links with commerce and industry and become more dependent on various government agencies for funding, so their culture has become more diverse and less distinct. Consequently, HEIs have a less distinct and less precisely defined culture to transmit to their students. HEIs are no longer the sole driving force for the transmission of knowledge as industry, commerce and the electronic media have come to take an increasing rôle in this process (HEQC, 1995b).

The Dearing Committee (1997), like the Robbins Committee thirty-four years earlier, had four main purposes. The first three of these are very similar to those of the Robbins Report. These were Dearing's aims of:

(i) inspiring and enabling individuals to develop their capabilities to the highest level;

(ii) increasing knowledge and understanding;

(iii) serving the needs of the economy.

Robbins' fourth point of developing a common culture can be seen as anachronistic in the present-day multicultural society. Dearing (op. cit.) acknowledges this and stresses instead the aim of HEIs to play a major rôle in shaping a democratic, civilised and inclusive society. However, the key point of the Dearing Report is for HEIs to sustain lifelong learning. In the HE sector, it is the intention to widen participation to a greater range of socio-economic groups and increase HE participation rates of 18 to 21 year olds to 45% over the next 20 years.

Dearing's third aim of serving the needs of the economy is to be advanced in part through the strengthening of HEIs' links with industry with the creation of an Industrial Partnership Development with funds of £100 million for joint applied research. Stronger links between industry and commerce and HEIs are to be made at regional level.

There have been significant changes in higher education curriculum development during the last three decades that have seen the hegemony of the academic community weakened as the influence of industry, commerce and central government has increased. Despite this, many members of academic communities still subscribe to the more romantic view of higher education as a means for students to achieve knowledge and satisfy the mind and, according to John Stuart Mill (cited in Pring, 1995), to make capable and cultivated human beings. They continue to resist the challenges to liberal education and the drive towards a "new model of education".

Despite the move away from an élitist to a mass system of higher education and the worries of "more means worse" which date back to the Robbins Report (Radford, op. cit.), quality as measured by degree class results has not fallen. Indeed, statistics show that the percentage of students obtaining upper second and first class degrees has increased (Macfarlane, 1993; THES, 1999e). This is all the more extraordinary if one takes into account that this ostensible increase in quality has been during a period of falling unit of resource (Wilson, 1998). There are a number of different explanations put forward for this apparent paradox. Elton (1998) argues that this degree grade inflation, first detected in the

1980s and which is not uniform across all academic disciplines, is a result of coursework comprising a higher proportion of continuous assessment than previously. As the weighting of coursework and unseen examinations has altered, so the influence of higher scores in coursework has increased. He also notes that examiners have come to reward skill acquisition more highly as curriculum changes emphasise the study *for* rather than the study *of* aspects of a particular subject. As examiners are likely to assess knowledge more rigorously than skills because they are more expert in the former, this change in assessment weighting tends to exert an upward influence on overall student grades. Thus, Elton is arguing that degree grade inflation is more a function of assessment procedures than the motivation levels and general abilities of the students. On the other hand, Macfarlane (1993) believes that, in large part, it is the instrumental drive to enhance job prospects that has led to students working harder and consequently being awarded generally higher degree classifications.

Essentially, there has been a gradual transformation of higher education from an élitist into a mass form of education (Eriksen, 1995) which is even acknowledged by Professor Ronald Barnett (1997a, p.13), a robust supporter of liberal notions of higher education,

> In short, higher education is now a large-scale service industry and customer care is moving up the agenda fast, however much such managerial expressions may offend those committed to 'traditional academic values'.

Henkel (1997), amongst others, considers that this process of transforming higher education in the UK from an élitist to a mass system is well advanced.

The notions of élitist higher education and a liberal education curriculum are helpfully summarised by a quotation over thirty years ago from a university professor of law.

> From outside the ivory tower there has nearly always been pressure, varying in intensity at different periods, to make university education more obviously useful and vocational. A university is not a trade school for the production of plumbers (Twining, 1967 p. 404).

Accountability and Academic Autonomy

The tension between accountability to the government and the academic freedom of HEI lecturers, particularly in universities, has been considered by Tapper and Salter (1992) as an ideological struggle between those who regard HEIs as having a primarily economic purpose and those who are concerned to protect the "traditional liberal ideal". McNay (1995) and Tapper and Palfreyman (1998) trace the move from "collegial academy to corporate enterprise" during the last thirty years. McNay (op. cit.) notes the gradual erosion of significant academic autonomy and professional self-determination as the government, the principal funder of higher education and proxy for the taxpayer, is concerned to receive value for money. Successive Conservative central governments were steadfast in their view that generally HEIs were wasteful, inefficient and very slow to react to exhortations for the adoption of private sector management practices and greater inter-university and inter-college competition. The government challenged robustly the twin traditional notions of self-governance and collegiality (Miller, 1998). The academic and financial difficulties at Thames Valley University in 1998 have helped to justify central government's apprehension about quality in higher education and whether it is receiving value for money consistently (Tysome, 1998b).

Managerialism and Professionalism

Managerialism can be summarised as the imposition of managerial techniques used by medium and large private companies on to public sector and voluntary organisations of a similar size (Clarke and Newman, 1994). The drift towards managerialism in HEIs had been encouraged as early as 1985 by the Jarratt Report which suggested that Vice-Chancellors should be seen as the Chief Executives and the governing bodies were to fulfil the function of Boards of Directors. The Report recommended that lay people should become more involved in the governance of HEIs (Dearlove, 1998). There was also the requirement for academic and financial plans and full details of how improvements in management processes were to be made (Shattock, 1991). Additionally, HEIs were exhorted to control their human and financial resources more effectively through the

introduction of management information systems designed to monitor expenditure and revenues (Newby, op. cit.). Williams, G. (1997, p.286) lists eight major changes in HEI management that were set in motion by this report and which have developed apace in the late 1980s and the 1990s:

- radical reduction in the number of decisions made by committees;
- rigorous costing of all activities;
- attribution of overhead costs to all activities;
- pricing of contracts to cover full overhead costs;
- documentation of all aspects of teaching and student assessment;
- out-sourcing of non-core activities;
- establishment of companies to handle income generating activities;
- creation of logos and other measures to stress corporate identity.

Two years later in 1987, the Croham Report (Croham, 1987) recommended performance indicators for university teaching and research, finance and management.

Managerialism was not so necessary when HEIs were well-resourced élite organisations. However, the pressure to achieve more with less in the 1980s meant that there was a pressing need for the efficient and effective governance of HEIs (Dearlove, op. cit.)

Warren (1994) illustrates this increase in managerialism by noting the switch at Manchester Polytechnic from collegiality to top-down managerial control when it became a "new" university and was re-titled Manchester Metropolitan University. Ryder (1996) noticed a similar change at his institution - the University of Portsmouth that was formerly Portsmouth Polytechnic. He was concerned that a University Senate and Councils were not established and based on the collegial model of certain traditional universities. Instead, the power of decision-making was placed largely in the hands of managers and administrators rather than academics. The perceived centralising of power and a drift towards managerialism has caused increased conflict and the alienation of academics. The "revolt" of certain academic staff at the University of Huddersfield demonstrated this opposition and increased conflict (Dopson and McNay, 1996). Andrews (1997 p.20) argues that the Dearing Report represents "an uncritical endorsement of the current ethos

of new managerialism". He notes that academic freedom is hardly mentioned in the report despite the concerns at the University of Huddersfield and elsewhere that lecturers have been disciplined - allegedly - for holding particular views. Similarly, the blocking by the senior management of Middlesex University of an uncomplimentary article due to be published in the university's in-house newspaper can be seen as the influence of new managerialism and an attack on academic freedom (THES, 1998). Tapper and Salter (1998) support Andrews' view. As well as believing that the Dearing Report serves as another step towards a national curriculum in higher education, they consider that it provides a narrower and less favourable definition of university autonomy. Generally, the blend of organisational culture at HEIs consisted of a diminishing element of collegial culture but increasing amounts of corporate culture (Clarke and Newman, op. cit.; Deem, 1998).

Hardy et al. (1988) note that collegiality thrives when a particular ideology or mission is accepted. This is often the case in relatively small, highly respected units or academic departments with a forceful and well-respected leader. They also argue that collegiality flourishes in "loosely coupled" organisations (Weick, 1988) which are characterised by disparate goals amongst the various academic and non-academic units and departments. One of the effects of managerialism is to galvanise these various units and establish a common, accepted organisational mission. In addition, managerialism - with its demand for external accountability - reduces the insulation of HEIs from outside pressures and leads to a reduction in the influence of collegiality (Thorne and Cuthbert, op. cit.).

Fear of being reduced to a "mere teaching machine", rather than an inspiring, life-changing educator, leads academic members of HEIs to guard jealously their function of encouraging intellectual growth (Watts, 1970). It is argued that if the primary, secondary, further and higher sectors of education do not discharge this function and create an educated community, then members of society will not have the knowledge and the skills to be able to take part in decision-making processes (Wilson, 1989).

The "possession" of specialist knowledge and academic freedom are central to HEIs' rôle of developing the minds of their students (Wilson, op. cit.) and members of these

institutions have resisted attacks on them. In large part, this could be related to lecturers' perception that they are working in HEIs, which are professional rather than machine bureaucracies (Mintzberg, 1983; Morgan, 1997). Many writers from the political left have seen these attacks as part of the relegation of lecturers to "mere teaching machines" with the consequent deprofessionalisation of higher education by government through exposure, for example, to the influence of market forces (Braverman, 1974; Halsey, 1992; Ainley, 1994).

However, the academic community can be considered as naïve in wanting the freedom from state interference that is associated with liberal education. After all, there is an element of social control in any educational system (Watts, 1970) and the government as a major funder and client of higher education is entitled to significant operational and strategic control over the curriculum. As some government funding of higher education shifts to private industry such as through the Private Finance Initiative (Forman, 1996), new stakeholders will seek to influence higher education (Wilson, op. cit.). In the case of Private Finance Initiatives in HEIs, there have been difficulties in establishing effective partnerships between these institutions and private companies. The proposal to build a media arts complex at Bournemouth University foundered because there was insufficient National Lottery grant funding to attract private sector involvement. The plan to build new premises for the University of Portsmouth Business School elicited bids from three private companies but all of these were judged not to provide adequate value for money (HEFCE, 1998).

Nevertheless, despite this lack of success, the notion of private sector funding for certain HEI building projects that was encouraged by the previous Conservative government continues to be supported by the present Labour government. The public sector in general has seen corporate bureaucracies give way to corporate enterprise organisations. HEIs are following this trend (Dopson and McNay, 1996).

The Influence of Central Government

The Conservative governments of 1979-1997 exhorted private industry to involve itself in funding and developing the higher education curriculum. In 1995, the Government's publication entitled "Competitiveness: Forging Ahead" noted the emergence of very close links between industry and HEIs. One of the examples given is the collaboration between the Retail and Marketing Department of Manchester Metropolitan University and Adhesives Limited over marketing and training (HMSO, 1995) and the British Airways MBA at Lancaster University (Macfarlane, 2000). Also, courses in Total Quality Leadership (TQL) provided in-house at the Rover Group's body and pressing plant at Swindon have been accredited at Certificate, Diploma and Master's level by Liverpool John Moores University (Hickie and Sawkins, 1996). British Telecom received permission in 1990 to train and assess its employees to a level equivalent to the Diploma in Management Studies (Hague, 1991), establishing links with Nottingham University and the London Business School (THES, 1999a). In April 1998, and with a Labour government in power, British Aerospace made use of its links with HEIs to set up its own corporate university offering awards from National Vocational Qualifications up to PhD level (THES, op. cit.). This illustrates that fostering co-operation between commerce and HEIs is a bi-partisan policy.

There has also been the emergence of corporate universities that "buy in knowledge" from HEIs. Companies such as British Telecom, Anglian Water, Unipart, Body Shop and British Aerospace have established such universities with, for example, British Telecom either "buying" existing courses or commissioning new ones from the London, Cranfield and Henley Business Schools and University College London (Hayes, 1999).

More indirect links between industry and HEIs exist through collaborative initiatives involving HEIs and Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs). Benefits accrue to both parties such as improved local economic competitiveness through the sharing of local knowledge, the provision of high level skill development and improved decision-making at national, local and organisational level by means of information exchange (Leigh, 1997). One of many such collaborations was that between the University of Leeds and Leeds TEC

which led to, amongst many other projects, the development of a "Train the Trainers" scheme designed to improve the communication skills of lecturers and trainers (Leigh, op. cit.).

This direct and indirect linkage of industry and higher education contrasts starkly with liberal education and the abhorrence of any form of industrial or commercial influence. Indeed, criticisms of liberal education have centred on the anti-industrial culture that has been dominant in England and Wales and which has been fostered and perpetuated by HEIs (Wiener, 1985). This culture had emphasised the arts and classics and then social science at the expense of technology and commerce. An influential attack on this academic hegemony by Prime Minister James Callaghan was contained in his Ruskin College speech in 1976. The subsequent Green Paper in 1977 exhorted educational institutions to match knowledge, skills and attitudes more closely to the requirements of British industry (Batho, 1989). However, such government anxieties and exhortations were not new. Worries about Britain's industrial competitiveness had been a major reason for the establishment of the "Civic" universities in the nineteenth century (Barnard, op. cit.). In 1965, another Labour Party politician, Anthony Crosland, felt that the development of the necessary higher education vocational courses could be achieved most effectively through the creation of polytechnics (Batho, op. cit.). Salter and Tapper (1994) viewed the 1963 Robbins Report as, in part, a response to attacks on the liberal tradition. Nine years later, the White Paper "Education: A Framework for Expansion" manifested the emerging economic ideology underpinning higher education.

> If (these) economic, personal and social aims are to be realised, within the limits of available resources and competing priorities, both the purposes and the nature of higher education ... must be critically and realistically examined. The continuously changing relationship between higher education and subsequent employment should be reflected both in the institutions and in individual choices (DES, 1972 p.34).

In her eleven years as Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher did a great deal to shift the emphasis away from liberal education towards business and technology by pointing out forcefully the contribution that they made to the British economy. During her tenure as Prime Minister, the status of a career in business, technology or commerce grew considerably (Seiff, 1990). The "new model of education", which Thatcherism helped to

develop, narrowed the gap between what industrialists required and the HEIs provided (Jessup, 1991). This "new model" was utilitarian and stressed "knowing how" whereas previous models based on liberal education emphasised "knowing what". It tilted the balance away from knowledge accumulation towards skill acquisition (Jamieson, 1985). Changes in the business studies curriculum in HEIs typify this move to skill acquisition as greater emphasis is placed on the study *for* business rather than the study *of* business. The former is concerned with developing specific business competences and particular problem-solving skills (Macfarlane, 1995, Barnett, 1997b). Study *for* business also assumes that there is precision and a "givenness" to knowledge structures whereas study *of* business involves far greater criticality together with some ambiguity about what is the appropriate knowledge (Barnett, 1997b).

Some of the more traditional universities had difficulty coming to terms with the "new" philosophy and rationale that underpins these notions (Ball, 1990). This was particularly the case with the funding arrangements, rigorous curriculum demands and inspections associated with the Teacher Training Agency (TTA) and its requirements for Postgraduate Certificate in Education programmes. The TTA can be viewed as a major subscriber to "new model" approaches, approaches which emphasise study *for* teaching rather than study *of* teaching and which "train teachers instead of educating them" (Utley and Baty, 1998).

Political Influence on Higher Education

Although senior members of the Labour Party, such as James Callaghan, Shirley Williams and Anthony Crosland, had questioned the value to society and the economy of a predominantly liberal higher education curriculum, it was the emergence of "the academic right" in the last thirty years or so which led to a concerted attack on the long-held assumptions about academic quality and outcomes. The élitism and the traditional conventions that were associated with liberal education were challenged. Members of the "academic right" included Professor Roger Scruton, Professor David Levy, Professor Sir Douglas Hague, Julius Gould, Lord Beloff, Sir Alfred Sherman and Lord Vaizey. These academics often worked with or for market-orientated organisations such as Aims of

Industry, the Freedom Association, the Adam Smith Institute, the Institute of Economic Affairs, the Institute for the Study of Conflict, the Centre for Policy Studies and the private University of Buckingham (Mason, 1986: Letwin et al., 1988; Salusbury, 1989; Chitty, 1992). Thus, the academic right had a firm and extensive organisational network from which to launch attacks on the liberal tradition in higher education and expound the radical alternative of a curriculum dictated largely by the market forces of supply and demand.

Hague (1991), writing in the Institute of Economic Affairs' Hobart Papers, says that in the higher education market it should be the student who is "king". When discussing freedom, his concern is less about academic freedom and more about the freedom of a university to fail and cease trading if it does not serve its customers. He argues that HEIs are in a privileged monopolistic position and operate as a cartel. It is only the entry to the market of alternative suppliers of knowledge, such as small businesses, which will lead to an end of these restrictive practices. Continuing this theme, Bunt (1999 p.16) who is Personnel Director at the University of Westminster and also Chair of the Universities Personnel Association, contends that "...university lecturers used to have more job protection than priests" but now they can no longer expect a job for life. This is as a result of the introduction of short-term contracts in order to provide a swift and flexible response to changing student demands. It is difficult to gauge the impact of these academics and institutions but certainly there has been a change in attitude towards the purpose of higher education.

Market Approaches to Higher Education

As well as the challenge to liberal education brought about by the economic need for the government to receive better value for money from its investment in higher education and the rise of the "academic right", there was also the emergence of a school of thought which saw higher education principally as a form of investment that developed human capital. With the human resource making a significant contribution to the Gross Domestic Product of a nation, it makes economic sense to invest in higher education in order that the workforce has the skills and knowledge to be able to compete with competitors in other

countries (Schultz, 1971). Indeed, Becker (1975) claimed that, as well as usually providing lifetime higher earnings for its recipients, education was also a major source of economic growth. His view is supported by a European Commission Memorandum (1991) which argued that higher education had an essential part to play in boosting economic development and in providing the necessary skills for industry and commerce within a rapidly changing European environment.

Sperling (1998) and Mitra (1998) consider that a free market approach to human capital is required, just as is the case with any other form of capital. They argue that the United States' for-profit universities, such as the University of Phoenix, and the NIIT Academy, which has 500 centres in countries including India, Indonesia, China, Zimbabwe and the United States of America, are ideal models for its efficient and effective development. They point out that the profit motive ensures HEIs are more responsive to customers and more prepared to be technologically innovative. It is the imperative and the rigours of market forces that encourage a swift response to customer demand and ensure that issues of resource shortages are addressed. Also, it is the need for HEIs to acquire the competitive edge that promotes the generation of new ideas and encourages their implementation. With this model of higher education, it is the operation of the market that indicates the quality of provision. A letter from Professor Barron of the University of Southampton to the Times Higher Education Supplement (Barron, 1999) illustrates this approach to quality assessment,

> Call me old-fashioned, but if students want to come, and employers want to employ them, then that's quality in my book. And if QAA doesn't agree, then sod (sic) the QAA.

However, some economists view education as a "merit good" that should not be subject to the natural workings of the market and the price mechanism. As higher education benefits the nation as well as the individual, it is appropriate that there is intervention in the higher education market place with the institutions and the students receiving various types of grants and low interest loans (Harrison et al., 1992).

The view of education as a means of developing human capital again fits with the first of the purposes that the Robbins Committee (1963) identified; to develop the necessary skills

in students so that they can play their part in the division of labour. The human capital approach is based on an instrumental and extrinsic model of higher education rather than the more altruistic and intrinsic model of liberal education. It has played its part in the reduction of the influence of liberal education on the curriculum in higher education.

Traditional notions of accountability have been challenged through the establishment of HEFCE, HEQC, QAA and the Research Assessment Exercise. The emerging form of accountability is, Tritter (1995) argues, achieved largely through the quasi-market that has emerged as a result of these new quality management institutions and practices. Quality in higher education is now seen in the context of a market model. McMurtry (1991) claims that the definition of excellence has changed from what it was with the liberal education model. Rather than a major indicator of quality education being the depth and width of the problems it poses for its customers, excellence in the market place is displayed when the product or service is free from defects and if it sells well. Supporting this view, Shumar (1995) argues that HEIs are undergoing a process of "commoditisation" in responding to market forces by presenting their services as commodities. Such commodities are becoming far more differentiated. A good example of this differentiation is the élitist approach of the "Russell group" of universities, so-called because their representatives met at the Russell Hotel, London (Radford, op. cit.).

Work Attitudes of Higher Education Students

The institutional drift away from liberal education has been accompanied by the emergence of a student body with generally more instrumental attitudes to their studies. Lecturers in higher education, asked to explain improving degree results, commented that students have begun to work harder and adopted an increasingly instrumental view of the educational process due to their concerns regarding job prospects (Macfarlane, 1993).

Hardened instrumentalists have become identified and known as "strategic" students. Their main aim is to achieve a degree with the minimum of effort. They often have little interest in their degree subject and deliberately seek to minimise their contribution to the

learning process. Their greater concern is the process of assessment. Kneale's (1997) study of academic departments in twelve traditional and ten modern universities found that 41% of the departments that responded considered that they had problems with this type of student. "Strategic" students often had good 'A' level grades. They were identified as those students who had no particular interest in higher education *per se*, who refused to contribute in classes for which there was no mark, preferred modules that did not have an examination and whose attendance was poor at modules where assessment was by means of essay. Generally, they only attended sessions up to the point where their essay topic had been covered. One of the many quotes from students to undergraduate tutors sums up succinctly these attitudes,

> I can pass the year without doing the course work, so stop hassling me to give it in. (Kneale, op. cit. p.121).

The emergence of this type of instrumental student is believed to be due, in large part, to a significant reduction in the use of tutorials; the increase in student numbers makes this teaching and learning strategy less practicable. For this reason, it is more difficult for tutors to get to know individual students and to ensure that course work is completed. However, it should be acknowledged that the "strategic" student is at one end of a continuum of student attitudes that has the extremely committed student at the other end (Kneale, op. cit.).

Harvey (1999) has also noted the marked increase in the number of instrumental students although he considers that this is due largely to the massification of higher education with the accompanying consumerist perspective (Ritzer, 1996). Harvey bemoans the rhetoric of consumerism and the instrumental demands of "strategic" students and yearns for a return to notions of scholarship and HEIs as learning communities.

Tapper and Salter (1992) argue that there are many present-day undergraduate and postgraduate students who can be considered to be more instrumental in their attitudes, basing their choice of subject to study on how it will contribute to their future employment opportunities rather than, as was the case when the notion of liberal education was dominant, on what was intrinsically interesting. The development of this more extrinsic,

instrumental attitude could also be related to the economic imperative to achieve better value for money from public expenditure on higher education. With the first of the four purposes of higher education that the Robbins Committee (1963) identified being to develop in students the necessary skills so that they could play their part in the division of labour, the government has inevitably wanted to influence the direction of educational change. Inflation of 20% and general economic difficulties in 1975 were partly responsible for the government ending the universities' building programme and, in 1981, there was a cut of 17% in the recurrent grant to universities during the next three years. Tapper and Salter (1992 p.22) saw these cuts in grants as part of an economic ideology designed to,

> ... shove aside the University Grants Committee's remaining attachments to the principles of the liberal ideal and university autonomy ... .

SUMMARY

Fitness for purpose is a key measure of the quality of higher education. However, the perceptions of the various stakeholders concerning the purpose of HE do vary greatly. Dualisms tend to over-generalise and over-simplify complex situations but, if these limitations are taken into account, they can assist by providing a framework for analysis. The dualism of liberal education and instrumental education helps with an understanding of two major purposes of higher education. These two purposes are not necessarily mutually exclusive nor are they always competing purposes. It is possible to satisfy the mind through the pursuit of knowledge and also cater for the instrumental development of skills and knowledge as a means of preparation for a particular profession. However, the field of business studies, for example, shows the general trend in curriculum development towards an emphasis on the study *for* business rather than a study *of* business.

Stakeholder views on the purpose of higher education will influence attitudes to, and expectations of, QM in HEIs. If higher education is regarded largely as having the altruistic and intrinsic purposes of developing students' minds, then QM will be a method of gauging the degree of transformation that has occurred. On the other hand, if higher

education is seen as a means of developing human capital in order to equip students for their part in the division of labour, then QM will be used to a greater degree to judge the extent to which particular and specific knowledge and skills have been acquired.

The emergence of a mass system of higher education has influenced the curriculum, the means of delivering it to the students and the organisational climate and culture within which it is delivered. The "old discourse" of collegiality, community and scholarship is being overshadowed by a "new discourse" of semesterisation, accreditation, modularity and credit accumulation and transfer. The number of more vocational programmes on offer has increased. There is less face-to-face interaction between lecturers and students as information technology is used to a far greater extent for teaching and learning strategies. Market forces are now far more influential and have led to the "commoditisation" of academic programmes. The locus of power in HEIs has moved away from academic staff towards administrators and the senior management team as attempts are made to create corporate organisational cultures as part of the endeavour to become more competitive in the higher education market place. The Jarratt (1985) and Croham (1987) Reports exhorted HEIs to adopt managerialist approaches (action planning, mission statements, appraisal schemes and performance indicators, for example) which were being used in business, commercial and industrial organisations. Modern universities transformed from polytechnics by the 1992 Further and Higher Education Act tended to utilise corporate managerialist structures, systems and procedures rather than copying the collegial structures of senates and committees that were associated with the traditional universities. Those in senior positions at HEIs were no longer regarded as academic leaders but rather as managers or chief executives.

On a broader level, during the last twenty-five years or so, the balance of power between HEIs and central government has altered with the concern for accountability leading to central government taking a more forceful rôle.

CHAPTER FIVE - THE PROPOSITION

The proposal of this thesis is based on the premise that emerging QM approaches, although used with varying degrees of success in a variety of private sector organisations (Bolton, 1995), fail to take account of the diversity of cultures in HEIs. Underpinning assumptions about the scope and purpose of higher education determine whether it is desirable and appropriate to apply QM approaches within the academic setting of a professional bureaucracy (Mintzberg, 1983). Professional bureaucracies are "loosely coupled", with this loose coupling affording the professionals a relatively high level of autonomy. Links between the various units that comprise an HEI are often so weak that there is fragmentation and very little co-ordination. In turn, this means that the discretion of the academic staff is high (Weick, 1988). Assumptions about integration, co-ordination and autonomy are key parts of organisational culture (Schein, 1985). It is recognised that professional bureaucracies in the higher education sector, with their loose coupling, are being challenged as they develop into more corporate bureaucracies (McNay, 1995). Those people who have a more instrumental and pragmatic view of higher education believe that a variety of QM approaches can and should be applied just as effectively here as elsewhere. However, supporters of more liberal approaches to higher education consider such an application to be an attack on their traditional academic freedom.

Followers of more liberal approaches to education also argue that HEIs rely far more on a people-orientated approach than is often the case in the private sector. Barnett (1992a) considers that the lecturer/student learning process in higher education involves more complicated and sensitive relationships between lecturer and student than is generally the case in other service industries. This could well be, in part, because higher education involves students in a "membership" relationship over a period of a number of years. He also claims that this relationship is more clear-cut for both parties in many other service industry contexts than is the case in higher education. Barnett is arguing that the relationship is peculiar and very different from that of other service providers and their customers. Scarff (1997), on the other hand, does not agree. He argues that from the consumer's perspective there is no difference between the service provided by an HEI and that supplied by any other service organisation. He does not believe that Higher

Education is a special case where particular and peculiar circumstances prevail. Scarff sees little difference between this relationship and that of a lawyer with a client or a doctor with a patient. However, if one does accept Barnett's view, then the problems of quality assessment that occur in service industries are likely to be all the more acute and pronounced in higher education. As in all service provider/customer relationships in a particular sector, the depth and complexity of the relationship would be likely to vary. Such variety is found in an HE sector that has substantial individual student/lecturer contact with the predominant use of the tutorial system in the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge universities and relatively little direct contact in a "modern" university (Tapper and Palfreyman, 1998). In these HEIs, more extensive use is made of multi-media methods and lectures to large audiences as part of teaching/learning strategies.

The mechanistic check-list systems which form a significant part of many QM approaches can be particularly inappropriate in HE if they fail to take account of the open-ended and dialectical relationships that exist in HE (Barnett, op. cit.). It is doubtful whether any checklist can lead to adequate analysis of these relationships. Procedures, written policies and internal regulations can only be part of QM. These need to be complemented by other methods that acknowledge and attempt to assess the quality and depth of dialogue between lecturer and student. HEQC audit, and now the auditing aspect of QAA review, with its emphasis on systems and structures, was and is less likely to gauge the quality of the relationship between lecturer and student than did HEFCE assessment. Audit is concerned to judge whether an HEI's systems will assist it to gauge this relationship. The QAA has introduced terms such as templates, codes of practice and benchmarking into the QM lexicon, suggesting that a more rigid, more prescriptive and less flexible system is being developed. However, there is danger in people assuming that the use of the term benchmarking in the Dearing Report is the same as that in common parlance and in use in industry and commerce. Benchmarking in the commercial and industrial sector is taken to mean a specific and precise measurement. The establishment of subject benchmarking groups has been considered to be the centrepiece of the QAA's approach to QM (Fletcher, 1998). Such a system of thresholds, benchmark standards, templates and codes of practice could, depending on their interpretation by subject review panels, take less account of an HEI's particular organisational culture than was the case with assessment

account of an HEI's particular organisational culture than was the case with assessment by HEFCE's Quality Assessment Division. Thus, more mechanistic styles of QM, such as audit, tend to emphasise process issues and this is at the expense of a people-orientated approach (see FIGURE 6).

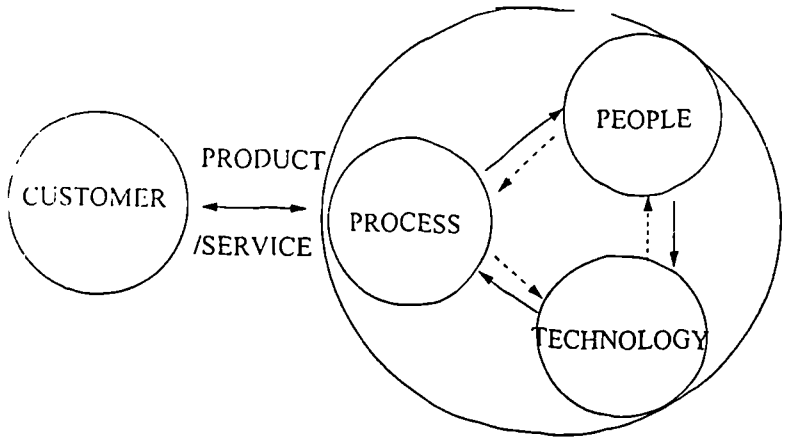


FIGURE 6: Organisational Pillars.
Source: Peppard, J. and Rowland, P (1995)

The perception of many HE lecturers that they are professionals (Nixon, 1996) is another barrier to the effective transference of QM from a production to a service context. Empowerment is one of the key benefits attributed to QM. Perceiving themselves as professionals, lecturers already enjoy a significant degree of autonomy over course design, management and assessment. Indeed, writers such as Hague (1991) would argue that they have far too much autonomy. Rather than offering empowerment (something they have in good measure anyway), QM can be viewed as reducing autonomy through the provision of a template which has to be used for various functions. Lecturers are channelled into certain types of prescribed behaviour and their scope for self-determination is diminished. It can be seen as an assault on this perceived professionalism and an attack on their perceived professional integrity (Barnett, 1994a; Halsey, 1992, Handy, 1984; Nixon, op. cit.). Tysome (1994) and Nixon (1996) argue that developments in higher education during the last thirty years have meant that autonomy and status are no longer guaranteed to them and, instead of providing empowerment and autonomy, QM represents an increase in control of lecturers by their managers. The creation of "... a growing army of insecurely employed contract staff who now make up to

professionalism - both perceived and real. Thus, it could be argued that the liberalism, the non-conformism and the general organisational culture of HEIs are all very different from that which exists in the business and commercial sector where more mechanistic QM has its roots and has often been implemented successfully (Holmes, 1993).

However, organisational culture can change rapidly and the difference in the organisational culture of HEIs and that of other organisations is narrowing (Barnett, 1994b) with the rise of managerialism in education (Scott, 1989), as appraisal and performance review spread into the higher education sector from industry and commerce. The government, as the major client of higher education, is concerned to exert its influence on its development (Tapper and Salter, 1992). The recent "environmental turbulence" has led to a shift in the balance of accountability, power and autonomy in HEIs (Holloway, 1994). These changes have reduced the level of peculiarity and eccentricity in higher education and have also gradually led to a change in culture. This cultural change has meant the situation is now more conducive than ever to the introduction of more mechanistic forms of QM. Some higher education lecturers at universities and colleges believe that there is a good deal to be gained from applying QM techniques from manufacturing and service industries. It is a matter of,

> ... getting a grip on quality assurance before it gets a grip on them (Ellis, 1993 p.16).

Indeed, as has been seen earlier, ISO 9000 has been adopted by HEIs such as Wolverhampton University. The University of Luton, amongst others, is an "Investor in People" and Aston and South Bank Universities, for example, have made use of TQM approaches.

Although there may be a mismatch of particular QM approaches in certain HEIs, senior managers have undertaken structural changes and strategies which are designed to stimulate changes in organisational culture (see FIGURE 7). As culture changes, so the adopted QM approaches have greater relevance and resonance. However, there is a not a simple cause and effect relationship between strategy and culture. The double-headed arrows indicate that, as well as strategic change being pursued and then the necessary cultural change being made, cultural change can precede and facilitate strategic change

(Brown, A., 1998). Similarly, an interdependence exists between structure and culture. Again, change in one of these factors does not always precede change in the other. Either can change first. What matters is the degree of fit between the two and, if there is not this fit, then adaptation is required.

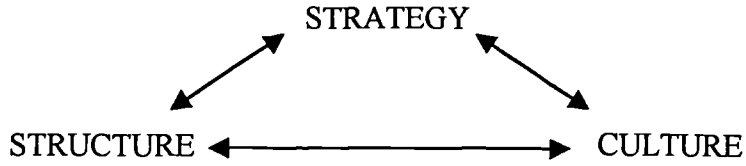


FIGURE 7: The Links between Strategy, Structure and Culture

Nevertheless, despite all these developments, it could be argued that the organisational culture of HEIs is still such that the more mechanistic QM methods often employed in the commercial sector are inappropriate. Shore and Roberts (1995) state the case even more forcefully, arguing that QM approaches such as that of ISO 9000 create "a bureaucracy of statistics" which replaces any meaningful and relevant assessment of quality.

Disagreement with the views of Ellis and other supporters of ISO 9000 series and IiP can be explained, in part, by a rejection of the emerging pragmatic perception of higher education which considers that higher education should be more firmly linked with the needs of industry and commerce (Training Agency, 1989). This pragmatic approach assumes a smaller gap between higher education and manufacturing and service industries. It also anticipates fewer difficulties in applying mechanistic QM techniques. Subscribers to the notion of liberal education (a notion which is regarded by some as being anachronistic) question the desirability of such techniques.

Academic members of staff at HEIs who subscribe to the notion of liberal education are far more likely to defend the status quo and resist the move towards "a new model of education". Hague (1991), amongst others, would consider this to be an élitist as well as an anachronistic and protectionist viewpoint.

This thesis is based on the premise that emerging QM approaches fail to take account of the diversity of cultures in HEIs. An investigation of this proposition requires an analysis of the extent to which there is a balance between the process and people-orientated foci of QM in HEIs. The underpinning argument is that QM in HE falls short of achieving this balance and that there is an over-emphasis on process issues with the consequent neglect of the people-orientation focus. In essence, the proposition is that the emerging standardisation of externally imposed QM methods fails to take into account the peculiarities of particular HEIs.

Terms such as benchmark standards, codes of practice and thresholds indicate that attention is now being paid to fitness *of* purpose as well as to fitness *for* purpose. With the possibility of greater standardisation of QM approaches by means of a nationally imposed external QAA framework, comparability between HEIs is facilitated. However, greater comparability tends to be at the expense of less flexibility. This standardisation means that there may not be a complete fit between an institution's mission and culture and its QM methods. QM instruments may not be taking account of differences in organisational culture as manifested by the mission statements of the individual HEIs.

It is acknowledged that senior management may adopt strategies and structural changes that aim to aid cultural change, thus developing a culture that is more conducive to particular forms of QM. However, it is a very difficult task to develop, sustain and embed a new organisational culture because the acceptance of all organisational stakeholders is required (Sommerville, 1996). Therefore, it may be that an HEI has not changed in the way that senior managers intended.

In order to examine the proposition, the first phase research was designed to lead to the construction of profiles for the seven fieldwork HEIs. Then the views and opinions, on a range of issues, of three senior staff stakeholder groups in each of the seven fieldwork HEIs were noted and compared. Comparisons were undertaken to examine the degree of homogeneity that existed amongst the groups in terms of beliefs and values. These beliefs and values form a key element of organisational culture (Schein, op. cit.). In essence, the intention of the first phase research was to discern whether distinctive

differences in organisational culture could be identified, and how far views related to the emerging QM approaches correlated with these cultures.

This proposition was not established so as to be either "proved" or "disproved". It was no more than a tentative supposition, subject to alteration, amendment and progressive re-focusing. This re-focusing was in response to the results from the research fieldwork in the seven HEIs.

SUMMARY

The academic staff of an HEI constitute part of a professional bureaucracy. In this form of bureaucracy, the coupling between senior managers, administrators and academic staff has usually been loose and this has allowed academics a relatively high level of autonomy. Staff in other service organisations rarely enjoy such levels of autonomy. In addition, many writers argue that there is a more complicated and sensitive relationship between lecturer and student, a relationship that is more open-ended and dialectical than is generally the case in service industries. It is for reasons such as these that it is more problematic to apply QM to HEIs than other organisations.

A more rigid and specific Quality Management system in HEIs is likely to develop under the auspices of the QAA, particularly if benchmarking is applied specifically and rigidly as it has been in business, commerce and industry. The use of models of organisational culture suggests that cultures vary greatly in the diverse higher education sector in England.

Although it is acknowledged that HEIs are changing rapidly as a result of the massification of higher education and the greater use of managerialist approaches, this proposition challenges the view that the developing Quality Management approach, based to a large extent on benchmark standards, can gauge accurately and fairly the quality of provision in such a variety of HEIs.

CHAPTER SIX - ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

Before exploring the proposition that QM methods in higher education fail to take sufficient account of an HEI's organisational culture, certain models of organisational culture will be examined and evaluated in this chapter. Then, in a later chapter, these models will be used to examine whether emerging QM systems and structures take account of the particular organisational cultures of the seven fieldwork HEIs.

If there is not a "fit" between an organisation's culture and external QM systems, then senior managers in the organisation need to acknowledge that culture will have to change significantly. Such change will be challenging and uncomfortable for all the organisation's stakeholders (Hart and Shoolbred, 1993). Nevertheless, cultural change should come first in the quality process because any QM initiative is unlikely to achieve long-term success without the embedding of new attitudes and behaviour (Sommerville, 1996).

Culture is a term that was introduced in the 1870s by Edward Tylor, an anthropologist. He defined it as including the knowledge, beliefs, values, laws, customs, habits, morals and any other factors associated with man as a member of a particular society (cited in Brown, A., 1998). Organisational culture has made use of this notion and it can be defined as the values, myths, heroes and symbols that have come to mean a great deal to the people who work in a particular organisation. Essentially, it is "the way we do things round here" (Deal and Kennedy, 1988 p.4). It can also be considered as "the glue that holds an organisation together" (Baron, 1994 p.64) and "corporate DNA" (Morgan, 1997 p.102). Oakland (1993 p.28) provides a useful summarising definition,

> ...(organisational culture includes) the beliefs that pervade the organisation about how the business should be conducted, and how employees should behave and be treated.

An organisation's culture is made up of a variety of rituals, myths, routines and stories and underpinning assumptions and values. It is also greatly affected by organisational structure and the distribution of power (Dopson and McNay, 1996). Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (1997) suggest the helpful analogy of considering organisational culture as an onion. There are different layers of culture. On the outside, the skin of the onion represents the artefacts of the organisation; those tangible items such as logos, uniform and office design that should reflect the organisation's norms, beliefs and values and basic assumptions. The skin needs to be peeled away if these norms, beliefs and values are to be

seen and further peeling away of layers is required to reveal, at the core, the organisation's basic assumptions. Becher, cited in Trowler (1998), notes that cultural inter-play can be observed at three levels that decrease in their degree of openness: front-of-stage (the public arena); back-stage (where deals are done) and under-the- stage (where gossip is purveyed).

Simple definitions of organisational culture suggest that it can be considered in isolation and the notion is straight forward and uncomplicated. However, culture should be examined in relation to an organisation's structure, the technology that it adopts and the environment within which it operates (Bax, 1991).

The culture of an organisation is influenced by numerous factors. Hofstede et al. (1990), on the basis of their research into multi-national organisations, identify six independent dimensions. Whether the organisation is process-orientated or results-orientated, job-orientated or employee-orientated and parochial or professional in outlook will have a bearing on an organisation's culture. Other influential factors will be whether it operates as a closed system or an open system where it is subject to a far greater degree to the influence of the political, economic, social and technological environment. Hofstede et al.'s final two dimensions are a normative versus a pragmatic approach and whether there is loose or tight control within the organisation.

Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (op. cit.) suggest another cultural dimension; universalism and particularism. A universalistic organisational culture is one where rules and procedures are applied rigidly and universally in order to achieve equity and consistency. On the other hand, a particularistic culture encourages flexibility and adaptation to particular situations. As with other dimensions, care needs to be taken to avoid polarisation and the establishment of a dualism. There are many different positions and blends between the two ends of the continuum.

Each of these dimensions will affect basic assumptions, beliefs and values and, consequently, their manifestation through organisational artefacts (Schein, 1985). However, great care is needed when considering these artefacts. For example, the decor, menu and the style of service at McDonalds fast-food restaurants are standardised throughout the world. This is all part of making their products distinctive. In addition, this standardisation process stresses the reliability and consistency of McDonalds' food, the

hygiene levels and speed of service. Although there is little or no variance in the artefacts associated with McDonalds throughout the world, people's perception of McDonalds varies. Whereas in the United States and the United Kingdom dining at McDonalds is seen as a way of acquiring a quick meal at a reasonable cost, in Russia it is seen as a sign of high status (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, op. cit.). Also, as will be seen later, it could be that an organisation's artefacts are not a true reflection of values, beliefs and basic assumptions but rather an attempt to project a particular image. The image that is being projected is based on the beliefs and values the organisation would like to have agreed and shared by all its members.

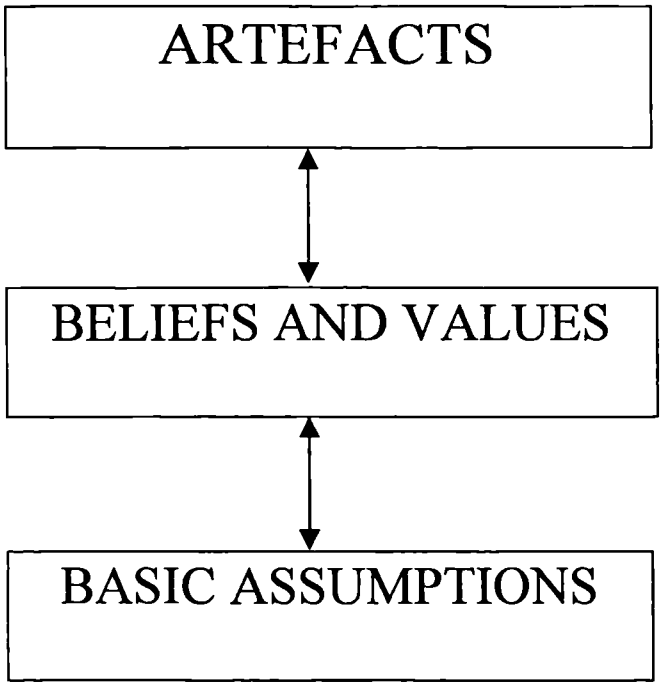


FIGURE 8: A Simple Model of Organisational Culture
Source: Schein, E. (1985)

Writers such as Deal and Kennedy (op. cit.) and Peters and Waterman (1982) see a "strong" corporate culture as advantageous because it provides clarity of purpose. It facilitates goal congruity between members of senior management and other employees and prevents goal ambiguity because there are clear signals as to what are the expected and acceptable types of behaviour. At an individual level, SAA (Selection, Attraction and Attrition) are processes to which a newcomer to the organisation is exposed (Schneider, 1987). Through selection, people are employed who "fit" the organisation and resemble

other members already in it. Also, supporters of the SAA model argue that people are attracted to a particular job and organisation because it fits with their conception of themselves and provides congruity between the job and their personality. Finally, attrition occurs with those around the newcomer constantly behaving in a particular way and wearing him/her down by providing clear organisational rôle models.

However, this argument has been criticised (Ybema, 1997) for being simplistic and over-generalised. There is an assumption that there is a clarity and consensus throughout the organisation and there is an absence of sub-cultures. Many researchers, including Gregory (1983), Louis (1985) and Morey and Luthans (1985), argue that organisations are an amalgam of a variety of different cultures rather than just one pervasive culture. Peters and Waterman (op. cit.) acknowledge the existence of sub-cultures and argue that organisations with a strong central culture are successful at enforcing co-operation and control and preventing barriers developing between different groups.

The complex nature of organisational culture is summed up by Ouchi and Wilkins (1988) who make the point that organisational studies can be sub-divided into those that attempt to create order and rationality and those that focus on the relatively chaotic and non-rational aspects of organisations. They argue that a consideration of organisational culture falls into the latter category.

The size of an organisation has an effect on its culture (Schumacher, 1997). Once an organisation has grown beyond a size where it is possible for members to communicate regularly, then there is likely to be the development of sub-cultures that have basic assumptions, beliefs and values that may differ from those of senior managers. Such sub-cultures could form in a department of an organisation, those employees who work in a particular geographic location or people who regularly take lunch together (Schumacher, op. cit.). People with a common workplace and/or who use the same canteen facilities will interact on a regular basis and, consequently, are likely to form as a group and develop a distinctive group culture (Ybema, op. cit.). Thus, in large organisations, it is likely that an employee interacts with many other organisational members and so it is possible that (s)he is a part of a number of sub-cultural systems. One of this number could be based on profession and/or academic background (Brown, A., op. cit.). Gregory (op. cit.) believes that it is very difficult for a large, internally-differentiated and rapidly-changing

organisation to have a stable, bounded and homogeneous culture. Such organisations are best seen as containing multiple cross-cutting cultures that change over time. It is not clear to an employee of a large organisation what is the organisational culture. Organisations can be seen as a mosaic of sub-cultures. However, unlike the pieces that make up a mosaic, the edges of each sub-culture are not always clear and well-defined (Ybema, op. cit.). Culture can be seen on occasions to be a differentiating rather than an integrating force.

Whilst acknowledging that defining an organisation's culture is fraught with difficulties, for the purposes of the research fieldwork it is necessary to develop a working definition if the proposition put forward in the previous chapter is to be examined. Schein's (1985) work on culture will provide one of the models to assist in the compilation of profiles of the seven different types of HEIs that have been selected for the fieldwork.

Schein (op. cit.) states that basic assumptions are those amongst members of an organisation that are taken for granted and are preconscious. They relate to issues such as human relationships and human nature. For example, the basic assumption of members of a Christian Church is that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. This is never questioned nor is it ever the subject of debate. The extent and strength of such basic assumptions will vary, with a greater level of acceptance of these basic assumptions in those organisations with a "strong" culture. In a management context, managers may have one of two different assumptions about employees' attitudes to work. McGregor (1960) developed the idea of two theories that were differentiated by their basic assumptions. Managers who subscribed to Theory X assumed that employees were inherently lazy and could only be motivated by financial reward or fear of disciplinary action. On the other hand, managers who supported Theory Y had a different basic assumption. They felt that employees were intrinsically rather than extrinsically motivated and wanted their work to be stimulating and challenging.

Beliefs and values will be related to an organisation's dominant basic assumptions and could include an emphasis on any number of the following examples of particular beliefs and values; internal and/or external competition, enterprise, innovation, equity in the treatment of employees and teamwork.

An organisation's beliefs and values are those that are considered "normal" and "good" within an organisation (Hofstede et al., 1990). They relate to agreed moral and ethical codes about what ought to be done in the organisation. Assumptions, beliefs and values are translated into reality and manifested through, for example, organisational-distinct sayings, dress, stories, myths, particular jargon, rules and regulations, rituals, organisational logos and the style of office and foyer furnishing. As was pointed out earlier, care needs to be taken when assessing these artefacts. They could be just an indication of the culture the senior managers of an organisation would like to project instead of an accurate reflection of the underpinning basic assumptions, beliefs and values. Argyris and Schon (1978) refer to this as a disjunction between espoused culture and culture-in-practice. An example of a disjunction could possibly be found at UK chocolate manufacturer, Cadbury. The company's artefacts in the form of publications such as "The Firm of Cadbury 1831-1931" and "A Century of Progress 1831-1931" claim that the houses that were built and sold to its workers in this period were a symbol of its enlightened Quaker attitudes. However, Rowlinson and Hassard (1993) raised doubts over whether Cadbury was motivated by religious idealism. They suggested that this was a *post hoc* justification and it was rather the awareness that it made good economic sense to provide employees with fairly-priced, utilitarian housing. After all, a contented and well-housed workforce is far more loyal and productive.

Schein's simple model of organisational culture (see FIGURE 8) is most easily clarified through reference to particular organisations. The fast-moving, highly competitive and dynamic environment within which the Hewlett-Packard computer company operates, influences its values. As one of its employees noted (McGovern and Hope-Hailey, 1997 p.198),

> The Hewlett-Packard Way is not jobs for life. It's jobs for performers. We're a business, not a philanthropic enterprise.

The company is renowned for its use of teamwork. Teamwork in the organisation is often reinforced and developed by means of ritual beer-drinking sessions after work.

In contrast to an organisation which exclusively stresses the value of competitiveness, there are others which, whilst valuing this attribute, have broader and more wide-ranging values. For example, Boots' company values involve building shareholder value and

ensuring that, as an organisation, they are ethically and socially responsible (Goldsmith and Clutterbuck, 1997).

When Archie Norman became Chief Executive of ASDA supermarkets in 1991, within a few months of being in post he instituted a "Tell Archie" campaign. This was designed to encourage a consultation process to involve over 20,000 colleagues (all staff were called colleagues and not employees) in decision-making (Goldsmith and Clutterbuck, op. cit.).

There are numerous examples of an organisation's values being manifested through artefacts in its offices or factories. A portrait of Queen Elizabeth the Second, which will be found hanging in many police stations, is an organisational artefact that indicates the dominant assumptions, beliefs and values of hierarchy, tradition and conservatism that prevail in the British police service.

An organisation's buildings can serve as totems of corporate or civic identity (Brown, A., op. cit.). For example, the prominent clock tower nicknamed "Old Joe" that stands in the grounds of Birmingham University is a symbol of the city's civic pride. The tower is named after Joseph Chamberlain whose support of the notion of municipalism contributed greatly to Birmingham's economic and cultural growth in the latter part of the nineteenth century. The lay-out inside buildings can also be seen as a statement of beliefs and values. The offices of Digital Equipment UK are open plan and this facilitates teamwork, co-operation and control through peer pressure, all of which are highly-prized by senior management (Brown, A., op. cit.). The interiors and exteriors of an organisation's buildings are reflections of culture and can be a source of cultural development and sustenance (Rowell, 1999).

An absence of particular artefacts can also indicate an organisation's beliefs and values. The Swedish furniture company IKEA does not allow its managers to have any form of status symbol. Managers are expected to fly economy-class and to use public transport rather than a taxi if the former is available. The company's President, Anders Moberg, reinforces this egalitarian attitude by also using the cheapest form of transport to business meetings. In addition, he insists that all employees be referred to as co-workers (Goldsmith and Clutterbuck, op. cit.).

National Culture

The influence of national characteristics on organisational culture is illuminated and illustrated by examining the functioning of the Korean electrical goods manufacturer, Samsung. This company has attempted to combine the rational organisational structures and Scientific Management (Taylor, 1947) typified by post-Second World War Western companies with the Eastern traits of paternalism, authoritarianism and formality. There are some clashes of the two different styles. For example, Samsung's Western meritocratic schemes for promotion based on performance appraisal have foundered because of the strongly-held Eastern belief that promotions should be based on seniority. Also, a survey has shown that familism continues to be influential with the eldest sons dominating in management succession (80%) in the top thirty Korean companies (Jang and Chung, 1997). Employees are expected to behave just like sons and daughters in front of senior managers and to bow with due reverence. Confucian familial-type relationships, based on authority and respect, exist in Korean organisations and these relationships influence industrial relations. There is less likelihood of industrial conflict when Korean companies use slogans such as,

> The company is my home and my colleagues are my family (Jang and Chung, 1997 p.62).

These slogans are a clear manifestation of the dominant basic assumptions, beliefs and values that prevail in many organisations in south-east Asia and help to explain the apparently harmonious work practices and the ethic that values hard work.

At Japan's Matsushita Electric Company, employees embrace the seven "spiritual" values of:

national service through industry,
fairness,
harmony and co-operation,
the struggle for betterment,
courtesy and humility,
adjustment and assimilation and
gratitude.

At the beginning of each working day, the 87,000 company employees in Matsushita's factories and offices recite the above code and sing together (Morgan, 1997). It is often difficult for people from Western countries to understand such behaviour because they are not aware of the profound impact of Japanese culture. Traditional cultural values emanate from two main sources; the rice fields and the spirit of service of the samurai (Sayle, 1982). Rice growing in Japan was, and is, an uncertain activity because of the scarcity of land and the short growing season. In order to secure success, there is a high level of co-operation and teamwork amongst all those involved. Conformity and co-operation are prized and a reliance on individualism is seen as ineffective in coping with the rigours of rice growing. The philosophy of the samurai with an emphasis on service to the community and their hierarchical position in traditional Japanese society also helps to explain the early morning communal reciting of the code and singing. Thus, the functioning of Japanese business organisations is, to a large measure, a product of the country's social construction. This is often why United Kingdom organisations find great difficulty with the effective introduction of suggestion schemes, quality circles and *kaizen* (continuous improvement) unless they can accomplish a radical transformation by somehow "becoming Japanese" and inculcating Japanese work culture amongst its employees (Parker and Slaughter, 1994).

The significant effects of organisational culture, as illustrated above, have led some management writers to view it as a means by which senior managers can control their employees. Ray (1979) identified three major forms of control at the disposal of senior managers: simple control through direct supervision of the employees; technical control, largely through the governing of the pace of work on a production line; and a third subtler form that involves using corporate culture. Ray argues that the third form, unlike the other two, endeavours to foster, and then gain, the commitment of the employees. As in certain Korean organisations, the expectations of the organisation are explicit and employees are exhorted to achieve these and to behave, at all times, in accordance with "the way we do things round here."

Blyton and Turnbull (1992) claim that this subtle form of control is typified by the use of Human Resource Management (HRM) strategies in the British factories of Japanese companies such as Nissan. Here, Human Resource Management is presented to employees by senior management as humane, employee-centred and as a means of developing the

individual. In reality, they argue, HRM is a means of increasing surveillance, imposing discipline and identifying "guilty" workers; all under the guise of team-working. The Japanese constantly extol the virtues of team-working and the consequent achievement of *wa* - team harmony and consensus. However, Blyton and Turnbull (op. cit.) argue that HRM in Japanese factories in the United Kingdom uses team-working and team peer pressure to secure compliance with company objectives. The production and quality measurement charts associated with Statistical Process Control are used to trace any "culprits" who are not working at the appropriate pace. Rather than HRM and team-working enriching jobs, it is used to maximise the output of the human resource. Peer pressure, which is a vital component of team working, is a method of achieving conformity and compliance with the consequent likely maximisation of production and profit.

Control, conformity and compliance to varying degrees and for different motives, are just some of many functions of organisational culture. It can also assist in the reduction of uncertainty and conflict resolution through the messages that it emanates. It can provide a focus and an identity and foster institutional loyalty. Appropriately channelled, it can lead to competitive advantage through enhanced employee motivation (Brown, A., op. cit.). Deal and Kennedy (op. cit.) claim that the extent of this competitive advantage can be quantified as up to one or two hours of productivity per employee per day. However, there is disagreement about whether there is a natural link between strong culture and high performance. Kotter and Heskett (1992) found in their studies of certain firms between 1977 and 1988 that some with strong cultures, such as Proctor and Gamble and Goodyear, performed relatively poorly. Perhaps a reason why strong culture leads to poor performance is that it is not appropriately channelled. Where it is focused on customer needs and care, then there can be productivity gains. However, if the focus is inwards on the employees themselves, then an employee coherence can develop that is not customer-friendly. The Post Office, British Rail and certain parts of the civil service have been given as examples where this has occurred (Brown, A., op. cit.).

Culture in Higher Education Institutions

There are numerous management approaches adopted by HEIs that are categorised as "organised anarchy", "loose-coupled", "collegiality" and "interactionist" by Dopson and

McNay (op. cit.). Such management approaches suggest a wide range of dominant organisational cultures in the Higher Education sector with, for example, collegiality being found in its most undiluted form in many colleges of Oxford and Cambridge universities (Weick, 1988; Tapper and Palfreyman, 1998). Schein's simple model helps with an awareness and understanding of prevailing and developing cultures in this sector. The supplementary use of Dopson and McNay's (1996) Model of Universities as Organisations (see FIGURE 9) can aid this process. It is important to stress that the authors recognise that all four cultural types are not mutually exclusive and co-exist as a blend in HEIs. Their framework is an analytical tool to discern the predominant culture of a particular HEI (McNay, 1995).

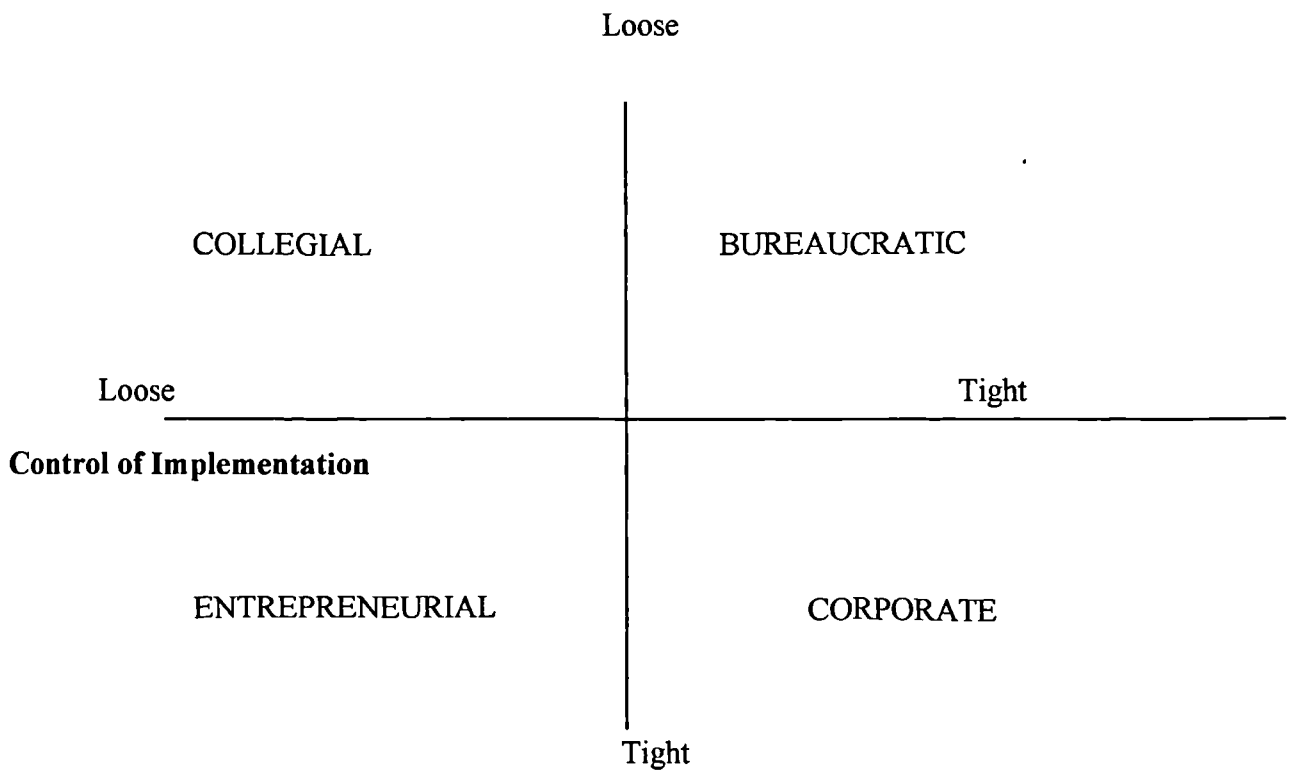


FIGURE 9: Model of Universities as Organisations
Source: Dopson, S. and McNay, I. (1996)

Collegial Culture

Harvey (1995) considers that collegialism has three key elements. There is the process of shared decision-making that relates to academic matters, adherence to the notion of academic integrity and the intense desire to protect and preserve a particular field of specialist knowledge and practice. Oxbridge colleges exemplify a collegial culture. They are generally small organisations that emphasise the academic autonomy and freedom of the individual (McNay, 1995, 1998). In Handy's terms (1993), there is very much a person culture with management seeking consensus. In order to achieve this, there is "Management by Walking Around" to gather the views of those who are likely to be affected by a particular decision. The main drawback where this culture predominates is either an absence of a response or a slow response to changes in the HEI's market (McNay, 1995, 1998). Research communities and senior common room committees are just two examples of a collegial culture.

Bureaucratic Culture

Great use is made of hierarchies and committees in the decision-making process. There are clear rules and regulations with most of an HEI's business being conducted through "Management by Meetings". Bureaucracy offers consistency of treatment for all in the organisation with decisions being based on rationality. There is a role culture (Handy, op. cit.) which, together with the strict adherence to rules and regulations, provides stability and limits role ambiguity. However, the attendant over-standardisation of processes and academic programmes, and a slow response to changes in its environment, are some of the problems that exist where this particular culture predominates (McNay, 1995, 1998). Academic Standards Units in HEIs, with their attention to detail, rules and regulations, typify a bureaucratic culture.

Entrepreneurial Culture

A task culture (Handy, op. cit.) dominates here with a keen awareness of the needs and demands of clients and customers in the higher education sector. This awareness leads to "Management by Marketing" and an emphasis on the competence of organisational members who need to demonstrate that they can meet the needs of their clients and customers. An over-response to market forces is the main danger where this culture is predominant in a particular HEI (McNay, 1995, 1998). Examples of an entrepreneurial

culture in HEIs are the development of business development units and the use of franchising as a means of increasing market share.

Corporate Culture

The power culture (Handy, op. cit.) is predominant with the power centralised and held by an HEI's Directorate or Senior Management Team. The Directorate/Senior Management Team makes key appointments through selection rather than election and it also determines the agendas of major meetings and controls the links and relationships with outside agencies. Managerialism is well-developed and reinforces the centralisation of power (Holmes, 1993). Essentially, this culture is predicated on "Management by Manipulation" leading to problems and dangers of over-politicisation and corruption (McNay, 1995). The development of a clear corporate image, logos and college/university newsletters are common manifestations of corporatism. The censoring by Middlesex University's senior management of an uncomplimentary article due to be published in the in-house newspaper "North Circular" could be seen as a less acceptable aspect of managerialism and a corporate culture (THES, 1998b). Corporatism makes use of what Trowler (1998) terms the "managerialist model of change" in which senior managers determine, plan, implement, monitor and review the organisation's change strategies.

Under Conservative governments of the 1980s and 1990s, the reduction of central government funding led to pressure on HEIs to tend towards an enterpreneurial culture. This was coupled with a diminution in the influence of collegiality.

McNay (1995) concludes that HEIs are now generally corporate bureaucracies and this has been a consequence of an increase in corporate culture at the expense of collegially. He bases this view on research that he conducted in one modern university when he asked twenty-five senior staff to distribute ten points to the four different cultures in 1989 and then again in 1994 in such a way as to reflect their perceptions of their dominance.

However, as with the use of any model, it needs to be acknowledged that there is the danger of over-simplifying and over-generalising a complex situation. This is particularly the case when conclusions are developed through research in just one HEI.

Type of Culture	Average score 1989	Average score 1994
COLLEGIAL	3.7	1.9
BUREAUCRATIC	3.4	2.7
ENREPRENEURIAL	0.7	1.6
CORPORATE	2.2	3.9

TABLE 3: Organisational Culture Shifts in One Modern University
Source: McNay (1995)

SUMMARY

Organisational culture can be considered as the assumptions, beliefs and values of an organisation with these intangibles being manifested through organisational artefacts such as uniform, jargon, rituals, logos, buildings and office furniture. However, care needs to be taken when considering these artefacts as there can be differences between espoused culture and culture-in-practice.

Culture is dynamic and subject to change. Assumptions are often made that there is a definitive and integrative culture that pervades an organisation whereas it could be more likely that an organisation is composed of a network of different sub-cultures. There is a danger of over-simplifying the notion of culture, both at national and organisational levels.

In order to investigate the proposition that QM systems fail to recognise the diverse organisational culture of HEIs, use has been made of Schein's simple generic model and Dopson and McNay's model of universities as organisations to develop an analytical framework for use in research fieldwork. As organisational culture can be particularistic rather than universalistic and can be as much a differentiating as an integrating force, it needs to be borne in mind that there are difficulties in drawing any firm conclusions from the analysis based on these two cultural models.

CHAPTER SEVEN - CHANGE AND ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

The research question can be set usefully within the context of the management of change as the development of QM approaches in HEIs is a major contemporary change issue. The types of QM that are in use in a range of HEIs and the attitudes towards them have been considered through an examination of relevant literature. Through the use of appropriate change models, the effectiveness of cultural change in HEIs can be gauged.

Change Models

There are numerous properties and dimensions to change (see TABLE 4).

	Properties	Dimensional Range	
a)	rate	Fast	Slow
b)	approach	Hard	Soft
c)	occurrence	Planned	Unplanned
d)	shape	Orderly	Random
e)	direction	Forward Upward	Backward Downward
f)	scope	Wide	Narrow
g)	degree of impact	Great	Small
h)	ability to control	High	Low

TABLE 4: Properties and Dimensions to Change
Source: Strauss, A. and Cohen, J. (1990)

By focusing on b) hard/soft approaches to change, HEIs can deal with hard factors such as organisation redesign through the establishment of "flatter" structures. However, the softer aspects of cultural change involving leadership, motivation, communication and sensitivity also need to be addressed (Ridgeway and Wallace, 1994). It is possible to re-structure the organisation, establish an Academic Standards Unit and appoint a Pro-Vice-

Chancellor to oversee QM but, unless the appropriate culture change is embedded fully, the development of effective QM structures and systems is unlikely to be effective.

Earlier discussion suggested that a "strong" culture can lead to a lack of ambiguity and a consequent clarity of organisational purpose (Peters and Waterman, 1982; Deal and Kennedy, 1988). Companies such as McDonalds and the Disney Corporation have benefited from sustained growth and a dominant market position as a result of their single-minded approach to strategic and operational management (Brown, A., 1998). However, the stronger the culture, the more difficult it is for the organisation to adjust its beliefs and values in response to changing circumstances. If the existing strong culture embraces values such as adaptation, flexibility and responsiveness to customers, then there is likely to be less of a need for senior management to initiate change. When these values are not present, then a strong culture is an encumbrance to change (Horowitz and Jurgens Panak, 1992).

The difficulties in responding to change experienced by organisations with strong cultures are often due to the "groupthink" that develops in them. Janis (1972) identified this phenomenon. Groupthink is comprised of four elements. These elements are all very different but some or all of them can be easily identified when analysing organisations with strong cultures. Firstly, there is tendency to search for scapegoats in times of crisis when there are problems. Also, there are often feelings of invulnerability accompanied by high self-belief and great admiration and support for the leader. The problem is that these attributes mean that decisions are not evaluated thoroughly and any opposition or criticism is construed as disloyalty. Thirdly, groupthink often leads to decisions being made on the basis of stereotypes and ideological assumptions. The strength of the culture prevents any meaningful self-reflection. Finally, there can be a form of detachment where members of the organisation disregard the consequences of their actions, even when they violate their most cherished principles. Janis (op. cit.) illustrates this final element of groupthink by reference to President Johnson's failure to recognise the contradiction between his espousal of humanitarian principles and his orders to escalate the bombing in Vietnam that caused suffering to the Vietnamese citizens. Janis' notion of groupthink helps to explain why organisations with strong cultures are either unwilling and/or unable to respond effectively to change.

Fullan (1991) considers that there are three components in the change process; materials, behaviours and beliefs. Materials are very easy to change. For example, it would be a simple matter to introduce pro formas to record and chronicle responses to QM initiatives. Such responses could be considered against established criteria. Lecturers and senior managers would then be expected to make use of the criteria in order to gauge progress towards the achievement of the QM objectives. Such operational use of a QM procedure would involve a change in behaviour on the part of lecturers and/or senior managers. However, as Fullan (op. cit.) notes, without belief in - and commitment to - the new materials and behaviour, the associated tasks would be likely to be carried out perfunctorily.

The first two of Fullan's key change components - materials and behaviours - are tangible and classified as "objective". On the other hand, beliefs are intangible and "subjective". All three elements of change need to be addressed. However, it is "subjective" change that is far more difficult to achieve but such a change in beliefs is essential if any proposed change is to become embedded. House (1974, p.73)) encapsulates the difficulty involved in the change process when he states,

> ... personal costs of trying new innovations are often high ... innovations are acts of faith. They require the belief that they will ultimately bear fruit and be worth the personal investment, often without the hope of an immediate return. Costs are also high. The amount of energy and time required to learn the new skills or rôles associated with the new innovation is a useful index to the magnitude of resistance.

In order to establish the appropriate shift in an individual's feelings (beliefs) and inter-relations, Leithwood and Jantzi (cited in Fullan, 1991) recommend a number of broad strategies, which greatly facilitate progress on the "subjective" aspects of change. Their recommendations were based on empirical research in Canadian educational institutions and include the senior management sharing power and responsibility with others in the organisation, engaging in direct and frequent dialogue about cultural assumptions, norms, beliefs and values and fostering staff development. Where there was a dominant collegial culture in a particular HEI, it would be more likely that a greater range of stakeholders would be involved in dialogue with senior management. On the other hand, with the dominance of a corporate culture, there would be less likelihood of such dialogue (Dobson and McNay, op. cit.).

For certain types of change to be embedded successfully, significant developments in organisational culture, structure and systems are required (Carnall, 1995). Scholz's (1987) work focuses specifically on different types of culture and the change-orientation associated with them. The following table (TABLE 5) identifies the major cultures, time-orientation, slogans associated with them and the attitudes towards change.

CULTURE	TIME-ORIENTATION	SLOGAN	CHANGE-ORIENTATION
STABLE	Backward-looking	'Don't rock the boat'	No change accepted
REACTIVE	Oriented to present	'Roll with the punches'	Minimal change accepted
ANTICIPATING	Oriented to present	'Plan ahead'	Incremental change accepted
EXPLORING	Oriented to present and future	'Be where the action is'	Accepts radical change
CREATIVE	Oriented to future	'Invent the future'	Seeks novel change

TABLE 5: Major Types of Organisational Culture and their Change-Orientations
Source: Scholz, C. (1987)

By making careful and judicious use of Scholz's organisational culture categories, it is possible to gauge an HEI's propensity for change in general, and cultural change in particular. Scholz's work is particularly helpful as it is predictive and culture-specific. The documentary analysis of college and university brochures, their mission statements and HEQC, HEFCE and QAA review reports on particular HEIs over a set period of time should provide some evidence of changes in organisational structures and systems. The interviews were designed, in part, to detect any changes in organisational culture that would be needed if a particular QM strategy were to be successful. Respondents were asked for their perceptions concerning changes in organisational culture and this was used as an indicator of whether or not the QM systems and structures were being matched to the prevailing organisational culture. For any strategy to be effective, an appropriate culture, systems and structures are required (see FIGURE 7, p.110).

Case studies of failed cultural change initiatives have revealed that senior managers must be committed to a new vision and new values if employees are to be convinced of the need for change (Richards, 1994). As Horovitz and Jurgens Panak (op. cit.) point out, leaders who demonstrate commitment and conviction are far more likely to be successful in cascading ideas through the organisation and encouraging effective employee participation. The senior managers in the sample were asked about their organisation's mission and the progress made towards achieving it.

Lundberg (cited in Brown, A., 1998) provides an interesting model developed in 1985 that helps to explain possible reasons for organisational culture change. Lundberg's model is essentially a learning cycle that argues cultural change is triggered by a surprise that occurs. This surprise can be due to environmental factors such as recession, technological breakthroughs, restrictive legislation such as nationalisation, structural change caused by the establishment of a new management team or a management crisis created by a serious mistake by a senior member of the organisation. Whether one of these triggers will actually lead to cultural change will depend on the existence of certain internal enabling factors. These include sufficient change resources, "system readiness", an appropriate organisational structure, a conducive organisational culture, where there is a willingness on the part of staff to change, and relatively stable leadership. If there is a surprise generated by environmental change, a number of the enabling internal factors are present and also the change is perceived as not too risky, then cultural change is likely to occur (Lundberg, 1985).

Managing Organisational Culture Change

Sometimes it is apparent that organisational culture change is needed desperately. It may be that an organisation is in decline and this is manifested by compulsive, repetitive and inappropriate behaviour that highlights continuous deterioration of performance. British Rail is given as an example of an organisation that required cultural change. Another sign of the need for attention to organisational culture is disproportionate amounts of time, effort and resources spent on restructuring. The UK National Health Service could be regarded as one of this type of organisation (Brown, A., op. cit.). However, just as there

are problems with defining organisational culture, so there are also difficulties with managing its change. Some management writers argue that it is not possible to manage the process whereas others, Peters and Waterman (op. cit.) and Deal and Kennedy (op. cit.), for example, consider it to be unproblematic. Brown, A. (op. cit.) notes, rather uncharitably, that these supporters of the latter view are often engaged in consultancy relating to culture change. Siehl (1985) steers a middle course in suggesting that there are some aspects of culture that can be managed and others that cannot. For example, he claims that an influence on culture can be achieved through direct action on recruitment and selection, induction, performance appraisal, training and reward systems. In the mid-1980s, the Abbey National Building Society identified those managers who were having difficulties in assimilating the new management practices. They were then offered a most generous early retirement package which one hundred and fifty managers accepted (Williams et al., 1993). Thus, relatively quickly and without any acrimony, one barrier to cultural change was removed. Performance appraisal, through its choice of particular targets, focuses attention on those issues that senior management regards as crucial to the change process. An integrative approach involving action on all the above managerial tools is far more likely to be successful because change in just one area will probably lead rapidly to subordination to the existing culture (Williams et al., op. cit.).

Having identified those aspects of organisational culture that can be managed, Hassard and Sharifi (1989) make some general points about their management. For example, the greater the extent to which cultural change involves more profound elements such as basic assumptions, the more difficult and time-consuming it will be. This also applies where there is heterogeneity with multiple cultures and numerous subcultures. Hassard and Sharifi argue that top-down approaches to cultural change are often very difficult to sustain as they are predicated on overt compliance rather than assumptions. A final example is summarised in Sathe's equation (cited in Brown, A., op. cit.),

Resistance to culture change	=	Magnitude of the change in culture	x	Strength of the prevailing culture

Strategies for Organisational Culture Change

As has been seen, organisational culture is not static as it is subject to change. External and internal factors may be such that organisational culture change is an appropriate response and senior management may want to change the culture. Bate (1995) identifies four major strategies which can be employed to achieve change and tackle the natural propensity of organisational staff to defend the status quo (Schein, 1985). Blends, which make varying use of two or more of these approaches, can be utilised. The conciliative approach may be used. Here change is achieved through routine, non-dramatic and gradual means. It is based on pragmatism rather than ideology and involves group problem-solving and collaboration. There is patience in dealing with organisational members who have difficulty in coping with the cultural change. Bate also identifies the corrosive approach. This is a more covert and devious strategy that relies on the building of coalitions and the progressive undermining of the power base of those opposed to cultural change. It makes great use of the manipulation of ideas and resources. Bate talks of an indoctrinative approach that sees cultural change as a highly-managed learning process, relying on training programmes to persuade organisation members of the need for change. The fourth and final approach he discerns is the aggressive approach. This is uncomplicated, direct, belligerent and conflict-centred. It can be seen as "cultural vandalism" with wilful attacks to destroy the existing culture. There is little or no sensitivity and every meeting to discuss future change is seen as a battle to be won.

Regularly, HEIs have been given as the archetypal example of Cohen and March's (1974) "garbage can" or "ambiguity" model of management. There is organised anarchy and a total lack of structure with those involved in the change generating a number of unrelated ideas. Somehow a decision on how to proceed emerges from this chaos. However, the development of managerialism in HEIs (Trowler, 1998) has led to the greater use of a top-down change strategy that is organised and structured. Policy is precisely and unambiguously defined and the implementation process is controlled hierarchically. From evidence derived from his in-depth study of "NewU", he claims that academic staff usually respond passively when faced by change presented and implemented in this way. Cultural change strategies such as those identified by Bate are types of approaches that are likely to flourish within this well-defined, top-down change management framework.

SUMMARY

Opinions vary as to whether it is possible to influence cultural change and, if so, how easy it is to achieve. Even when it is very clear that cultural change is urgently required, this change process is often problematic with interventions only being possible in areas such as recruitment and selection, induction, training, performance appraisal and reward systems. Such an integrative approach does not guarantee any degree of success.

Unlike artefacts, beliefs, values and basic assumptions are intangible and consequently any analysis of them is more problematic and likely to be subjective. Organisations with "strong" cultures are often unwilling and unable to adjust their beliefs and values in response to changing circumstances. This can be due to the "groupthink" that a strong organisational culture often engenders.

Empirical research in Canadian HEIs suggested that where there was a predominant corporate culture, there was less likelihood that there would be meaningful dialogue between senior management and other stakeholder groups about how to bring about cultural change. Without such dialogue, change was even more difficult to accomplish.

Overall, senior managers should resign themselves to the fact that cultural change is a slow process which, at best, can be only assisted and not controlled.

CHAPTER EIGHT - RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Objective

The research objective was to investigate the proposition that emerging QM approaches fail to take account of the diversity of cultures in HEIs.

Research Design

The investigation of the proposition involved an investigation into the extent to which there was a balance between the process and people-orientated foci of QM in HEIs. The underpinning argument is that QM in HE falls short of achieving this balance and that there is an over-emphasis on process issues with the consequent neglect of the people-orientation focus. The apparent move towards a greater standardisation of externally-imposed QM methods suggests that that these are even more likely to fail to take into account the peculiarities of particular HEIs.

When considering which research design and research methods were most appropriate to the research objective, Silverman (1993 p.54) advises that "... methodologies, like theories, cannot be true or false, only more or less useful." In heeding this advice, it was apparent that the proposition required the exploration of the views of a range of senior managers, administrators and academics in HEIs concerning the nature and impact of QM. Firstly, there was an inquiry into the types of QM that are in use and, secondly, the perceptions of the various stakeholder groups concerning the influence and effect those forms of QM have on the service that they provide. In order to ensure that the focus of the research was not too broad and the fieldwork did not become unwieldy and unmanageable, the students' perception of this service was not considered. However, institutional HEFCE, HEQC and QAA assessment and audit reports were consulted to gain an indication of the institutions' success in achieving high quality provision of higher education. Assessment and audit reports, as part of their methodologies, included the students' perception of the education that they receive.

Whilst acknowledging the dangers inherent in reducing the research methodology to a simple dualism of quantitative or qualitative research, the proposition is more qualitative as it is concerned to a greater degree with meanings and social constructions than facts. Thus, the design of the initial research involved a high level of interpretation and required more of a qualitative and subjective than a positivist approach. The positivist paradigm considers that there is an objective reality which can be sought and found by the researcher whilst the qualitative and subjective paradigm seeks to understand respondents' behaviour and/or views and opinions (Silverman, op. cit.). Such an interpretative approach seeks to understand these actions and meanings in their everyday settings (Bryman, 1988).

In considering what type of evidence was to be gathered in an attempt to answer the research question, the issue of validity was considered (see TABLES 6, 7, 8). Where the evidence is quantitative, the research instrument has to be able to measure that which it is supposed to measure. To ensure validity of more qualitative evidence, the researcher (myself) needed to understand and gauge what the respondents meant by what they said (Easterby-Smith et al., 1991). Quantitative data in the form of noted occurrences of particular QM approaches was required and qualitative evidence in the form of senior managers', administrators' and academics' views and opinions on the impact of such QM approaches supplemented and complemented this "harder" data (Layder, 1994).

Each research paradigm (see TABLES 7 and 8) has its own underpinning rationality which informs the reasoning, nature of thought and the type of inquiry (Popkewitz, 1984). Each has a different ontology or view of what is reality and emphasises a different, particular type of evidence (Zuboff, 1988). A mixed methodology of both quantitative and qualitative orientations was employed as this twin-strategy approach limited the distortion or bias that can occur through an over-reliance on any one form. Also, it allowed the researcher to reap the benefits that accrue from the adoption of each approach. Reed (1985) calls this "intellectual pluralism".

POSITIVIST VIEWPOINT	PHENOMENOLOGICAL VIEWPOINT
Validity	
Does an instrument measure what it is supposed to measure?	Has the researcher gained full access to the knowledge and meaning of informants?
Reliability	
Will the measure yield the same results on different occasions? (assuming no real change in what is to be measured)	Will similar observations be made by different researchers on different occasions?
Generalisability	
What is the probability that patterns observed in a sample will also be present in the wider population from which the sample is drawn?	How likely is it that ideas and theories generated in one setting will also apply in other settings?

TABLE 6: Validity, Reliability and Generalisability.
Source: Easterby-Smith, M. et al. (1991)

POSITIVIST PARADIGM	PHENOMENOLOGICAL PARADIGM
Quantitative	Qualitative
Objectivist	Subjectivist
Scientific	Humanistic
Experimentalist	Interpretivist

TABLE 7: Alternative Terms for the Two Main Research Paradigms
Source: Hussey, J. and Hussey, R. (1997)

POSITIVIST PARADIGM PARADIGM	PHENOMENOLOGICAL
Tends to produce quantitative data	Tends to produce qualitative data
Uses large samples	Uses small samples
Data is highly specific and precise	Data is rich and subjective
Reliability is high	Reliability is low
Generalises from sample to population	Generalises from one setting to another

TABLE 8: General Features of the Two Main Research Paradigms
Source: Hussey, J. and Hussey, R. (1997)

As much of the fieldwork entailed eliciting senior college managers', senior administrators' and senior academics' opinions and views on QM, there was the subjective rather than the positivist perspective here with a concern not for observable facts, but with subjectivity and socially-constructed reality (Cohen and Manion, 1991; Cresswell, 1994). Initially, such research is exploratory but it can then lead on to emphasis being placed on the subjective interpretations, beliefs and perspectives of the respondents. Semi-structured interviews, chosen as one of the research methods for the first phase research, involve "researching with people rather than researching on people" (Reason, 1994, p.1). Thus, it is possible that such subjective evidence elicited by this method can be used selectively to support the researcher's argument (Silverman, 1985; Cresswell, op. cit.). It is for this reason that data gained from documentary and other more "objective" evidence should be used as a counterbalance.

However, care needs to be taken with the notion of objective data and in assuming that it is inherently more reliable and valid than that which is subjective. Denzin is an advocate of the more subjective approach to research (1994, p. 505) arguing that "the age of 'objective' description is over". He claims that researchers create their own versions of the realities they describe. It is questionable whether any research can be objective as those forms of data collection which involve contact between the researcher and respondents lead to the disturbance of the respondents' working pattern. For this reason, the research is

likely to contain error, bias and prejudice (Parlett and Hamilton, 1977). The Hawthorne studies between 1927 and 1932 at one of the Western Electric Company's factories showed that the outcome of experiments based on scientific principles were affected by the presence of the researchers. The researchers found that the respondents' productivity was not affected by increases in the level of lighting in the factory. Instead, increases in production were attributed to the presence of the researchers and the interest that they showed in the workers. This brought into question whether research can be scientific and objective when it involves the study of people's views or behaviours (Cole, 1990). The term "Hawthorne Effect" has become part of the language of researchers and refers to the notion that the mere fact that a person is being observed can influence and disturb his or her behaviour (Remenyi et al., 1998). The process of data collection and the conducting of interviews for this dissertation did similarly disturb the respondent's working pattern. It is the researcher's responsibility to minimise this disturbance and the accompanying bias and prejudice. Sensitive and unobtrusive behaviour by the researcher can achieve minimal disturbance. Nevertheless, it needs to be acknowledged that the impact on interviewees of the researcher's style of posing questions, his body language during interviews and the additional problems emanating from interviewing peers and fellow professionals (Platt, 1981) is significant and very difficult to minimise.

Hammersley (1990) warns of two other concerns that need to be addressed if research fieldwork is to be valid. These are the need for the researcher to prevent his/her values influencing the respondents. There is also the truth-status of a respondent's account of what is happening in his/her institution. As discussed earlier, it is difficult to ensure that any research is totally objective. A researcher, by avoiding leading questions and responding neutrally to a respondent's replies, can limit the influence of his own values on other people. In terms of the truth status of a particular respondent's account, a comparison with the accounts of the two other members of the same organisation provided other sources of data and thereby serves to check the more qualitative information. Just as there can be no guarantee that the researcher's values do not impinge on the research, so there can be no guarantee that the replies of all the respondents are truthful.

As the research progressed, Remenyi et al.'s (1998, p. 66) prediction of shifting methodologies was found to be relevant. They note that,

> The choice of methodology can change during the research project. It can be seen as a journey in which the researcher may develop from one research methodology or paradigm to another as his or her understanding of the research problem changes.

Initially, the research was undertaken in order to investigate a specific proposition. However, at the same time as a particular proposition was being investigated, an analysis of the interview data uncovered issues which had not been anticipated or considered before.

Research Methods

The methods selected by any researcher are determined by several factors. These include the nature of the research problem, the availability and accessibility of data and time and funding available (Layder, op. cit.). The reasons for adopting a twin-strategy research design were discussed above. A dual-strategy approach to research methods similarly helped to overcome problems of distortion and bias, which could occur if there is exclusive reliance on one method. Methodological triangulation refers to the use of multiple but independent measures (Easterby-Smith et al., op. cit.) and it acts as a check on validity. Although bias cannot be eliminated totally, triangulation can minimise it (Remenyi et al., op. cit.). Essentially, triangulation involves a multi-method approach with,

> ... the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behaviour (Cohen and Manion, 1991 p.269).

For the initial research, two methods were chosen: document analysis and semi-structured interviews. The document analysis of selected institutions examined mission statements, aims and objectives and policy statements on quality, procedures and guidelines. Such quality statements would have been developed largely in response to HEQC audit, HEFCE assessment and QAA audit and assessment. However, Stenhouse (1975) warns that validation documents, QM systems and procedures and programme aims and objectives are merely written prescriptions of what should happen and they are not

necessarily accurate representations of what actually happens. Categorisation of this largely qualitative data was facilitated through the application of content analysis techniques (Hussey and Hussey, op. cit.) that provided headings and a framework.

First impressions of the researcher's views on the ambiance and atmosphere of a particular fieldwork HEI also formed part of the document analysis. Field notes were taken at the time of the visit to the respondents. In order that a record of the HEI's artefacts could be made, photographs were also taken. Significant features such as cloister courts, chapels, styles of architecture are examples of the subjects of these photographs.

Intensive semi-structured interviews were conducted with a range of academic and administrative personnel in a very limited sample of seven HEIs. Questions were asked in order to ascertain how and why the QM system was introduced and established, what was the underpinning philosophy and rationale and whether the system was designed to be in sympathy with the organisational culture as perceived by the particular respondent.

As an in-depth examination of QM issues was required, interviewing was selected as one of the research methods because it offered the researcher the opportunity to uncover complex interconnections and to discover nuances in organisational culture. The major purpose of interviewing is to discover what is in the mind of the respondent and to uncover information that cannot be deduced from observing someone's behaviour (Patton, 1980). It is acknowledged that research interviewing is dependent upon the co-operation of a small group of key respondents (Hughes, 1996). Elite interviewing was adopted (Marshall and Rossman, 1989) and this involved selecting a sample of senior managers, senior administrators and senior academics to be interviewed. These senior staff were regarded as an élite because they are very well-informed and influential on the subject of QM. As many of the issues discussed in the interviews could be regarded as sensitive, the interviews were not tape-recorded. Notes were taken at the interview and then written up into a report at the earliest possible opportunity on that day. Respondents were assured of anonymity and confidentiality. A draft report of the interview, marked "Strictly Confidential", was sent to a respondent in order that (s)he could make appropriate

amendments and/or additions before a final report was compiled. The final reports of all twenty-one interviews can be found in APPENDIX B. The names of interviews and their institutions have been removed from these reports in order to ensure anonymity for the interviewees.

As with all research methods, interviewing has strengths as well as weaknesses. Major strengths include obtaining large amounts of expansive and contextual data in a relatively short length of time and in a natural setting. All twenty-one respondents were interviewed in their places of work. Another strength was that it is a good method of uncovering, discussing and then clarifying relatively complex notions. Weaknesses of interviewing as a research method include the difficulty in replicating interviews. Semi-structured interviews develop in different ways, thus affecting overall research reliability. Another major weakness is that the data can be influenced by the interviewer's level of skill and by effects on the respondent due to the interviewer's mere presence, tone of voice and body language (Hughes, op. cit.). Such problems occur because of the social process involved in interviewing and they can only be avoided if the interviewer does not establish and then engage in this process but, instead, behaves in a detached and machine-like manner (Jones, 1985). However, behaving in a machine-like manner would have meant that it would not have been possible to have built up the necessary level of trust between the interviewer and the senior staff being interviewed. This trust was essential if a free flow of thought and in-depth discussion was to be developed. The semi-structured interview schedule established common starting points for discussion but each interview developed differently. The richness and diversity of the data yielded by the interviews was, to an extent, at the expense of a reduction in the comparability of these interviews.

As well as methodological triangulation, there was also data triangulation (Easterby-Smith et al., 1991). This involved asking similar questions to three representatives of the seven fieldwork HEIs - a member of senior management (Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Vice Principal or Assistant Principal), a senior administrator (Academic Registrar or Senior Assistant Registrar) and a senior academic member of staff (Dean of Faculty, for example). By seeking responses from a range of interviewees with varying perceptions and experiences and from different interest groups, the validity of the fieldwork was

improved. Had only representatives from just one interest group been interviewed, then it is likely that a degree of bias towards that group's perceptions would have been present.

In order to provide an analytical framework for the three groups of respondents' perceptions of organisational culture, Schein's (1985) and Dopson and McNay's (1996) models were used. As with all models, it should be recognised that, although they greatly assist with analysis, they necessarily involve an element of over-simplication and over-generalisation (Becher and Kogan, 1992).

Pilot Interview

The initial review of relevant literature suggested the main areas of the semi-structured interviews which needed to be explored in order to examine the research question. A number of key questions were asked (APPENDIX A) with supplementary questions being stimulated by respondent's answers to these key questions. The questions for the semi-structured interviews were piloted by their use with a colleague at the researcher's institution. Consequently, a few minor amendments were made to the initial questions in the interview schedule.

The pilot interview raised two very important concerns about the use of interviews as a research method. These concerns had been noted by, amongst others, Saunders et al. (1997). Firstly, so that respondents would be as open and frank as possible, it was necessary to put them at ease before they were asked the first of a number of challenging questions. In all twenty-one interviews, at the outset an attempt was made to relax the respondents by asking them to describe their rôle and responsibilities in their institutions. This allowed them to talk fluently and authoritatively about issues with which they were familiar. The first two questions were "ice-breakers" and were designed in part to relax the respondents but they also yielded information from an examination of the respondents' perceptions of organisational culture.

A more difficult problem highlighted by the pilot interview was the respondents' interpretations of key words used in the questions such as "culture", "liberal education",

"professionalism" and "managerialism". Such words are open to a wide range of interpretations. Thus, it was very difficult to ensure that there was a shared understanding of their meaning. Asking each respondent what (s)he understood by the particular words would have affected adversely the flow of the interviews. Also, senior staff members might have felt uneasy at having to define a wide range of terms. It transpired from the interviews that the similar backgrounds of the twenty-one respondents meant that the interpretation of these words appeared to be broadly similar. When respondents asked for clarification or appeared to require this, it was given. However, it has to be said that it cannot be guaranteed that there was total shared understanding amongst the researcher and all twenty-one respondents.

The pilot interview also suggested that an hour would be the maximum duration of any interview because of the limit to a respondent's span of attention. In addition, the interviewees were very busy people at the higher levels of their organisation. It would have been unreasonable to expect them to spare more than an hour. In that limited time, it was not possible to ask all of the relevant and appropriate questions that could have been put to them. Therefore, the questions were prioritised but with sufficient flexibility to allow issues raised by the interviewees to be followed up.

The pilot interview was most helpful in refining the questions in the interview schedule. It also served as a rehearsal for the research interviews, allowing the researcher to practise and thereby improve his interviewing skills. However, it could not help with a problem that emerged during the course of the research. As the researcher conducted more interviews, his confidence grew. This, together with an increasing knowledge of the subject area as more literature was consulted, improved the quality of his interviewing. For this reason, it is likely that the later interviews yielded more relevant information than those right at the beginning of the research. This problem had not been anticipated and, even if it had been, there would seem to be little that could have been done to achieve total consistency in the quality of the interviewing.

Research Sample

There are seventy-one universities, sixteen schools of the University of London and forty-eight higher education colleges which are funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE, 1999). The proposed research proposition required in-depth, qualitative study. Issues such as organisational culture warrant thorough examination and this can only be achieved if a substantial amount of time is spent in a particular organisation.

For the initial research, a number of people in a variety of HEIs were approached. Six of these people did not reply and two said that they were not prepared to take part in the research. One HEI did not permit any research to be conducted in that institution. There were three HEIs in which research was not possible because of either a refusal on the part of senior management to allow it or because of the non-responses of those stakeholders in an institution who were approached by letter. Interestingly, all three of these institutions made use of at least one QM scheme such as ISO 9000, IiP, TQM or Charter Marking. It is not being argued that the use of such schemes made an HEI less willing to participate in the research. This observation is only of relevance because it suggests that HEIs using such QM schemes could be under-represented in the sample.

Overall, the institutional and individual refusals and non-responses did mean that the sample of twenty-one respondents was not as random and representative as had been planned. On a few occasions, in order to find interviewees from particular HEIs, colleagues from the researcher's own institution provided contacts to be asked. When this approach was used, all the potential respondents agreed to take part in the research. However, it did mean that these members of the sample were, perhaps, more opportunistic rather than random (Foster and Parker, 1995).

Seven different types of HEI were discerned. Duke's (1992) typology of universities pre-1992 Further and Higher Education Act was used as a basis for categorisation and this yielded four types; Oxbridge, Redbrick, Greenfield/Plateglass and ex-College of Advanced Technology. To these categories were added the "modern" universities created post-Further and Higher Education Act from former polytechnics, Colleges of Higher Education (some are now University Colleges) and a miscellaneous group of creative arts

institutes. The seven HEI types were also derived from a distillation of Scott's (1995) thirteen categories that, he argued, illustrated and illuminated the pluralism of English higher education. The twenty-one respondents in the sample comprised three members from the following seven HEIs:

a) Oxbridge College
b) Redbrick University
c) Plateglass University
d) Technology University
e) Modern University
f) College of Higher Education
g) Arts College

To an extent, any method of classification is open to criticism on the grounds that not all HEIs in a particular category share all the same features. However, by making using of Duke's typology of traditional universities and then categorising the remaining HEIs in terms of "modern" universities, colleges of higher education and institutes, the seven types of HEI that have been discerned are based firmly on historical development. Despite possible imperfections, the use of the seven categories does provide a workable framework for the analysis of organisational culture in higher education.

From each of these institutions, one member of the senior management team, a Pro-Vice Chancellor, Vice-Principal, Assistant Principal or equivalent, was invited to answer questions related to QM. Also invited to respond to these questions were a senior administrator such as the Academic Registrar or Senior Assistant Registrar, and a senior academic such as a Dean of Faculty. Senior members of staff were chosen because they were likely to have greater knowledge and understanding of developments in QM. In part, this greater knowledge is explained by their ease of access to QM documents and literature. Another reason for the choice of senior staff was that their position in the organisational hierarchy meant that they had more influence than other staff on the development of internal QM systems and structures. Senior staff would also be more likely to respond on behalf of the HEI when outside agencies invited comments on proposed QM initiatives.

The accumulation of data from the interviews and information gleaned from documents relating to the fieldwork institutions led to the compilation of outline profiles for the seven HEIs.

Research Data Analysis

In order to analyse the notes made from the twenty-one depth interviews, the Constant Comparative Method of analysis was used (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). This method combines inductive category coding with a simultaneous comparison of all the interview notes. Once meaning has been ascribed to a particular note in an interview, it is then compared with other interview notes and, when similarities of meaning are found, they are grouped and coded. If no similar meaning is found during a comparison, then a new category is formed. Thus, there is a continuous and simultaneous collection and processing of data with the generation of further typologies (Lincoln and Guba, op. cit.). FIGURE 10 illustrates the process.

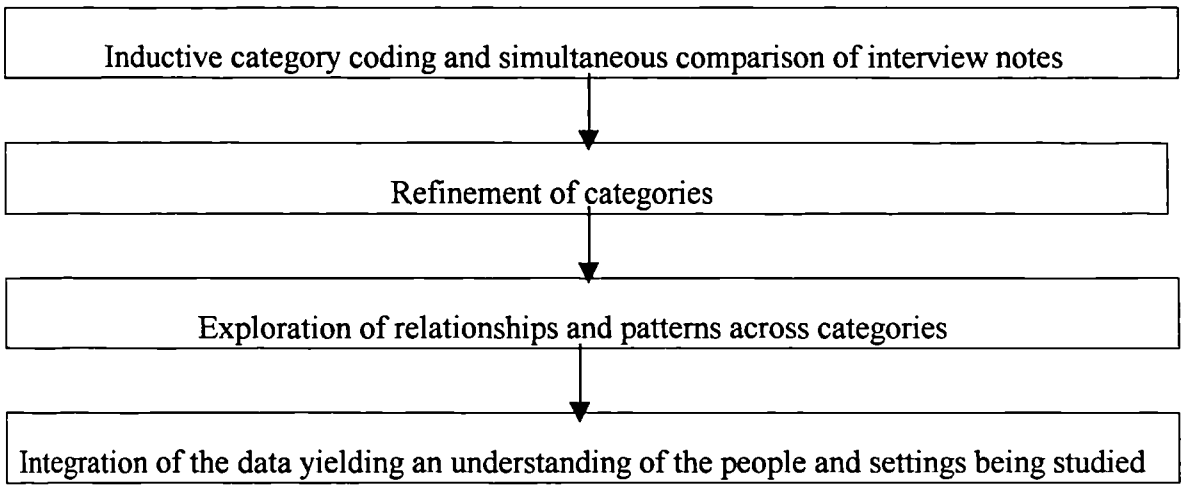


FIGURE 10: Constant Comparative Method of Data Analysis
Source: Glaser, B. and Strauss, A. (1967)

The four stages of the Constant Comparative Method are very similar to the four stages of interview data analysis discerned by Morse (1994). These four stages are comprehending,

synthesising, theorising and recontextualising. The first stage involves the researcher acquiring a clear understanding of the subject area. Synthesising leads to a drawing together of all the different themes and issues and then forming them into new integrated and coherent patterns. Theorising, as the term implies, relates theory to practice. The final stage of recontextualising is a generalising of the emerging theory or theories to a much wider setting and population than that which was the subject of the empirical research. Some exponents of this method argue that it develops Grounded Theory, that is theory built rather than tested and involving a theoretical formulation from the research findings (Glaser and Strauss, op. cit.; Strauss and Cohen, 1990).

The Constant Comparative Method of interview data analysis was operationalised by identifying every comment made in the twenty-one depth interviews by means of a code on each report detailing the type of senior staff member and the category of his/her institution. All of the comments were then separated by means of cutting the reports appropriately into strips. The comments were then grouped into particular themes and, for each of many themes, the statements were compared and contrasted and sub-divided further. At the end of these processes, a fuller understanding of the respondents' views and their work environments emerged.

SUMMARY

When determining research design and deciding upon research methods, the selection of design and methods is guided by what is appropriate to help address the research question. The initial research fieldwork involved an examination of HEIs' externally imposed and internal QM processes and procedures. Senior managers, administrators and academics in representative examples of the seven major types of HEI funded by HEFCE were invited to comment in detail on the impact and relevance of their organisation's internal and external QM procedures. These procedures were linked to their perceptions of the prevailing organisational culture. Additionally, brochures, marketing materials, mission statements and HEQC, HEFCE and QAA reports on these seven HEIs were

consulted in order to understand their organisational culture and assess the effectiveness of their QM systems and procedures.

The initial research was more qualitative than quantitative and more interpretivist rather than positivist in design. Greater validity was sought by adopting the multiple methods of document analysis, field notes taken when visiting the HEIs and detailed semi-structured interviews. This methodological triangulation was complemented by stakeholder data triangulation involving interviews with staff from three different interest groups within an organisation.

However desirable objective data is considered to be, it is questionable whether total objectivity is possible because the researcher's presence disturbs *significantly the* respondents' working patterns. This "Hawthorne Effect" can limit the degree of objectivity of positivist as well as qualitative and subjective research work.

The major problems involved with adopting the interpretivist paradigm of research are that the researcher's values could influence the respondents during interviews. Also, the interpretation of the interview data could be subjective. Strategies need to be adopted to minimise this subjectivity and, in order to help achieve this, the Constant Comparative Method for the analysis of the interview data was used in addition to methodological and data triangulation.

CHAPTER NINE - OUTLINE PROFILES OF SEVEN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

There have been great variations in the stated aims and purpose of individual HEIs. Duke (1992) noted that in the early 1990s, for example, Aston University's objective was to be the leading technological university, Salford's purpose of its teaching was to supply British industry and commerce with well-trained and able graduates whilst Bradford prided itself on its openness to change. Manchester not only took a leading role in teaching, research and scholarship but also it acknowledged its part in the development of the city and North-West England. Southampton University stressed its high standing in research and its role in the continued economic and cultural prosperity of central Southern England.

The proposition of this thesis is that QM methods in higher education do not take account of the diversity of organisational culture within and between HEIs. To examine this proposition, outline profiles of seven HEIs have been constructed and used to examine current practice and organisational culture. The theories and practice discussed in earlier chapters were utilised to understand, analyse and explain what was happening in the seven research fieldwork organisations. As discussed in the chapters relating to the proposition and the research methodology, the major purpose of the analysis of the profiles was to explore whether emerging QM systems and structures acknowledged the differences in culture in these HEIs.

A wide range of sources was used to build the profiles. The interviews with the three respondents at each of the seven HEIs yielded valuable information on current practice and their perceptions of organisational culture (APPENDIX B). The researcher's own perceptions of culture, as a non-participant observer, were another source of qualitative data. Provision of other qualitative data on each organisation was provided through reference to mission statements, HEQC audit, HEFCE assessment and QAA review reports.

Quantitative data was provided through reference to Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA, 1998) documents published in 1998 and relating to the academic year 1996/7. Such information included the proportion of part-time students, the proportion of "mature"

students, the number of modular and inter-disciplinary academic programmes, the balance of undergraduate/postgraduate and female/male students, whether there were registered further education students at the HEI and the range of subject areas covered by an HEI's academic programmes. Additional relevant information was found through reference to undergraduate and postgraduate prospectuses published by the HEIs and other marketing materials such as the British Council Institution Profiles. The 1996 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) gave an indication of the emphasis placed on, and success achieved in, research work.

Through a range of sources such as those above, there was a wealth of quantitative data for each of the seven HEIs that could have been used to evaluate organisational culture and QM systems and structures. However, had exact figures, verbatim quotes from mission statements, HEQC audit, HEQCE assessment and QAA review reports been used, it would have been relatively easy to identify particular HEIs. As anonymity was promised to all respondents for themselves and their organisations, verbatim quotes from documents have not been used. Paraphrasing has been used instead. Similarly, all figures have been rounded in order to make it as difficult as possible to identify an HEI whilst, at the same time, constructing the most accurate picture as possible of the organisational context in which culture has developed.

An attempt has been made to use Schein's (1985) and Dopson and McNay's (1996) models of organisational culture in order to analyse and categorise the seven HEIs. However, this process is fraught with difficulties as Trowler (1998) noted when undertaking an in-depth cultural study of what he called NewU. Although he did not use either of these models, he did find the existence of numerous sub-cultures. Although it was possible to classify one department as having, say, a collegial culture, another was predominantly entrepreneurial. Thus, the categorisations in the following seven profiles are very general as it is recognised that there are bound to be cultural variations within a particular HEI. One of the objectives of the empirical research is not only to use Dopson and McNay's model, but also to extend and develop it.

a) OXBRIDGE COLLEGE

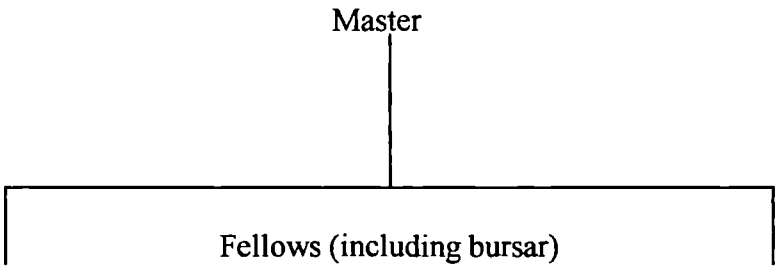
Oxbridge College was founded in the Middle Ages and the cloisters, the lecturers' study rooms and the general antiquity of Oxbridge College manifest its tradition and centuries of providing higher education.

There are about 400 undergraduates and nearly 200 postgraduate students at the College with nearly half the total number of students being female. Oxbridge College is a self-governing institution within the University. It provides academic programmes in thirteen out of the nineteen subject area categories identified by HESA (HESA, 1998). This is a relatively extensive range of programmes and it includes the provision of undergraduate joint honours degrees which combine subjects. There is no modularisation of programmes and the university year is divided into three terms rather than two semesters.

The Oxbridge College's prospectus for the academic year 1999/2000 makes clear that the College is first and foremost an intellectual and educational community. Oxbridge College is considered to be a constituent part of the "golden academic triangle" formed by the three geographical points of the University of Cambridge, the University of Oxford and the Colleges of the federal University of London (Targett, 1999a). This golden triangle highlights the emphasis placed on academic activity and the value attached to the pursuit of knowledge at Oxbridge College and the other colleges of the three universities. The prospectus, like that of other Oxbridge colleges, draws attention to the academic qualifications of its teaching staff and its administrative officers and highlights those members of staff that are Fellows of the College.

The mission statement of the university, of which Oxbridge College is a part, refers to the maintenance and enhancement of its standing as a world-class university in terms of teaching and research. In the academic year 1998/9, the average 'A' level points score of students entering colleges at the University was 28.7 (Financial Times, 1999a). These 'A' level scores are determined by aggregating and then averaging students' three best 'A' level results with, for example, ten points being allocated for an A grade, eight points for a B and two points for a C. A score of nearly 30 is at the top end of the scale.

Oxbridge College exemplifies a collegial culture. It is a relatively small organisation which emphasises individual autonomy (McNay, 1998). Collegiality requires that academic members of staff have a significant part to play in the management of the College. To this end, senior management seek consensus and in order to achieve this there is "Management by Walking Around" (Peters and Waterman, 1982), gathering the views of those who are likely to be affected by a particular decision. Although under attack and threatened (Halsey, 1992), "Donnish Dominion" which involves all college academic staff in decision-making at the Oxbridge college, still prevails. This collegial culture values the contribution of all lecturers and the views of all interested parties. Often academic members of staff will take turns at chairing meetings, showing the sense of equality and parity that exists. Annan (1999), in his book about Oxbridge fellows during the last fifty years, refers to the high level of autonomy that they traditionally enjoyed, the special customs, the democratic nature of college meetings and the unswerving loyalty of college servants such as clerks, butlers and porters. Although there have been changes during the period under review, Annan like Halsey (op. cit.) notes that significant vestiges of these traditions still exist at Oxbridge College and its sister institutions.



The interviews with senior staff suggested that very little use had been made of the tools of managerialism such as performance indicators, formal appraisals and action plans. These respondents reflected the general opposition at Oxford and Cambridge Universities to the construction of league tables based on particular performance indicators. For a number of years, Oxford and Cambridge dons have been dismissive of the league tables of college degree results; tables named after their originators - Norrington and Tompkins respectively (Targett, op. cit.).

Although it is egalitarian and ensures an input to discussions from all informed and interested members of staff, the main drawback where this collegial culture predominates is slow decision-making with either little or no response to changes in the higher education market (McNay, 1998). Having said this, it could be argued that Oxbridge College does not need to be particularly responsive to change and alter its portfolio of academic programmes as it appears to have little difficulty in attracting students. As it is heavily over-subscribed, it is apparent that Oxbridge College continues to operate most effectively and successfully in the higher education market.

It is a basic assumption at Oxbridge College that there is great intellectual value to be gained from the tutorial system. A tutor from the University has described the tutorial system as "the jewel in Oxbridge's crown" (Tapper and Palfreyman, 1998). Senior members of staff consider that it serves as a means of reinforcing the commitment of staff and students and focusing and channelling the students' energy and academic ideas.

There is also the assumption that the university of which Oxbridge College is a part should pursue international standards of excellence (THES, 1998a). Indeed, the university mission statement makes mention of the need to ensure that its standing as a world-class institution is maintained and enhanced in teaching and research. It is not possible to disaggregate the research assessment of Oxbridge College from the overall university ratings. However, in the 1996 RAE, 92% of staff of the University of which Oxbridge College is a part were assessed and the subjects that were rated had an median score of 5* (THES, 1996). Research grants and contracts have been the biggest single source of income for the university for the past few years. In 1998, this revenue amounted to £114 million (THES, 1999b). Nearly a third of Oxbridge College's students are undertaking postgraduate research. HEFCE Quality Assessment reports for particular subjects show that the University, of which Oxbridge College is a part, has achieved very high standards. Between November 1994 and November 1997, nine of the fourteen subjects were assessed as excellent. In their interviews, senior staff expressed the view that the reputation of the College is such that it attracts students from a large number of different countries. There is a relatively high proportion of students from overseas (14%).

At present, seventeen faculty boards of the university examine the work of Oxbridge College's students. It is generally accepted by representatives of the various colleges that the present structure prolongs decision-making and does not allow for a sufficient level of accountability that is appropriate for the commencement of the twenty-first century. Consequently, there are detailed discussions about a reduction in the number of faculty boards from seventeen to three or four. It is most likely that any amended faculty structure will be overseen by a "sovereign body" of twenty-five academics from the colleges of the university. The creation of this "sovereign body" of academics illustrates that, at times of change, there is the concern amongst staff at constituent colleges of the university to retain a high level of academic autonomy (THES, 1999c; Baty, 1999).

Interviews with senior staff at Oxbridge College suggest that a calm, peaceful and reflective atmosphere exists in which creativity is highly valued. The author also noted this atmosphere when he visited Oxbridge College to conduct the interviews. As a senior administrator stated, this creativity is more difficult to manage and this difficulty tends to lead to under-management. He said that managers were often regarded as "gentlemen amateurs" and the trappings of managerialism such as appraisals and business plans were felt to be inappropriate. Nevertheless, the refurbishment of existing buildings, and the provision of new buildings that has taken place in recent years, suggests that use has been made of some form of strategic planning. Great emphasis is placed on teamwork and any member of staff who is under-performing would be regarded as "letting the side down". It is considered that the organisational culture at Oxbridge College is "caring and humane" and much less "hard-nosed" compared to that of most other HEIs. This attitude is illustrated when an academic member of staff's performance is causing concern. The likely course of action would be to make use of "sidelining" by granting a sabbatical term or year or providing a College officership.

Oxbridge College's University is a member of the "Russell Group" alliance of Masters and Vice-Chancellors and this group includes, in addition to the Oxbridge Universities, Imperial College and University College, London and the Universities of Birmingham, Manchester and Bristol. The "Russell Group" is a pressure group of senior managers in colleges and universities who are concerned to protect and enhance the research function

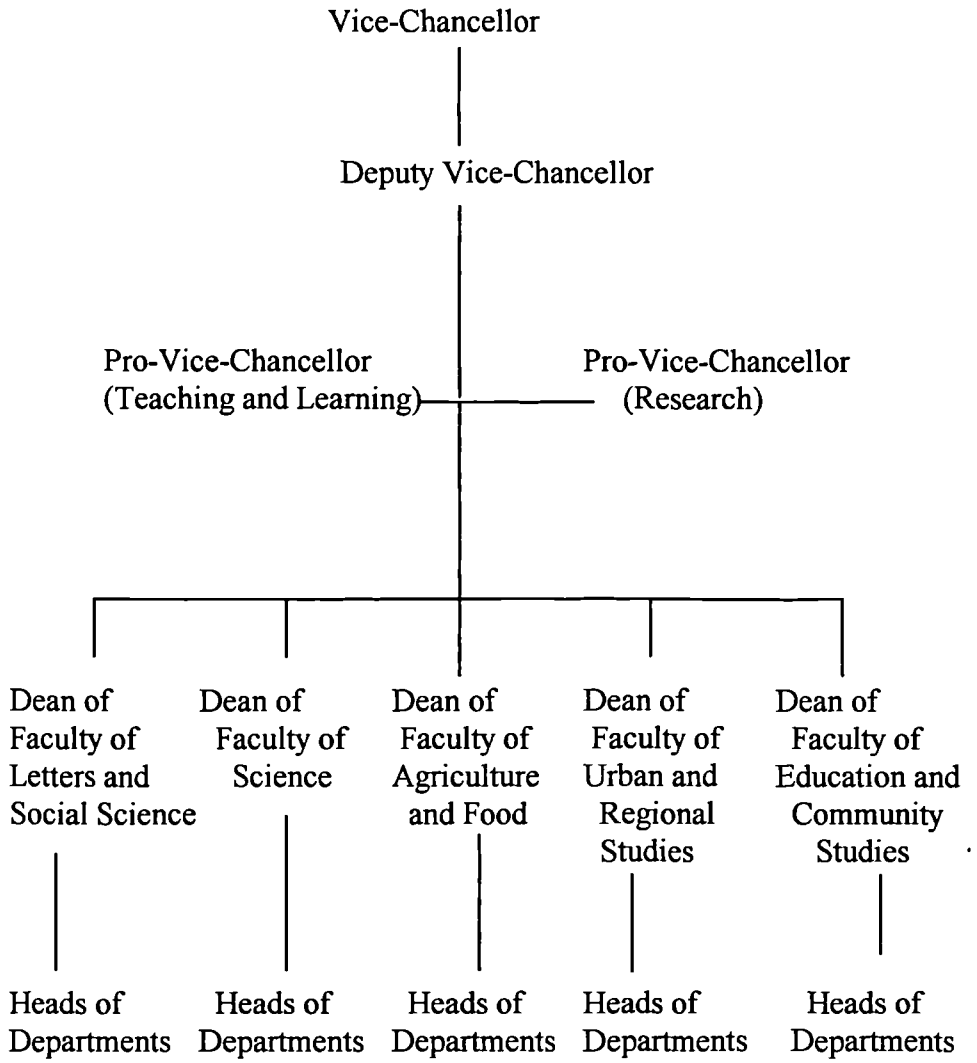
of a group of "elite" universities. The group acquired its name because it was formed after a meeting at the Russell Hotel in Bloomsbury, London (Radford, 1997).

b) REDBRICK UNIVERSITY

Redbrick University is located in a large provincial town on three sites. The buildings are a mixture of ages and styles, reflecting the various periods of expansion in student numbers. Many of the University's buildings are literally built of red brick. Most of the red brick buildings were constructed in the 1920s and 1930s.

Redbrick University was founded as a university college between the two world wars and, like other redbrick universities on their inception, Redbrick University strove to emulate Oxford and Cambridge Universities by stressing the values of liberal education (Barnett, 1986). At the end of the nineteenth century, the University of Oxford established extension courses on the site and Redbrick's own staff taught these. Vestiges of such aspirations still exist as shown by its membership of the "94 Group" alliance of Vice-Chancellors which, as its name suggests, was formed in 1994. This pressure group of university vice-chancellors includes representatives from Exeter, Durham and York Universities and Birkbeck, Royal Holloway and Goldsmiths' Colleges, London. Its membership of the "94 Group" indicates that Redbrick University considers itself to be a "traditional", research-orientated university with a concern to promote research and protect the interests of researchers. The "94 Group" is similar to the "Russell Group" in its aim to promote research. However, it is smaller and does not have representatives from medical schools. In the 1996 RAE, 89% of its staff were selected for assessment and an average score of the subject areas assessed was almost 5.

Its mission statement illustrates its underlying aim to achieve excellence in teaching, research and scholarship across a broad range of subjects (HEFCE, 1997). At Redbrick University, there are over forty academic departments grouped into five faculties and this illustrates the high level of diversity in terms of the academic programmes offered to students.



There is a traditional academic senior management structure with a Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and two Pro-Vice-Chancellors. The level below this contains the Deans of the five faculties of Letters and Social Sciences, Science, Agriculture and Food, Urban and Regional Studies and Education and Community Studies. Within the faculties, there is a recent trend of creating Schools by amalgamating departments with similar fields of study. This is based on the view that larger units are generally more efficient as there are financial gains, such as reductions in unit costs, which accrue from economies of scale. However, the amalgamation of the departments was often felt by several academic members of staff to have been at the expense of a reduction in departmental autonomy.

Academic staff tend to identify with their own particular academic tribe (Becher, 1989) and often this concern with tradition and the status quo militates against effective cross-faculty collaboration. The lack of such collaboration may lead to the visitor regarding the five faculties as five separate monotechnics.

During the academic year 1996/7, there were approximately 14,000 students of whom 38% were postgraduates. Just over 10% of students were from overseas and the interview respondents claimed that this relatively high proportion (HESA, 1998) reflected the international reputation of the courses provided by the University. If the views of these respondents are accepted, then there are similarities here with Oxbridge College in that the relatively high percentages of postgraduates and students from overseas indicate the international reputation of both institutions' research. In terms of academic programme provision, relatively more modern subjects have been introduced in the last ten years or so. Business studies and accounting courses were not generally offered to students until the 1960s and then, with the notable exception of the University of London's BSc (Econ) programme, largely only in technical colleges (Barrett, 1998). Although students are spread fairly evenly amongst the nineteen HESA academic areas, business studies is the subject which has the largest number of students (HESA, 1998). During the academic year 1998/9, the average 'A' level score of students entering Redbrick University was 19.9 (Financial Times, op. cit.).

The interviews with all three senior members of staff suggested that there was a "benign management system" and a collegial culture that allowed academic staff a significant level of autonomy. This collegial approach was demonstrated when one of the Pro-Vice-Chancellors drafted a strategy document for teaching and learning. There has been intensive discussion of this draft document amongst academic staff for the last few months and the final paper will not be presented to Senate until every effort has been made to achieve consensus. However, two of the interviewees did point out that recent financial imperatives and constraints had meant that greater use had been made of "top down" approaches to decision-making. The interviews also showed that organisational culture was based on a firm belief that change should only occur if it is required and then as a re-alignment in response to political, economic, social and technological developments. This

is an example of reactive and incremental change that is one of the categories identified by Scholz (1987).

One respondent mentioned that there was an atmosphere of trust with academics left to develop new courses in their areas of expertise without hindrance. However, he did detect that market forces with the need to develop viable courses were having a growing influence on the academic programmes that were validated. The growing influence of market forces was seen as an indication of a gradual shifting in power from departments and faculties towards the university's central management. The Collegial model (Dopson and McNay, 1996) would seem to be the most applicable for Redbrick University but it does not exhibit as many elements of this model in such a clear-cut, overt and obvious manner as does Oxbridge College.

c) PLATEGLASS UNIVERSITY

Plateglass University was granted its Royal Charter in the mid-1960s and is located on a single-site campus. It was one of many universities built on a greenfield site as a response to the expansion in Higher Education recommended in the Robbins Report of 1963. As its pseudonym suggests, many of the university buildings are constructed of plateglass and concrete blocks.

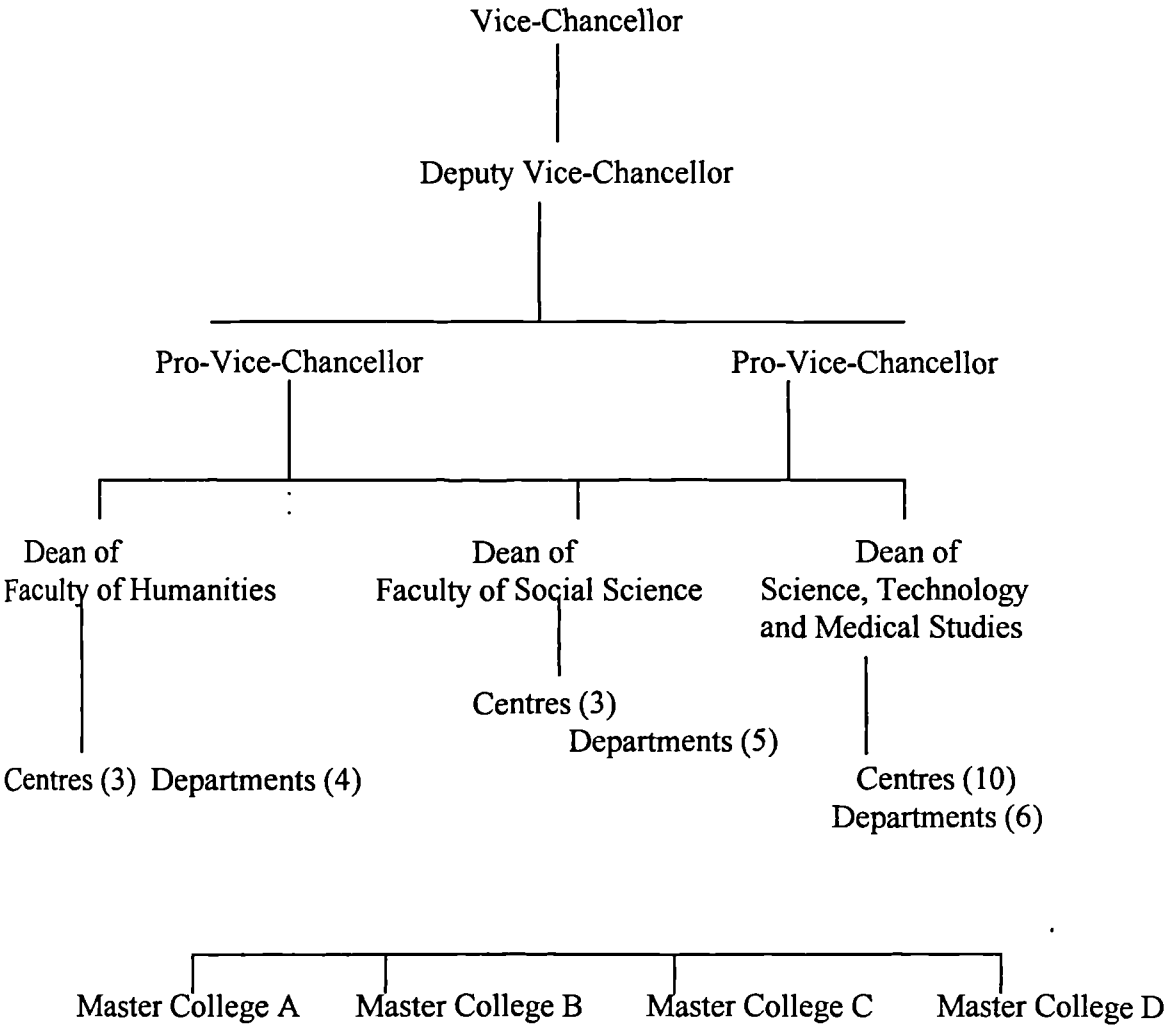
In the years soon after its foundation, it catered for the top 5% of academically qualified eighteen year old applicants to HEIs. There has been a widening of access in more recent years with some students undertaking the first year of their degree at a college of further education before transferring to Plateglass University. Despite this widening of access, it does not offer HND programmes and it still tends to recruit students with relatively high average 'A' level points scores. For example, the students entering the University in October 1998 had an average score of 19.8 (Financial Times, op. cit.). Essentially, it views itself as a traditional university and the respondents acknowledged that some members of the academic staff suffered "culture shock" when faced with change such as the introduction of QM systems and structures. Unlike the modern universities who had

experience of the rigorous QM structures of CNAA, staff at Plateglass University generally met QM for the first time when HEQC audit and HEFCE assessment were introduced. Its research record illustrates Plateglass University's attachment to the ideals of traditional universities. In the 1996 RAE, 82% of staff were selected for assessment and an average score of over 4 was achieved.

In the academic year 1996/7, there were approximately 11,000 full-time equivalent students of which 78% were undergraduates (HESA, 1998). There is a relatively large amount of joint degree provision (24%). Indeed, Plateglass University's Mission Statement makes clear the desire to provide this type of degree. It states that the university will provide higher education of excellent quality and this will be achieved through, for example, interdisciplinarity and flexibility.

As with Oxbridge College and Redbrick University, a very broad range of subjects is offered with students studying in sixteen of the nineteen subject categories identified by HESA. Their prospectus shows that Plateglass University offers over four hundred undergraduate degree programmes in more than forty different subjects and its courses are based within three faculties. It is the more modern subjects of social, economic and political studies (14%) and business studies (11%) that have the largest proportion of students (HESA, 1998).

The University was established on a collegial basis and interviews with the three senior members of staff showed that, until recently, there was a most democratic style of management with a high level of discussion taking place and decisions being made at College Senior Common Room, Faculty and Senate levels. The underlying philosophy for this collegial structure was that it facilitated students mixing socially with students from other academic disciplines. Through the formation of heterogeneous groups in terms of subjects studied, an educational environment was created that encouraged the exchange of differing ideas, methods of thinking and concepts.



However, the collegial approach is not nearly so prevalent now due to a move to greater centralisation and the replacement of the College by the academic department as the key administrative unit. Up until two years ago, the four Colleges comprised students specialising in a variety of academic disciplines and the social events were centred around this collegial structure. Since then, the university has been zoned with colleges taking only students studying particular related subjects. There is no longer the mix of students from a wide range of academic disciplines and the rôle of the Colleges and the College Masters in the social and academic life of Plateglass University has diminished most significantly over the past few years. Thus, there has been a drift away from a Collegial towards a more Corporate model of organisational culture (Dopson and McNay, op. cit.). The experience of Plateglass University supports McNay's (1995) general conclusion relating to the organisational culture of HEIs during the last ten years or so.

d) TECHNOLOGY UNIVERSITY

Technology University is one of the ten universities created in the 1960s from colleges of advanced technology. It is located on four campuses that are geographically well spread. These campuses comprise particular academic departments with each campus being a centre of certain academic specialisms. There are particular specialist resources on the campuses according to the departments based there. Each of the four campuses is self-contained in terms of its teaching, welfare and social facilities. However, the administration is centralised and located at one of the campuses.

Technology University's antecedent was a Technical College on one site in the 1920s. This became a College of Technology in the late 1950s. In the early 1960s, it was designated a College of Advanced Technology and then a university a few years later. There was rapid expansion of Technology University in the early 1980s when a College of Education was incorporated into the University. Further rapid expansion occurred in the mid-1990s when an Institute of Higher Education was also incorporated into the University and brought with it new areas of subject expertise.

The culture of the university has been affected in the last five years by this latest period of rapid expansion. In all of the interviews with the three senior members of staff, mention was made of the significant impact of the incorporation of an Institute of Higher Education. A senior academic said that, as with all organisations, the culture of Technology University was a function of its background. He discerned three distinct and different strands. Firstly, there was the culture associated with the University prior to the incorporation of the Institute. Staff took pride in its status as a traditional university that received its Royal Charter in the mid-1960s. Secondly, there was the culture linked with the former Institute and, thirdly, that related to the "new", post-mid-1990s Technology University. In the last two years, a significant amount of thought and attention had been given to its mission and strategy. The "new" organisation was larger and able to offer a far wider range of subjects. A senior administrator considered that the blending of the various cultures has led inevitably to tensions amongst staff from different backgrounds. These tensions have been manifested in recent Senate meetings over the issue of PhD study.

Generally, staff from the former Institute have a more professional/vocational approach to research degrees. This has led to their representatives proposing at a recent Senate meeting that PhDs should be awarded on the basis of published work as well as through the more traditional route of writing a thesis. Members of staff with a traditional university background have tended to oppose this proposal on the grounds that it would lead to a fall in standards of work. Such tensions are to be expected at such an early stage in the merger and a more consensual culture is likely to develop over time.

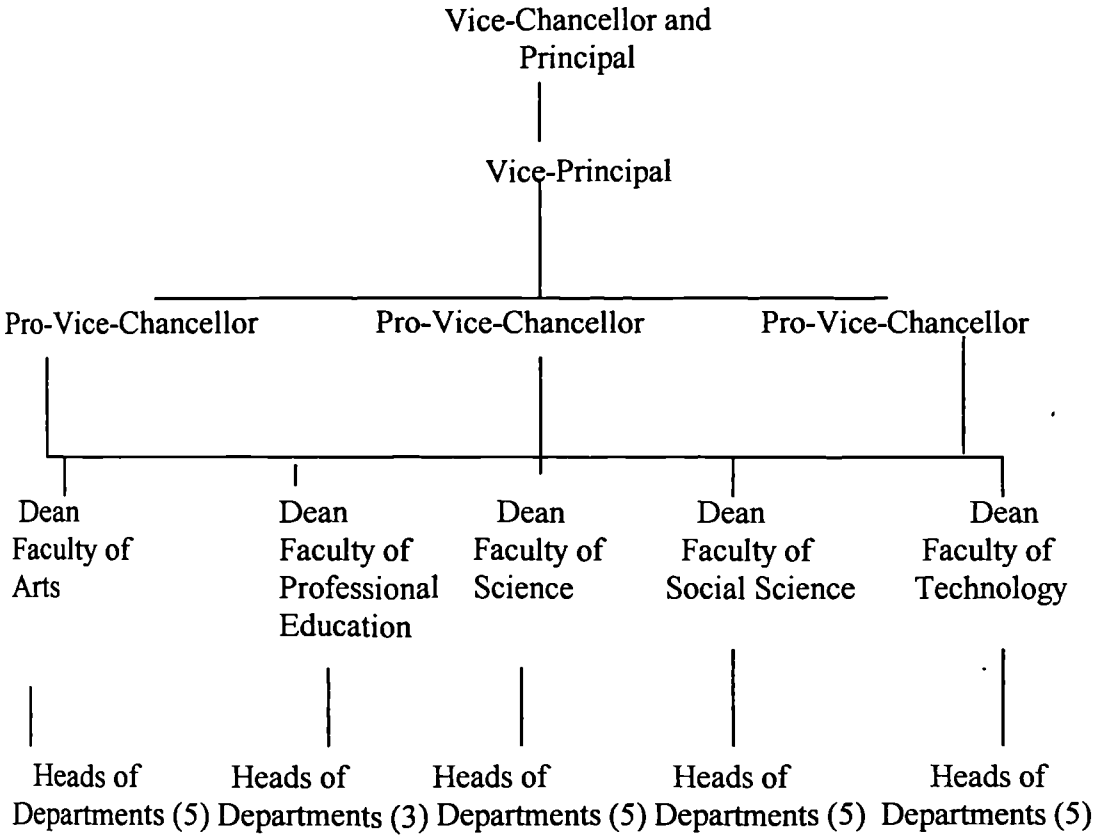
The recent incorporation had greatly increased the size of the organisation, brought economies of scale and generally increased feelings of security amongst members of staff who now felt that the University was more able to compete effectively with other HEIs. Technology University considers itself to be a research-led institution and, again according to senior staff, it aspires to be in the top third of all HEIs. 68% of staff had work assessed in the 1996 RAE and the average score for those subjects assessed was over 4.

In 1996/7, there were over 13,000 students. Approximately 20% of these were postgraduates. About 70% of the students were full-time. The overseas student population was just over 700 and they came from over 70 different countries (HESA, 1998). The average 'A' level points score of students commencing at Technology University in October 1998 was 15.8 (Financial Times, op. cit.). This is not particularly high for a more traditional university.

There is a highly decentralised admissions policy. Students are not offered a place at the University without the agreement of an academic member of staff. A departmental admissions tutor is responsible for agreeing offers to prospective students. Most departments at Technology University allocate the post of admissions tutor on a collegial basis with members of the departmental staff "taking turns".

There is a faculty structure comprised of the five faculties of Arts, Professional Education, Science, Social Science and Technology. Academic programmes are provided in fifteen of the nineteen subject categories. As its name suggests, the technical subjects have the highest proportion of students at Technology University. Over 20% of the students study

for engineering or technology degrees with other large groups according to subject area being education at 12% and computer studies with 9%. 1.5% of the students were registered on Further Education courses (HESA, 1998). Many of the undergraduate programmes require professional work experience and thus there are very strong links with industry and commerce. These are often "thick", or sometimes "thin", sandwich programmes with periods of up to a year spent working in an industrial, commercial or professional organisation. All courses have a modular structure and the academic year is comprised of two semesters (HEFCE, 1997).

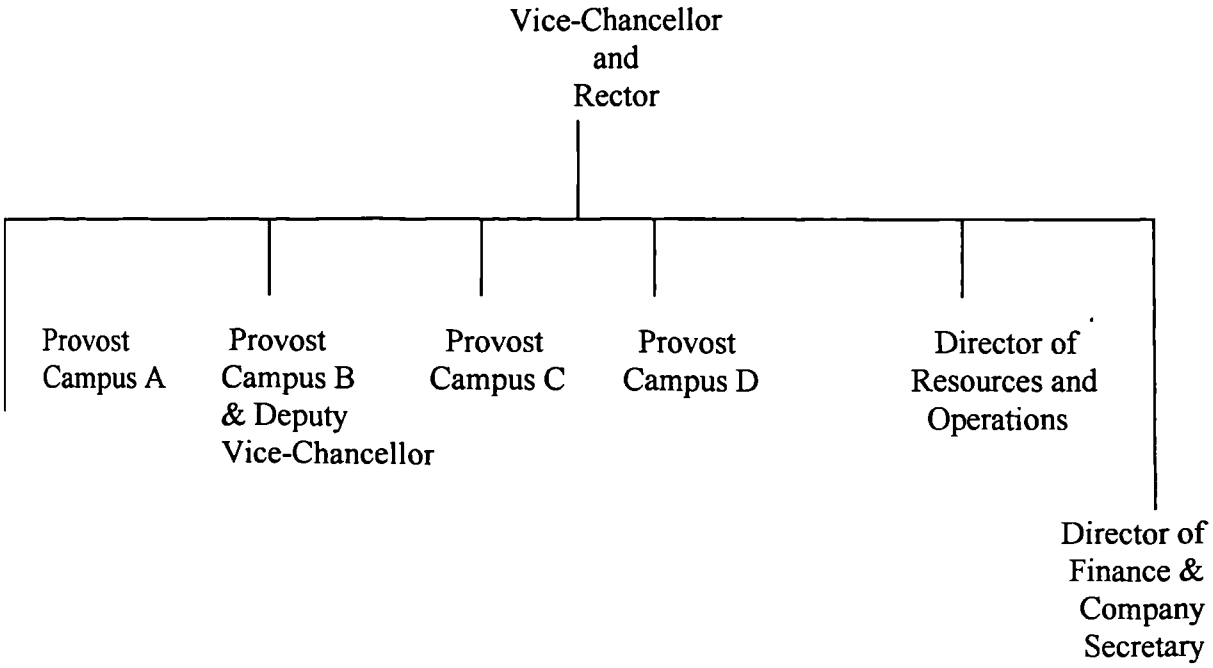


e) MODERN UNIVERSITY

Modern University is one of "new" universities formed after the 1992 Further and Higher Education Act brought to an end the "binary divide" in higher education. Before 1992, it was a polytechnic with the foundation of one of the original colleges dating back to the 1830s. It is located on a multi-site campus with all but one of these sites being in the centre of a large city. The other site is situated in the suburbs. Most of the buildings are

relatively modern, having been built in the 1950s and 1960s. In the last couple of years, much of the administration and operational decision-making has been devolved to the various campuses that are the centres for particular faculties. However, certain functions such as strategic planning, marketing, personnel and student counselling remain as a centralised function.

In its literature, Modern University refers to itself as a metropolitan university that is progressive and responsive. The recent appointment of a new Vice-Chancellor has led to a high level of structural and cultural change. One of the respondents believed that it was not status-conscious like more traditional universities.



In the academic year 1996/7, there were over 19,000 full-time equivalent students of whom 78% were undergraduates and 22% were postgraduates. 45% of the undergraduate students and 74% of postgraduates were part-time. The proportion of both undergraduate and postgraduate part-time students was, therefore, relatively high compared with other HEIs. There were a few Further Education students which comprise just 0.5% of the total (HESA, 1998).

The University has an admissions policy of wide access, encouraging applications from people of diverse ages, race, ethnicity and academic background. For example, the use of

Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL) credits is encouraged and this assists more mature students with their applications. Also, in its undergraduate prospectus for the academic year 1999/2000, it refers to the intention of providing the maximum level of academic programme flexibility to people from all backgrounds. In 1999, Modern University's success in catering for the needs of a diverse student population was recognised through the award of extra HEFCE funding. It was one of the top ten HEIs in a league table relating to the widening of student access. This league table was based on the level of recruitment of "less advantaged" students (THES, 1999f). However, as with many league tables, care is needed when interpreting the results as sometimes only selective data is used. A relatively low average 'A' level points score of 12.9 for 1998/9 entrants (Financial Times, op. cit.) is a further indication of the commitment to broadening student access.

A very large range of subjects is offered with students studying in sixteen of the nineteen subject categories identified by HESA. There is a modular structure to the degree programmes that are taught in a two semester academic year. The more modern and vocational subjects tend to attract the larger number of students. Business studies is the largest subject area with over 24% of students. 16% of students study languages and 13% computer studies (HESA, 1998.) There is an emphasis on vocational programmes, a number of which are linked to professional qualifications and involve a joint venture between the University and various professional bodies. Modern University has been very keen to offer more flexible teaching programmes and to increase the choice of subject combinations available to its students. The prospectus of Modern University clearly justifies its use of a modular scheme for undergraduate programmes. This is based on the belief that such a scheme offers choice and flexibility to a student so that (s)he can be design a programme to match a particular area of interest and prepare for a specific career. This supports Becher and Kogan's (1992, p.32) view that,

> ... meeting the needs of society through more economically and socially relevant studies came to be regarded as a particular function of the (former) polytechnics.

The modular structure means that it is possible for a number of academic programmes to share common lectures. Such lectures are often delivered in a converted cinema that can accommodate over four hundred students. The modular scheme even allows a student

from another HEI to choose one of Modern University's modules as part of his/her academic programme at that "home" institution. Technology University and College of Higher Education also have a modular structure to their academic programmes but they are not able to offer as great a variety and mix of courses as Modern University. One of the interviewees mentioned that Modern University's higher number of students and its commitment to the notion of programme flexibility were two of the reasons why it can offer more varied programmes to its students than other HEIs.

The University's mission statement refers to the need to foster the intellectual, social and professional development of members of its community. In order to facilitate the achievement of this particular aim, the prospectus provides details of free courses in management and marketing for the unemployed and free professional retraining courses for the over 50s.

Generally, a task culture (Handy, 1993) dominates at Modern University with a keen awareness of the needs and demands of stakeholders in the higher education sector. This awareness often leads to "Management by Marketing". An over-response to market forces is the main danger where this culture is predominant in a particular HEI (McNay, 1995). In the higher education sector, a number of HEIs have pursued Investors in People status and ISO 9000 series accreditation, in part, because of the perceived marketing advantage that such awards can provide. As Hall (1996) notes, HEIs now need to be much more responsive to changes within the higher education market. However, Modern University is the only one of the seven sample institutions which has the Investors in People award. It also has ISO 9000 series accreditation. Such concern with market forces suggests elements of the Entrepreneurial Model of an HEI. The centralisation of, for example, the marketing and personnel functions together with the desire to create a clear and distinct image are features of the Corporate Model (Dopson and McNay, op. cit.). However, concern to make use of a structured QM scheme such as the ISO 9000 series and its CNAA background, suggests features of the Bureaucratic Model. HEIs do not necessarily have distinct cultures as often there is a blend of culture types. Modern University appears to be what McNay (1998) refers to as a corporate bureaucracy.

f) COLLEGE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

College of Higher Education is a relatively small HEI with approximately 3,500 full-time equivalent students. The College is located on two campuses in two separate towns that are a few miles apart. One campus site is particularly old with buildings dating back to the 1840s. However, there is a mixture of Victorian, Regency-style and modern buildings that reflects the various periods of expansion. In the College's strategic plan there is a clear intention to concentrate the teaching on one of these sites. The College was formed in the late 1970s through the merger of two colleges that had similar portfolios of academic programmes. The researcher found that there was a friendly and welcoming atmosphere at both of the sites when he visited them to conduct interviews with three senior members of staff. The prominent position of the College chapel on one of the sites reflects the continuing Christian ethos of the institution.

From 1978, the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) validated College of Higher Education's academic programmes. With the impending demise of this particular validating body, the College became an accredited institution of a local university in 1992. Recently, it was engaged in the process of seeking degree-awarding powers. It has been successful and soon it will be able to award its own degrees.

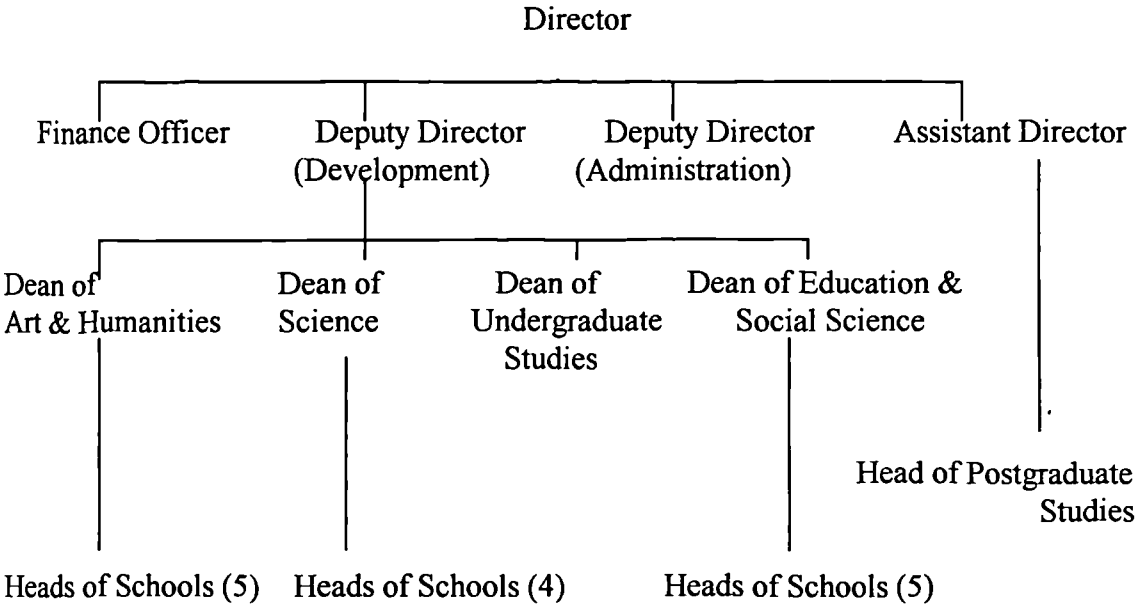
The College draws a relatively large proportion of its students from its immediate vicinity, with over 50% of the students coming from either the local education authority in which the two campuses are located or the three surrounding authorities (HEQC, 1996c).

In the academic year 1996/7, there were approximately 3,500 full-time equivalent students of whom 72% were undergraduates and 28% were postgraduates. Fewer than 4% students were from overseas. It is notable that 67% of undergraduates and 74% of postgraduates were female representing a far higher proportion of female students than in the other six fieldwork organisations (HESA, 1998).

College of Higher Education's mission statement highlights the vocational purpose of many of its programmes by referring to educating and training students for careers in

teaching, the Church, local government, health services, social services and voluntary agencies. Links with the local community are also stressed (HEQC, 1996).

Since 1992, there has been a modular structure to the degree programme and semesterisation is being considered. Education is by far the largest subject area with just over 40% of students studying this particular subject (HESA, 1998). A fairly broad range of subjects is offered with students studying in eleven of the nineteen subject categories identified by HESA. This provision is organised within three faculties.



The mission statement also makes reference to students' studies being carried out in an environment of research and inquiry. The HEQC report (1996) commends College of Higher Education on the development of its research culture and profile but, compared to other HEFCE-funded organisations, the College was in the fourth quartile for the 1996 Research Assessment Exercise (THES, 1996).

As in Redbrick and Plateglass Universities, great use is made of hierarchies and committees in the decision-making process. There are clear rules and regulations with most of an HEI's business being conducted through "Management by Meetings". Where this culture is the most significant in an HEI, problems include a standardisation of processes and academic programmes and a slow response to changes in its external

environment (McNay, 1995). Nevertheless, bureaucratic systems should not be considered in a pejorative manner. Rather they should be seen, as Weber argued, as a rational and an efficient means of accomplishing certain tasks (Weber cited in Handy, 1993). The internal Quality Assurance systems, established at College of Higher Education, exemplify such rational and efficient systems and, indeed, these systems have been highly praised by both the Higher Education Quality Council and its successor, the Quality Assurance Agency. Internal systems have been established which are based on QAA's six-part external review. In effect, this means that any internal review at College of Higher Education is a "rehearsal" for QAA review. Internal review highlights those aspects of a particular academic discipline that require attention by utilising the six QAA review categories.

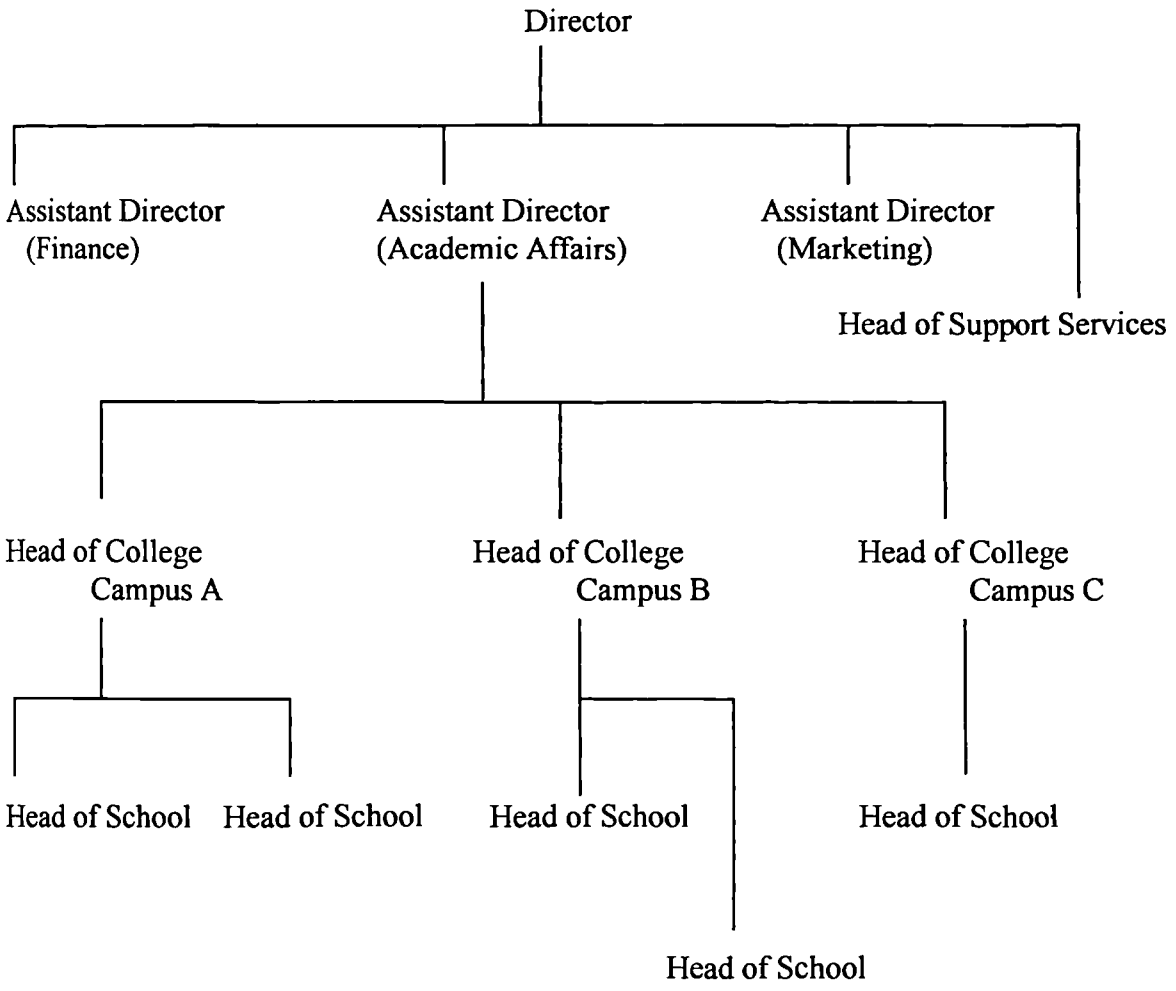
These highly advanced and developed QM structures and systems are a manifestation of the Bureaucratic Model of HEIs as organisations (Dopson and McNay, op. cit.).

It is the senior administrator at College of Higher Education who has operational responsibility for the QM systems. Interestingly, she is one of only two in the sample of seven senior administrators who has an administrative rather than an academic background. It is the senior administrator at Redbrick University who has a similar background.

g) ARTS COLLEGE

Arts College was created in the late 1980s through the amalgamation of three adjacent colleges of art or design. Each campus has retained its identity to a large extent because subject specialisation has continued on the three sites. With approximately just 600 students at each site who all share very similar academic interests, there is an informal and friendly atmosphere that is associated with a small college environment.

At the outset, Arts College's academic programmes were validated through the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) but in the early 1990s, with the disestablishment of CNAA, validation was undertaken by a local university (HEFCE, 1997).



The interviews with the three senior staff indicated that the influence of CNAA was still pervasive even after many years. The College's present QM monitoring process was based on the rigid and rigorous systems and structures encouraged by this particular validation body.

The continuing influence of CNAA, and the fact that its academic programmes were still validated by an outside organisation when a local university took over from CNAA, have meant that it has been necessary for the College to adopt a Bureaucratic Model to a large extent (Dopson and McNay, op. cit.). Such a model does provide the clear documentation and lines of responsibility and accountability that are required by outside agencies.

There were approximately 1,800 full-time equivalent students in the academic year 1996/7 of which over 99% of the higher education students were undergraduates. Just 1% of these higher education students were postgraduates. There were Further Education (FE) students studying on further education courses at Arts College. The proportion of these FE students was high at 28%. Also, a relatively high proportion (21%) of the Higher Education students were from overseas (HESA, 1998).

There is no combined degree provision. Courses are offered in only two of the nineteen subject categories identified by HESA. 90% of students study on creative arts and design courses with the remaining 10% undertaking architecture/building courses (HESA, 1998). Clearly, Arts College specialises to a most significant extent on the creative arts and design. Its mission reflects this specialisation when it refers to the desire to foster an environment in which the spirit and skills of the creative individual will thrive. The College is vocationally focused. The nature of the subjects in which Arts College specialises is such that teaching and learning strategies involve a significant amount of project work; far more than in the other HEIs that are being studied. The narrow subject base means that staff are relatively homogeneous in terms of academic and work experience. A significant number of part-time staff are employed, most of whom are engaged predominantly in professional practice. Such staff are thus able to inform students of the very latest professional developments. It is possible for students to achieve professional qualifications in addition to their degree qualification and, for this and other reasons, there is a high level of regular contact between the College and particular professional organisations.

COMPARING THE SEVEN HEIs

When applying Schein's model to the seven HEIs that were examined as part of the fieldwork research, a great range of organisational cultures are discerned. For example, there is the assumption at Oxbridge College that it needs to pursue international standards of excellence (THES, 1998a). On the other hand, the mission statement of Modern University, whilst acknowledging the need to provide high quality education and research,

shows an assumption that the university should foster social and professional as well as intellectual development (HEFCE, 1997).

The prospectus of Modern University clearly argues for the use of a modular scheme for undergraduate programmes. This is based on the belief that such a scheme offers choice and flexibility to a student so that (s)he can design a programme to match a particular area of interest and prepare for a specific career.

The extent to which an HEI values research activity is reflected not only in its mission statement but also in the outcome of the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) undertaken in 1996. The average scores of subjects submitted for the RAE in the seven fieldwork HEIs varied from 2 up to 5* (HEFCE, 1997) and this shows the great range of expertise in this area. There is also a significant difference in the proportion of staff from the seven HEIs whose work was considered for the RAE. This varied from 19% up to 92%.

Arts College saw its role as concentrating on particular creative arts subjects, believing that it was advisable to specialise and make the most effective use of its expertise. At this particular HEI, programmes were provided in only two of the nineteen areas of study discerned by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA, 1998).

The artefacts of the seven HEIs reflect their underlying basic assumptions and their beliefs and values. For example, the cloisters and antiquity of Oxbridge College manifest its tradition, conservatism and centuries of providing higher education.

TABLE 9: The Seven HEIs: A Comparative Summary Chart

	Approx No.	%age part-time	%age postgr aduate	97/98 % of under-repres ented groups	Semes ters	Modu lar	ISO 900 0	I.I.P.	FE %age	Subject areas	%age of staff in 1996 RAE	RAE 96 average scores	'A' level ave. points score of 98/99 entrants
Oxbridge College	600	9	30	6	✖	✖	✖	✖	NIL	17/19	92	5* #	28.7
Redbrick University	14000	26	38	15	✖	✖	✖	✖	NIL	16/19	89	4++	19.9
Plateglass University	11000	26	22	16	✖	✖	✖	✖	NIL	16/19	82	4+	19.8
Technology University	14000	25	20	16	✓	✓	✓	✖	1.5	15/19	68	4+	15.8
Modern University	19000	26	22	17	✓	✓	✓	✓	0.5	16/19	29	3+	12.9
College of HE	3500	33	28	17	✓	✓	✖	✖	NIL	11/19	47	2+	N/A
Arts College	1800	10	1	12	✓	✓	✖	✖	28	2/19	19	2+	N/A

This median RAE score refers to that of the university of which Oxbridge College is a part.

TABLE 9 illustrates the great diversity that exists in the seven fieldwork HEIs and indicates the variety in terms of, for example, the composition of student in-take, curriculum emphasis, use of QM systems and research expertise. As has been seen earlier, Bahram Bekhradnia, the director of policy at HEFCE, acknowledges this diversity. Consequently, he accepts that it is difficult to be sure that like is being compared with like when HEIs range from Oxford and Cambridge colleges to institutes of art or drama (Goddard,1999a).

When looking generally at all HEIs in England, the HESA (1998) figures for the academic year 1996/7 identify the HEIs at particular ends of the ranges in terms of student in-take. The London Business School and the London School of Economics have the highest proportion of overseas students; 70% and 67% respectively. On the other hand, the University of Derby attracted just 3% of its students from abroad. Whereas 90% of students at the Institute of Advanced Nursing Education were part-time, fewer than 2% were part-time at the Royal Veterinary College. The Universities of North London and East London had the highest percentage of ethnic minority first year undergraduates (45%). This figure can be contrasted with 0% for the University of Wales, Lampeter (HESA, 1998).

SUMMARY

Organisational culture can be considered as the assumptions, beliefs and values of an organisation with these intangibles being manifested through organisational artefacts such as uniform, jargon, rituals, logos, style of buildings and office furniture. When applying Schein's simple, generic model and Dopson and McNay's higher education-specific model to analyse and categorise the seven fieldwork organisations, the great range of organisational cultures is apparent. However, culture is dynamic and subject to change. Assumptions are often made that there is a definitive and integrative culture that pervades an organisation whereas it could be more likely that an organisation is composed of a network of different sub-cultures. Nevertheless, the great cultural diversity amongst the seven HEIs is indisputable.

The profiles of the seven fieldwork HEIs show very clearly a great range in the variables investigated. These variables include mission statements, aims and objectives, size, student in-take and the range of academic programmes. The great diversity of cultures was the result of the significant differences in these variables. Overall, the depth interviews and the document analysis illustrated and illuminated the literature review findings which showed that culture was dynamic, diverse and often a differentiating rather than an integrating force. As a consequence, there are difficulties in generalising on the basis of the research in seven particular HEIs. For this reason, this summary of the conclusions from the fieldwork is, necessarily, tentative.

Some HEIs are likely to cope with the recent changes and proposed changes better than others. The research fieldwork revealed that Modern University, College of Higher Education and Arts College had validated their academic programmes through CNAA. Although this was a number of years ago (CNAA was disestablished in 1992), the influence of CNAA still pervaded these HEIs and, because of this, they were more comfortable than the traditional HEIs with the specific and particular criteria associated with internal and external QM systems and processes.

CHAPTER TEN- ISSUES ARISING FROM THE INTERVIEWS WITH TWENTY-ONE SENIOR MEMBERS OF STAFF IN THE SEVEN FIELDWORK INSTITUTIONS

After extracting detailed respondents' views on the organisational culture of their HEI, the Constant Comparative Method (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Lincoln and Guba, 1985) was used to uncover and analyse those QM issues raised in the interviews that merited further examination. For example, this was the case with the three major components of organisational culture – basic assumptions, beliefs and values and artefacts (Schein, 1985). Also, other issues emerged from this process of progressive focusing.

The references in brackets indicate the literature reviewed earlier in this thesis or mentioned by the respondents in the interviews and they serve to link the various respondents' opinions to theories, ideas or the experiences of other HEIs.

The Prime Purposes of Higher Education

From an analysis of the interview summary reports, a group of respondents could be discerned which clearly subscribed to the liberal education purpose of HEIs (Hirst, 1965; Barnett, 1990). Members of this group tended to be from the more traditional institutions such as Oxbridge College, Redbrick University and Plateglass University and included all senior three senior staff from these institutions. Others of the twenty-one respondents who supported the liberal education purpose of higher education were a senior manager at College of Higher Education and a senior academic at Arts College. There was very little variation between the different senior staff stakeholder groups in a particular HEI where there was a common sense of purpose for their organisation. However, support of liberal education, although very much stronger in the traditional universities, was not restricted only to this type of HEI.

A senior member of the administrative staff at Oxbridge College – who was also a senior academic with a notable record of publications - viewed lecturing as a means of engaging students in current educational and academic debates. Similarly, at Redbrick University there was reference to "... opening the students' minds, extending the intellect and developing intellectual abilities." A member of staff here stated unequivocally that "vocationalism does not sit comfortably with HE." Indeed, either implicitly or explicitly, a

crucial difference between training and development was identified with the rôle of an HEI being concerned exclusively with the latter. To use Twining's (1967) phrase discussed earlier, universities are not trade schools for the production of plumbers. At Plateglass University, the term "disinterested development of knowledge and understanding" was used with this aim being achieved through the teaching and research functions of an HEI.

A senior manager at Oxbridge College agreed with his senior administrator colleague that his institution was highly suited to the provision of liberal and highly challenging academic programmes. However, he argued for a continuation of the diversity in higher education with other HEIs providing very different but equally worthwhile academic programmes. He criticised the obsession of certain academics with the higher education "gold standard" that existed up until the 1950s and involved catering largely for just a very small minority of school leavers.

Not surprisingly, senior managers in HEIs with a more vocational mission talked of the vocational purposes of HEIs. Again, there appeared to be shared perceptions amongst the stakeholder groups in these institutions. A senior manager criticised the traditional "navel-gazing" approach to knowledge. He supported strongly the view expressed by Peter Scott, Vice-Chancellor of Kingston University, that increases in student numbers meant that the students had to be taught more efficiently and new relevant subjects had to be introduced that would generally be based on vocational rather than cognitive demands. Scott (1998, p.115) claims that higher education can no longer be regarded as "an intimate intellectual engagement" between lecturers and students. The higher education curriculum needs to be systematised and even industrialised in order to meet the needs of an ever-increasing number and diversity of students.

A senior member of staff at Arts College made the point that, with a relatively homogeneous group of students seeking similar careers, there was bound to be a vocational emphasis within the curriculum. However, the point was made in the interviews that it is possible to pursue vocational outcomes related to a profession but, at the same time, adopt critical and reflective teaching styles that are more usually associated with traditional liberal education. This supported the criticism of the dualism of liberal and vocational education that had been raised in the literature review (Peters, 1977; Pring, 1995).

The largest group of respondents mentioned a blend of both liberal educational and vocational purposes for HEIs. A senior academic member of staff at College of Higher Education considered that, although HEIs should develop the ability of students to think critically and question assumptions, he disagreed vehemently with a member of a traditional university mentioned earlier. He believed that HEIs should not be concerned with the disinterested pursuit of knowledge because this was a luxury that society could not afford. Government, as the major funder of HE, had a right to expect certain vocational outcomes. A senior manager at Modern University noted the importance of encouraging students to be concerned for lifelong learning and also to be analytical and reflective. However, the key purpose was to develop transferable skills that could be used in the workplace. After all, employability was an important issue to students and the wider community. A senior manager at Redbrick University supported this view. He said that it was necessary to balance the liberal and vocational purposes of higher education. An emphasis on either of the two polar extremes is inappropriate as a total concentration on liberal education ignores the world of work and a similar concentration on vocational education suggests training rather than education. The prime purpose should be to develop critical and lifelong skills that are transferable to a very wide range of situations. Similarly, a senior academic at Technology University said that his organisation was struggling to find the appropriate balance between liberal and vocational purposes of education. For many years the University has had very close links with industry through "thick" and "thin" sandwich programmes in engineering. This has led to a greater emphasis on "knowledge for use". However, the expansion of the University through the incorporation of other institutions, has led to an increase in its portfolio of academic programmes. For many of these new programmes, notions of study are less instrumental and more epistemologically based.

A senior manager at Technology University considered that the dualism between liberal and vocational education, whilst having some value as an analytical tool, was unhelpful because it had no practical value in terms of student learning outcomes. Such outcomes were inevitably a blend of liberal and vocational objectives. She preferred to look at the purposes of higher education in terms of lifelong learning (Dearing, 1997) by developing in students an awareness of what it is to be a learner and with a knowledge of themselves as learners.

As well as identifying more altruistic purposes, a senior administrator at Modern University referred to the need for HEIs to help provide a better-educated and more productive workforce. To a significant extent, her view was based on the notion of students as human capital (Schultz, 1971; Becker, 1975). A senior academic at Arts College was saddened at the shift away from more liberal to vocational purposes which he considered to be a consequence of HEIs dropping into lower ability groups in order to recruit undergraduate and postgraduate students.

Quality in Higher Education

Respondents' views concerning quality in higher education varied from the more subtle and implicit definitions to those that were clear-cut and explicit. The latter were far more prevalent. It was senior staff, academic staff in particular, from Oxbridge College and Redbrick University who stressed the more subtle and cognitive aspects of quality. This is, perhaps, understandable given their support of liberal education as a key component of higher education.

An academic member of staff at Redbrick University strongly supports Barnett's (1997b) concept of knowledge saying that in higher education there should be no certainty as the nature of study involves ambiguity and uncertainty. With training, outcomes are clear-cut and this makes these outcomes very easy to measure and it is the achievement of these stated outcomes that is regarded as quality. However, with higher education, the criteria for quality are implicit. By being part of a community of scholars, a lecturer becomes aware of what is acceptable and what is work of a high quality. A senior academic member of staff at Oxbridge College believed that the extent of student involvement was an indicator of high quality with excitement, enthusiasm and the extent of student inquiry being manifestations of this engagement. This approach to quality was supported by another respondent who thought that quality involved the creation of an environment in which staff can develop students' curiosity. She felt that an absence of creativity and the presence of stagnation were indicators of a lack of quality. A senior administrator at Technology University supported this more subjective and interpretative interpretation of quality. He argued that much of the "measurement" of quality in higher education can be achieved by peer review; formally through the External Examiner system and more

informally with a particular academic community coming together at a conference. At such conferences there can be a useful interchange of ideas and the development of a tacit understanding as to what constitutes quality and "graduateness" in a specific academic area. He did accept that this should not be the only means of gauging quality. It was necessary for other higher education stakeholders, such as central government, local education authorities, employers and the students, to contribute by helping to define and then assess the quality of academic programmes.

A senior manager at Redbrick University placed research at the centre of any discussion about quality. He considered that universities had the two key functions of teaching and researching. The rôle of research was pivotal as it informed teaching and thereby contributed to improvements in its quality of provision.

The interviewees far more commonly expressed specific definitions of quality. The definition of a senior administrator at College of Higher Education typified these. She said that quality involved checking stated aims and objectives against the perceptions of the various stakeholders in terms of what was being provided. In essence, this is service quality gap analysis (Berry et al, 1985; Parasuraman et al., 1985; Zeithaml et al., 1990); the narrower this gap, the higher the quality of provision. An administrator at Modern University considered that this approach could be applied equally well to research as to teaching. Generally, senior managers and senior administrators were very comfortable with the approach to quality that involved stating objectives and then gauging the extent to which they had been achieved. Some respondents went further than others in terms of specifying criteria for quality. For example, quality at Arts College was "measured" in terms of design skills, well thought-out solutions to problems, good research skills, good presentation skills and the ability to realise concepts. A senior manager at College of Higher Education argued that level descriptors of skill and knowledge acquisition mean that it is possible to be precise about the quality of work at levels 1, 2, 3 (undergraduate) and M (postgraduate). A senior administrator at Redbrick University favoured the value-added approach to quality that took account of inputs and outputs. Here, the quality of education is "measured" by the difference between the starting input and the finishing output. The input can be taken as a student's 'A' level points score and the output as the student's final degree category. The various approaches of comparing stated objectives with perceived outcomes are all variants of the fitness for purpose definition of quality

whereby the purpose is stated clearly in terms of objectives which are then "measured" (Oakland, 1993).

A senior manager at Technology University was very comfortable using the quantitative performance indicators developed by the Treasury Working Group (Bowden and Marton, 1998). These quantitative measures of quality included financial probity, a "good" research output as measured by the Research Assessment Exercise, high quality teaching as gauged by Teaching Quality Assessment and the destinations of graduating students. Such figures, she said, gave a useful overview of the quality of an HEI's provision.

However, her senior academic colleague recognised the value of quantitative indicators but noted that there were insufficient underpinning qualitative indicators. The overall student experience and the extent to which an HEI was self-critical were very important in terms of the quality of provision and, therefore, a more detailed analysis of these factors should be made.

Difficulties in the Use of Quality Indicators

In more traditional universities where the purpose of Higher Education and its quality were considered to be more difficult to define, consequently its quality measurement could not escape being regarded as more "woolly". An academic at Oxbridge College argued strongly that, if quality was so clear-cut in a particular academic area, then it would be neither interesting nor worthy of study at Higher Education level (Stenhouse, 1975). He continued to say that the loose liberal education definition of quality had been in existence for a significant number of years and there have been very few problems with it. After all, Higher Education in the UK compared very favourably with that in other parts of the world. Indeed, the education provided by Oxbridge colleges and other "Russell group" institutions is something to which HEIs aspire throughout the world. He also argued that academic members of staff should lead the discussion about the aims and objectives of a particular academic programme, negotiating these outcomes with the programme participants. He bemoaned the growing influence of external agencies in the establishment of programme aims and objectives and definitions of quality. An academic member of staff at Arts College felt that the subjective nature of quality could be largely overcome by

making use of a panel of academic assessors. This was particularly important in the field of art and design where quality is often said to be "in the eye of the beholder". However, one of the senior managers in a non-traditional HEI was singularly unimpressed by these arguments. He considered that there was already far too much self-reporting by academic staff and, because of subjectivity and the vested interests of academics, its validity was questionable. He preferred the use of trained quality assessors whose judgements could be trusted. Lecturers should not determine the assessment because it should be seen as a tool to ensure lecturer accountability.

Reference was made to the rôle of external examiners in the assessment of quality. The low level of their fees worried a senior administrator at Plateglass University, doubting whether such remuneration could engender the necessary level of engagement and scrutiny. Also, changes in the external examiner for a particular programme sometimes led to the programme team and students receiving conflicting advice. However, when discussing external examiners, respondents did acknowledge that their rôle was under review and subject to change (Dearing, op. cit.).

A senior manager at Plateglass University contended that where there were clear aims and objectives, quality assessment was not problematic. A senior administrator at Modern University noted that her type of institution had been, when a polytechnic prior to the 1992 Further and Higher Education Act, subject to the rigorous quality monitoring framework provided by the Council for National Academic Awards. Her opposite number at Redbrick University noted how his academic colleagues were struggling to come to terms with the accoutrements of quality audit, assessment and review.

Generally, interviewees accepted that the quality of research was measured adequately by the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE). A senior manager at Redbrick University, who stressed research as a key indicator of the quality of higher education provision, considered that the RAE was a reasonable and robust process. He acknowledged that there were some shortcomings. For example, it had tended not to give sufficient recognition to applied research and this disadvantaged the modern universities, which were more likely to adopt this approach. Also, as the departments are the unit of assessment, this militates against inter-disciplinarity. Some academic staff also expressed their concerns with RAE as an indicator of quality. At Modern University, a senior academic criticised it for being too

quantitative. Also, as there was a firm link between RAE rating and funding, it tended to direct research into "safer" areas. RAE was discouraging risk-taking because lecturers would be less inclined to open up new, untried areas of research in case their work here was received badly by the RAE assessors. She referred to the work of Whiston (1992) in support of these arguments.

Overall, the senior academic staff were not nearly as content with the existing quality measurement processes as were the senior managers and administrators. This range in attitudes to quality measurement is illustrated by comparing the views of a senior manager at Arts College and a senior academic at Plateglass University. The senior manager stated firmly there was absolutely no problem with assessing quality once the aims and objectives of a particular academic programme have been established. He added that any academic member of staff who was not clear about the aims and objectives of a particular programme should not be working in an HEI. Aims and objectives helped to provide for the accountability of academic staff who should "have the sense" to be aware of to what and to whom they were accountable. On the other hand, the academic member of staff was of the opinion that external quality assessment was just part of a "Quango-isation" of Higher Education. The demands of managerialism with their emphasis on market forces were rarely compatible with the needs of professionals and their desire to maintain high academic standards. He illustrated this disjunction by referring to the internal programme review system at his institution. Programme directors were expected to adhere rigidly to the reporting procedures. They would be admonished if they deviated in any way from what was required. Their programme reviews would be returned from the appropriate committee with patronising comments such as "this is a well-written report". He felt that in the quality review process, senior managers and administrators established the agenda and academic staff had to respond to it.

Tensions between Managerialism and Professionalism

When the respondents were asked about quality audit, assessment and review and their relationship to managerialism and professionalism, there was very little significant disagreement between the three stakeholder groups. However, although this was only a

very small sample of HEI stakeholders, the general views of certain senior managers concerning their academic staff colleagues were interesting and revealing.

A senior manager at Modern University considered that lecturers were often arrogant and more concerned with their own needs than those of the customers. Another senior manager, at Technology University, argued that academic staff should be more self-critical. Universities received a great amount of public money and so it was reasonable to expect all staff in HEIs to be accountable. Often academics tended to be self-satisfied and managerial tools such as appraisal, action planning and performance indicators were needed to facilitate sharper and more probing self-evaluation by academic staff. A senior manager at Plateglass University said that there was a danger that poor practice by lecturers was being excused by reference to a diminution of professional autonomy.

Most respondents accepted that professionalism and managerialism were not polar extremes but could co-exist and complement each other. Managerialism was essential, particularly as HEIs have had to respond to market demands. It was a responsibility of senior managers to react to, or anticipate, student demand. QM is part of managerialism but it does involve lecturers in the process as they establish the aims and objectives of academic programmes. An academic at Oxbridge College valued professional autonomy with numerous talented individuals "doing their own thing". However, he recognised that HEIs required more than talented individuals because without managerial systems and structures there would not be the continuity and coherence required to deliver effective higher education. These respondents saw no fundamental cause for tension between managerialism and professionalism. A senior academic at Technology University argued that there need not be tension if academic autonomy is seen to embrace accountability. If accountability is an accepted part of the quality enhancement cycle, then academic staff will not regard quality management as a hurdle to be cleared. By involving academic staff in the quality management process and giving them some ownership of it, he believed that the process would not be viewed in the same way as an annual Ministry of Transport vehicle test which, once passed, is forgotten for about a year until it is time to make an appointment for the next one. Instead, the quality management process will be accepted as a natural contributor to the improvement of provision.

There was another group of respondents, which included the senior administrators at Plateglass University, Modern University and Arts College, who accepted that academics were often irritated by the amount of form-filling and the number of committee meetings associated with QM processes and procedures. One respondent made the point that the QAA's "new" review system involved far more direct engagement between the Agency and academic staff with a consequent reduction in the information flow from the central services of a university. She believed that QAA review had reduced the level of frustration and irritation. However, it was considered that academics were generally coming to terms with these new demands on their time. In the seven fieldwork HEIs, there was certainly no sign of the significant antagonism and lack of contact between academic and administrative staff that Watson and Taylor (1998) contend exists in many of the traditional Oxbridge colleges and redbrick universities.

A senior administrator at Technology University considered that many academic members of staff recognised the need for accountability and understood that this accountability involved some limitations on academic autonomy. However, there were other academic members of staff at the University who considered that there had been a "golden age" in higher education when their views were paramount and the influence from stakeholders outside of the University was, justifiably in their view, very limited. He believed that academic staff were gradually accepting the notion of quality management.

An academic at Modern University stated that there was often the perception that her particular stakeholder group were a "lazy bunch" who needed to work harder and managerialism was seen as a way of achieving this. Managerialism was based on contractual obligations between managers and academic staff whereas previously it was based to a large extent on good will. Although there was often tension between managerialism and professionalism, this did not necessarily have to be the case. Managerialism could enhance professionalism by providing appropriate helpful, time-saving supportive systems and structures. Whether or not there was tension between the two depended largely on the attitudes and approach of senior managers.

She was worried that quality was coming to be seen more in terms of Quality Control than quality of experience (Salaman, 1978; Tysome, 1994). This was an element in the McDonaldisation of society (Ritzer, 1993). HE in the UK could be following the pattern in

the USA where standardisation and consistency were equated with quality. It could be argued that this standardisation is predicated on the Scientific Management approach developed and applied in the early twentieth century by Frederick Taylor (Case, 1999). However, she did not agree with Ritzer (1996) that student needs were being met through this close control of quality. She viewed the distinction between Quality Control and the quality of experiences as a manifestation of the tension between managerialism and professionalism with managerialism being associated more with control whereas professionalism was more concerned with the quality of experience.

In contrast, a senior manager at Redbrick University believed that there was very little tension at his institution. He argued that the reason for this was due to academic staff being given the major part of the responsibility for quality management. There was very little central support of departments during HEFCE and now QAA subject reviews. Academic staff were left to "get on with it" and there was a very "light touch" from the centre that indicated their high level of trust and confidence in the departmental staff.

The Influence of Environmental and Cultural Change on Quality Management

A senior administrator at Oxbridge College discerned extrinsic and intrinsic factors that determined staff attitudes to quality. Peer pressure is an example of an extrinsic factor. Academic staff work in teams so that poor performance is easily identified and other team members are keen to remedy this. In addition, the poor performer would not want to let down the other team members. The team norms, expectations and pressure are all elements of the Japanese notion of *giri* (Briggs, 1988). Also, an extrinsic factor is the competition between the various colleges of the University. It is very intense and Oxbridge College competes against other colleges to recruit the "best" students. Each college is concerned to achieve the greatest number of first choice applicants and this serves as an informal quality management mechanism. Another extrinsic factor that also acts as an informal quality management mechanism is the perceptions of the major feeder schools. Such schools will be aware how the various colleges are performing. Similarly, employers exerted an influence on quality management because they recruited from colleges with good reputations and any fall in standard would affect adversely the number of Oxbridge College students progressing to prestigious appointments.

Intrinsic factors that helped to maintain high standards included the innate commitment of Oxbridge College academic staff. The College aimed to select the best people for the job and its reputation helped to achieve this goal. In addition, the nature of the staff/student relationship ensured quality of provision. The students at Oxbridge College were knowledgeable (4 grade A 'A' levels is the norm) and articulate and therefore kept the lecturers "on their toes". The students were very carefully chosen by means of competitive interviews. As the lecturers were involved in the interview process, they had greater affinity with the students than would be the case if the students were selected by the Admissions Office without an interview. This is often the case with Modern Universities. The tutorial system at the College reinforced this commitment to the student.

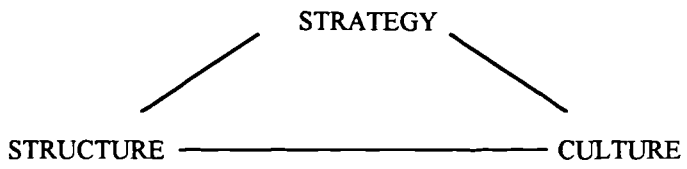
To summarise the views of this senior administrator at Oxbridge College, he was arguing that high quality of provision was maintained without the usual internal QM procedures and with only those external QM systems imposed on it. Oxbridge College's organisational culture, its particular market environment and the attitudes of staff and students are such that formal QM approaches are rendered superfluous. Managerialism, in the form of appraisal and formal QM would only be, at best, of marginal assistance in improving quality. Indeed, this diffidence towards formal QM has been demonstrated by one Oxbridge university refusing to allow QAA to audit its systems and the other university considering a non-co-operation policy towards them (THES, 1999i). This disquiet over QAA's proposals for the new of forms of audit and assessment, due to start in 2001, have continued into the new century (Baty and Tysome, 2000). The vice-chancellors of the Oxbridge universities have been joined in their opposition to "unworkable, summative judgements on quality" by vice-chancellors from redbrick universities such as Bristol, Durham and University College, London (Baty, 2000 p.1).

It could be argued that Oxbridge College was in an advantageous and élitist position because of the networks that have been established during more than five hundred years of providing Higher Education. Other HEIs need different strategies to maintain the quality of provision.

Staff at both Modern University and College of Higher Education referred to the appointment of a new Vice-Chancellor or Director leading to changed attitudes to QM and the gradual development of an organisational culture that was more focused on quality

issues. At Plateglass University, two senior members of staff noted that the commitment of senior management was essential if QM systems were to be effective (Lawler, 1994). Academic staff were very quick to sense any lack of commitment and, if they did, they were likely to adopt a perfunctory and/or defensive attitude.

At Arts College, a senior manager said that they had linked QM systems firmly to the organisational structure with QM functions being devolved to faculty and school levels where appropriate. Thus, the QM process ran parallel with the institutional chain of command and linked responsibility and accountability. In addition, the firm linkage between QM systems and structures helped with the transition and development towards a more quality-focused organisational structure.



Prior to 1992, Modern University, College of Higher Education and Arts College had all offered academic programmes validated through CNAA and had been subject to its QM processes. Many of the interviewees from these three institutions expressed the opinion that their CNAA background had made it far easier to assimilate the increasing focus on QM that occurred throughout the 1990s. They were more attuned culturally to the changes in quality assessment.

The Value of ISO 9000 Series, Investors in People and Other Quality Management Schemes

There was a very high level of agreement amongst the respondents on this issue with relatively little enthusiasm or regard for QM schemes such as ISO 9000 series and Investors in People.

At Oxbridge College, all three senior staff agreed that the College provided high quality higher education thanks to its academic and support staff, its resources and the nature of its student in-take. It had no need of the marketing advantage that allegedly accrued from "quality badging". Indeed, a senior academic believed that some of his colleagues would consider the processes of ISO 9000 series and IiP to be demeaning as well as unnecessary. A senior administrator rejected QM schemes, as they patently did not fit with its collegial culture. He continued by saying that efficient and effective management did not require TQM, ISO 9000 series or IiP.

There was also consensus on this topic at Redbrick University. A senior academic said that there was absolutely no interest in such QM schemes, in part because they were of greater value to HEIs that were predominantly teaching institutions. Redbrick University was not such an institution as it derived a very high proportion of its income from research. A senior administrator adopted a cost/benefit approach to such schemes. He concluded that there was no demand at Redbrick University for the "external betokening of quality" as the awards would not impress members of their potential customer groups and also the seeking of such awards would take academic and support staff members' time away from dealing directly with students.

At Plateglass University, a senior academic was opposed to ISO 9000 series in particular, stating that you cannot make people faultless nor did people regularly "get it right first time" as Crosby (1984) recommends. A senior manager made the point that, although the schemes were of no interest in terms of academic issues, in non-academic contexts they might have something to offer. They could be used to improve service provision in such areas as catering, maintenance and security.

Only Modern University out of the seven sample HEIs made use of both ISO 9000 series and IiP. A senior academic said that staff were surprised that the University had received the IiP award. This was because there was relatively little staff development, a situation made worse when staff development activities were "frozen" due to financial difficulties. Also, in general, communication was poor. Unlike at Wolverhampton University (HEQC, 1994d; UCoSDA, 1998), this senior academic believed that IiP had not alleviated the communication difficulties that often beset a multi-site campus. She was also sceptical

about IiP, largely because she felt that the motive behind it was the marketing advantage it was thought to bring (Clutterbuck, 1997).

The Engineering and Technology Department at Technology University had achieved ISO 9002 accreditation. However, the ISO 9002 award was sought for largely pragmatic and instrumental reasons. This was because it was a contractual requirement of the Ministry of Defence, one of the University's major clients, that all providers of particular military engineering courses had this accreditation.

At College of Higher Education, IiP status had been sought and a Deputy Director took responsibility for this. However, when he left the institution, interest in IiP waned. A senior manager and a senior administrator said that, as there were more pressing issues, there were no plans to re-apply. A senior academic at the College said that there was no need for such external QM schemes. Academic members of staff should take responsibility for improving their own teaching and research abilities. He argued that ISO 9000 series and IiP seek to identify defaulters and, if lecturers were truly professional, there would not be any.

At Arts College, there was some interest in pursing IiP status because of its organisation-wide influence. A senior administrator said that it could help to integrate academic and support functions and focus the attention of all staff on the College's mission statement.

Standards in Higher Education

A senior academic member of staff at Plateglass University believed that most HEIs had responded to central government's exhortation to increase student numbers by lowering their standards for student admissions. "More meant worse" (Radford, 1997) and there had been a "dumbing down" in the Higher Education sector. As there are external pressures to achieve good results with less able intakes (as measured by 'A' level points scores) and a diminishing unit of resource, so the results from internal QM systems have been used to suggest increasing standards of student achievement. Such standards are measured by the proportion of first and upper second class degrees in a particular HEI (Macfarlane, 1993). This respondent asked, "How does one explain the increasing

proportion of 'good' degrees at a time of less able student in-take and a falling unit of resource?" (THES, 1999e)

A senior academic at Redbrick University, a senior manager at Modern University and a senior administrator at Oxbridge College drew attention to the likelihood of further increases in the proportion of the population entering Higher Education. The senior academic at Redbrick University saw further "dumbing down" as a consequence with "more meaning worse" (Radford, op. cit.). The situation would be exacerbated with financial penalties for withdrawals leading to more marginal students being encouraged to remain in Higher Education.

A senior administrator at Technology University raised a pragmatic issue relating to the issue of standards in higher education. Whilst accepting that the broadening of access to higher education was most desirable, the increase in entrants to HEIs could lead to a greater proportion of students with academic and/or financial difficulties. This would follow from the rise in recruitment of non-standard entry students and students from families who had previously not had any involvement with higher education. Thus, if there was a further 5% increase in student numbers, then there was likely to be a greater than 5% increase in resource requirements. As numbers in HEIs increased, it would be more difficult to maintain academic standards as the pressure on limited resources mounted.

Supporters of the view that standards are falling could refer to research conducted and funded independently by the Performance Indicator Project in order to strengthen their case (THES, 1999g). The report of the research, which gathered views of the graduate recruiters at two hundred large companies, concluded that more than half of Britain's major employers think that degree standards are falling whereas just under 10% felt that they were rising. The expansion of higher education was regularly given as a reason for the fall. In addition, modern universities that were formerly polytechnics were consistently rated well below the traditional universities. A league table constructed on the basis of the data indicated that Sheffield Hallam University was the most highly rated modern university but even this institution was not placed in the top twenty HEIs. Traditional universities dominated the higher levels of the table with the first five being, in descending

order, Manchester, Cambridge, University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, Oxford and Birmingham (THES, op. cit.).

The senior manager at Modern University did not necessarily subscribe to the "more means worse" argument. He argued that the maintenance of the proportion of "good" honours degrees (Macfarlane, op. cit.) at a time of lower general average 'A' level points scores of students entering HE (Wilson, 1998) and the lower unit of resource (see TABLE 10), may not indicate any lowering of standards. Rather it could be due to a broadening of what was being assessed and also the use of new assessment processes that tended to be more flexible and adapted to a variety of cognitive styles than was the case with traditional examinations (Elton, 1998).

	1979	1981	1983	1985	1987	1990	1993	1995	1997	1999
UNIVERSITIES	100	101	104	101	100	98				
POLYTECHNICS	100	96	92	85	83	79				
JOINT						100	85	78	70	64 E

(1979 = 100; 1989 = rebased) Key – E – Estimate

TABLE 10: Higher Education – Unit Public Funding
Source: Robertson, D. (1997)

A senior manager at Technology University ardently refuted the argument that "more means worse". She believed that the general abilities of students entering higher education at the end of the twentieth century had not only changed during the last twenty to thirty years but had also improved. For this reason, a rise in the number of students entering higher education was to be expected as a larger proportion of any cohort was able to cope with, and benefit from, the experience. The United Kingdom should aim to increase participation rates from about 33% to approximately 60%, the level to be found in Sweden and certain countries in south-east Asia.

The Influence of Central Government on HEIs

Many of the respondents referred to an increase in accountability of HEIs to central government and the students. Generally, this was not seen as threatening. The senior administrator at Oxbridge College acknowledged that greater accountability was an integral part of the democratic process and it was right and proper that lecturers should be responsible and accountable for public money. Whilst having no problem with the general notion of accountability, a senior manager at Modern University made the point that it was to whom one was responsible that was of significance. He wanted to be accountable to people who were well-informed on the subject of Higher Education but, sadly, not all groups in society were.

Some interviewees noted that, with the election of a Labour government in May 1997, central government was taking less direct interest in HE. A senior administrator at Redbrick University subscribed to this view saying that there is a noticeable "lighter touch" with government advisers taking a more passive rôle in HE committee discussions. A fellow administrator at Plateglass University had also perceived and welcomed this trend.

A senior academic at Technology University hoped and believed that the government would continue to encourage the broadening of access to HEIs with, for example, the award of grants to institutions that made an effort in this area of recruitment (THES, 1999f). Generally, HEIs could be far more effective in recruiting women with young children, mature people and people from certain ethnic backgrounds who have been seriously under-represented. Greater use of technology and more imaginative use of premises and support services during evenings, weekends and vacations would help to match more closely higher education provision to the needs of these particular groups.

Views on Possible Future Developments in Higher Education

Some concern was expressed over practical issues relating to subject benchmarking. At the time of all but three of the interviews, the results of the pilot benchmarking in chemistry, history and law were not known. Without the benefit of this information, there

was an assumption that the benchmark standards would be precise and definitive, in the same way as a surveyor's mark cut in a wall. This was a reasonable assumption given that QAA (1999b, p.4) had defined benchmarks as,

> ... explicit national statements of academic standards or outcomes, at subject level. Benchmark information of this type provides a reference point against which outcomes can be measured. QAA is developing benchmarks of this sort in respect of forty-two subject groupings as part of its national quality assurance process.

A senior manager from College of Higher Education and a senior academic from Redbrick University considered that the eventual benchmarks would be too dependent on the composition of the benchmarking panel. The former said that, if panels were composed mainly of academics from traditional universities, then the benchmark standards would reflect their backgrounds and values. The latter was more specific saying that in his field of study – philosophy – there were three major schools of thought; the "Greats", post-enlightenment and English ethics and German philosophy. Although all these schools of thought could be included in the curriculum, ultimately the benchmarking panel would need to decide which of these it would support. This was because there was no room in the curriculum for an in-depth study of all three of these schools of thought. However, Dearing (op. cit.) and QAA (Utley, 1998) have made it clear that the benchmarks will relate to learning outcomes and not content. Once the learning outcomes have been specified, it will be for the programme team in a particular HEI to determine the content that will lead to the achievement of these outcomes. Nevertheless, perceptions can often overshadow rationality and many academic staff share the concerns of this senior academic at Redbrick University that benchmarking is a precursor of a national curriculum for higher education (Tapper and Salter, 1998). These concerns emanate largely from the opinion that subject benchmarking with involve predetermined course outlines that will stifle creativity. Lecturers, Becher (1999) argues, are like other professionals such as architects and engineers in that they do not flourish when their originality is constrained.

A senior manager at Modern University saw benchmarking as an attempt to "close the lid on Pandora's box" after the drive to a mass higher education system had led to a very wide range of provision, abilities in terms of student in-take and levels of student expectations. Having encouraged great diversity through HEIs being exhorted to pursue varying missions, central government was using benchmarking as an instrument of control that sought to bring standardisation. With HEQC audit, HEFCE assessment and the present

QAA review, there was less commonality about what constitutes quality. Benchmarking marked a shift away from a relativist form of quality assessment to a more absolutist one. He continued by saying that benchmarking was a massive task and, in his opinion, unlikely to be successful.

A senior manager at Redbrick University disagreed, saying that the pilot benchmark standards in chemistry, history and law had been relatively uncontentious. He thought that benchmarks would have very little impact on HEIs where good practice already existed. Indeed, they would simply be reflective in these institutions and fail to provide them with a challenge. Much of the concern and anxiety relating to benchmarking had been caused by Dearing's (op. cit.) inappropriate use of the term. Benchmarking in industry and commerce are specific, rigid and prescriptive but this does not seem to be what is intended in higher education. Although there is desire for greater standardisation in higher education, the system has to recognise the great diversity that exists in HEIs throughout England and Wales. He suggested that subject criteria would be a more apposite term than benchmarks.

A senior administrator at Plateglass University, which had a relatively high proportion of joint honours and combined honours programmes, was concerned how the subject benchmarking groups would take account of the lower total learning hours for each subject. He assumed that, for one of the component subjects of a joint honours or combined honours programme, there would be lower thresholds and fewer benchmark criteria than would be the case for a single honours programme.

A senior manager at Redbrick University and a senior academic at Plateglass University believed that, in the near future, there would be a clear divide between teaching and research HEIs (Dearing, op. cit.). There would be the emergence of top ranking universities that would be able to secure the majority of research funding. As these universities received a larger proportion of the available research funding, so their position would be strengthened. They would be in an upward spiral with success breeding further success. Those HEIs unable to attract sufficient research funds would be forced into being all-teaching institutions. A senior manager at Redbrick University also predicted this polarisation with research-only and teaching-only HEIs. He was, like a senior academic at

Modern University, worried that RAE funding would lead to researchers playing safe and being less willing to research "at the edges" of their subjects.

SUMMARY

Although in-depth interviews were conducted, there was a relatively small sample of twenty-one interviewees. For this reason, care needs to be taken not to over-generalise on the basis of the responses of these twenty-one senior members of staff.

However, the interviews confirmed the great range of views on the purpose of Higher Education, as was suggested in the literature. Views ranged from those based on a liberal education philosophy to those that were more instrumental, pragmatic and vocational. Generally, senior academics were more likely to be supporters of liberal education and this support was stronger in the more traditional HEIs such as Oxbridge College and Redbrick University.

A person's opinion on the purpose of Higher Education often shaped their definition of quality. Where a clear purpose was stated, it was easy to define quality as fitness for purpose. Clear-cut aims and objectives for academic programmes could be established and the progress towards achieving these could be gauged. In general, the senior managers and senior administrators subscribed to this approach to QM. However, senior academics were not as comfortable with this notion of quality assessment because their definitions of quality were usually far less distinct. Another reason why senior academics were less comfortable with the emerging quality assessment systems than other senior staff was their perception that they were part of a professional bureaucracy and resented what they considered to be interference in professional issues from outside agencies. Such interference was viewed as a threat to their professional autonomy and part of the tightening of the coupling between the academic and administrative parts of an HEI. However, two senior managers questioned the attitudes of certain lecturers in HEIs, implying that their championing of professionalism with the attendant antipathy towards managerialism was largely a demonstration of an unwillingness to be accountable for the outcomes of their work.

There was consensus that the QAA's proposals to use benchmarking, codes of practice and thresholds in quality assessment meant it would be more universalistic. With less relativism, some respondents implied that it would not take into account their HEI's mission to the same extent as at present. The interview data also confirmed the trend identified in the literature that there was a gradual shift in emphasis from process to outcome measures.

There was very little support amongst the respondents for QM systems used to a significant extent in business and commerce. IiP and, in particular, ISO 9000 series were generally felt to be irrelevant to education which was the core activity of HEIs.

The continued move to a mass higher education system was acknowledged but, in a few cases, was not welcomed. Three senior academics at Redbrick and Plateglass Universities and Arts College made either implicit or explicit references to "more meaning worse" and/or "dumbing down". Generally, the senior manager and senior administrator stakeholder groups did not share such views. A senior academic member of staff at Modern University considered that QM was leading to the standardisation of higher education provision rather than improving standards in higher education. She felt that the emphasis on quality control could be seen as part of Ritzer's McDonaldisation thesis in which quality was synonymous with consistency and standardisation.

Overall, there was some variance in the beliefs and values of the three stakeholder groups with the senior academics in particular not sharing the perceptions of the other two groups on a number of issues.

This variance amongst stakeholders in terms of beliefs and values and, perhaps, basic assumptions is one reason why it is very difficult to argue that a particular HEI in the sample has a clear organisational culture. It is also very difficult to sustain an argument that an HEI has a universalistic culture, as there is far more evidence to suggest that it is particularistic. One of the aims of a relativist quality assessment process is to take account of an HEI's mission and culture. However, it is not possible to say with any degree of certainty that it has a shared mission and a definite culture when there is such a variance in the perceptions of different stakeholder groups.

The initial empirical research from a sample of seven HEIs has shown that there are a great variety of cultures both between them and within each of them. It suggests that the proposed more universal and less relativist assessment through benchmarking will not take this diversity into account to the same extent as was the case previously with HEFCE assessment. The use of Schein's simple generic model of organisational model and Dopson and McNay's university-specific cultural model has helped to reveal tangible evidence of this variance through qualitative and quantitative differences in student in-takes, stated missions and size of organisation. These models have also helped to highlight an apparent variance in the intangible elements of organisational culture such as beliefs and values and, possibly, basic assumptions.

Thus, it is questionable whether the more rigid, standards-based review system being developed by QAA will be able to take this great variation into account. Brennan et al.'s research demonstrated that, even when the methodology of HEFCE assessment was based on an HEI defining its purpose (subject to certain constraints) and assessors gauged fitness for this purpose, there were still concerns amongst senior managers, senior administrators and academic staff that insufficient account was taken of the organisation's mission. If this relativist form of assessment did not recognise fully the diversity in the higher education sector, then the more universalistic QAA reviews based on benchmarks, codes of practice and thresholds are even less likely to make allowance for these differences.

Further empirical study is required in order to illuminate and examine these issues in greater depth.

CHAPTER ELEVEN – REVIEWING THE PROPOSITION

The proposition of this thesis is that QM methods in higher education do not take account of the diversity of organisational culture that exists within and between HEIs. In reviewing this proposition, the cultural issues that have been discussed will be summarised and then the emerging issues relating to developments in QM will be re-stated.

The results of the twenty-one depth interviews in the seven fieldwork HEIs supported the literature review findings that the general culture of an organisation varied greatly and was a function of many factors including its mission, tradition and size. Dopson and McNay's (1996) model was helpful in broadly categorising the seven institutions, thereby pointing up the great diversity of culture that exists in the higher education sector. Analysis of the literature, the interviews, HEQC, HEFCE and QAA reports, HESA data, prospectuses and other published materials revealed that the relatively loose policy definition and control of implementation at Oxbridge College and Redbrick University suggested a dominance of collegial culture. The tighter control of policy and implementation at Modern University, College of Higher Education and Arts College indicated a more dominant corporate culture with elements of bureaucracy. McNay (1995) describes this as corporate bureaucracy. Plateglass University and Technology University did not fit so neatly into any of these categories.

However, although some general conclusions could be drawn about the culture of the seven HEIs, the depth interviews cast doubt over whether there were clear, definitive organisational cultures. By making use of Schein's (1985) simple model, an analysis of the comments of the senior managers, senior administrators and senior academics showed that members of these stakeholder groups did not always share the same beliefs and values. Sometimes there were great divergences of beliefs on issues such as the purpose of higher education, definitions of quality and whether general standards are rising, falling or remaining static. Trowler's (1998) empirical research in just one HEI on the effects of the Credit Accumulation Transfer (CATs) scheme led to similar conclusions although it analysed different issues and made use of a different methodology. His

research findings were derived from a single-site ethnographic case study based on interviews with fifty "ground level" academics. One of his five conclusions was that there was an over-simplification of the notion of culture in HEIs because of the mistaken assumption that there are largely unitary rather than contradictory influences.

Use of Dopson and McNay's (1996) model of universities as organisations also suggests that there are some perceptual differences between the three groups of senior staff. Academic staff, particularly in the more traditional universities, made numerous references to collegiality. On the other hand, senior managers in most types of HEI alluded to the need for the tight policy definition and control of implementation that indicates the corporate model.

If there are these great differences in the views of senior staff in HEIs about beliefs, values and, possibly, basic assumptions, then they could be related more to stakeholder group affiliation than to the organisation. This causes problems when attempting to identify an HEI's general culture. Rather than a universalistic and unitary attitude amongst all staff in HEIs, it is more particularistic and pluralist (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1997; Bratton and Gold, 1999). There is the indication that an HEI's culture is diverse and differentiated through the existence of these numerous sub-cultures (Ybema, 1997).

The diversity that exists amongst HEIs also exists within them. Just as diversity makes standardisation problematic for certain HEIs in the external quality review process, so diversity of opinion amongst the various senior staff stakeholder groups makes it difficult to argue that an HEI has a standard and agreed organisational culture. This is because HEIs are relatively large organisations with the total number of employees usually being in excess of 500. Also, HEIs are comprised of staff who have different education and career backgrounds, different philosophies regarding the key purposes of higher education and specific affiliations with their fellow professionals and members of their academic tribes (Becher, 1989). For these and other reasons, it is likely that there will be the development and sustenance of a number of sub-cultures. Thus, the cultures of HEIs are based more on a pluralist perspective and are very likely to be particularistic.

In defining terms, a unitary perspective is taken to involve the goals of employees being closely interlinked with those of the organisation (Bratton and Gold, op. cit.). It is associated with a functionalist and universalistic culture that gives its members a sense of purpose and an identity and assists the organisation to survive and develop (Trowler, op. cit.). This unitary perspective exists amongst most managers and employees in many Japanese organisations and explains, according to de Mente (1990), Lessem (1991) and Lawler (1994, 1995), why Japanese employees have responded so positively to the introduction of QM approaches. There is a reciprocal commitment between employees and management (James, 1992). This contrasts with the pluralist perspective where there is often a lack of congruity between employee and organisational goals. Each stakeholder group within an organisation is legitimately pursuing its own goals and the group that is in the strongest bargaining position is likely to be successful when there is inter-group conflict (Gospel and Palmer, 1993). A universalistic organisational culture is identified by the rigid application of rules and procedures in order to achieve equity and consistency. It is often termed a "strong" culture. A particularistic culture is more flexible and adaptable to particular situations. It is far more heterogeneous (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, op. cit.). Unitary and pluralistic perspectives and cultures should not be seen as polar extremes but rather as the end points of continua. Also, the construction of simplistic dualisms should be avoided.

The data from the depth interviews indicates a need for further investigation of the proposition. The proposition could gain greater credibility when subject benchmarking is introduced. However, this assumes that the benchmarks will be prescriptive and akin to a surveyor's mark cut in a wall (Ecclestone, 1999; Woolf et al., 1999). Since the benchmarks are being devised by a group of approximately twelve higher education practitioners for each academic subject, it seems unlikely that there will be similar benchmarks for all the different subjects. This suggests that the use of the word "benchmark" in the Dearing Report (1997) is rather inappropriate as they are most unlikely to resemble the precise and specific measurements used by surveyors and, to a lesser extent, as the term is applied to standards in an industrial and commercial context.

The interviews and the relevant literature suggested that the QAA's methodology for reviews commencing in 2001 were to be less relativist and thus not as likely to take into account an HEI's organisational culture to the same extent as at present. Some pilot subject benchmarking groups have already made their recommendations but it is not clear how flexible or prescriptive the final benchmarking process will be when it is implemented in 2001. There is uncertainty about the future of QAA review and Professor Alan Smithers of Liverpool University (O'Connor, 1999) articulates the concerns of certain academic staff in HEIs when he warns against the use of an over-rigid form of quality assessment. If this does occur, he believes that there will be a consequent over-centralisation of higher education and a very real danger that a national curriculum could develop. Smithers' view is supported by Court (1999) who considers that the outcome of the benchmarking process is likely to involve some limitation of HEIs' autonomy over course content. He argues that it is merely a matter of the extent of this reduction in autonomy. However, John Randall, Chief Executive of the QAA, has reassured academic staff that benchmarking is designed to identify the minimum acceptable level of attainment in a particular subject below which a student should not fall. He stresses the recommendations of the pilot history benchmarking group that identified overarching intellectual skills rather than prescribing particular historical content that should be covered in HEIs. He maintained that benchmark statements would be very general and thus would not threaten the long-established autonomy of academic staff to determine curriculum content (Randall, 1999).

The greater involvement of central government with its concern to facilitate comparisons between HEIs in order to improve public accountability, and the shift in emphasis to examine outcomes rather than processes, have indicated a tendency towards standardisation. Since the publication of the Dearing Report (1997), there has been interest in fitness *of* purpose as well as fitness *for* purpose (Randall, op. cit.). Research by Brennan et al. (1997) discovered that senior staff had concerns about whether assessments by HEFCE prior to April 1997 took sufficient account of the diverse mission statements of HEIs and this at a time when the assessment methodology was predicated on the notion of fitness *for* purpose. The depth interviews with senior staff in the seven fieldwork institutions indicated different beliefs and values amongst these staff and thus the cultures

of HEIs are likely to be even more complex than Dopson and McNay's (1996) model suggests. Taken together with a standardising trend that could lead to prescriptive subject benchmarks, it is possible that the emerging QM methods are less likely to take account of the mission and culture of a particular HEI. At present, as the compilation of the forty-two subject area benchmark standards is at the development stage, outcomes can only be surmised.

An understanding of the perceived trend towards greater standardisation in higher education could be aided by reference back to the notion of McDonaldisation (Ritzer, 1993, 1996) discussed earlier. Ritzer's thesis is that western societies are being characterised by a desire for rationality, efficiency, predictability and control. McDonaldisation is the process by which McDonalds fast-food restaurant principles are applied to a wide range of production activities and service provision. It is argued that HEIs are no different from other service industries and consumers require the same standardisation, reliability and predictability in terms of higher education provision as they do when purchasing a burger meal or dealing with their bank. This leads to the notion of the "McUniversity". The recent massification of higher education in the United Kingdom (Scott, 1998) has confirmed higher education as just another "mass production industry".

Second Phase Research

In order to examine in greater detail whether or not there were clear, universalisic organisational cultures characteristic of the seven types of HEI, further examination of the beliefs and values of the three senior staff stakeholder groups was required. Significant differences in senior staff stakeholder beliefs and values would indicate that organisational culture was differentiated rather than integrated, making it very difficult to identify the organisational culture of a particular HEI (Ybema, 1997). Also, an examination of senior staff's views as to whether there was a standardising tendency in terms of QM would illuminate issues relating to the other aspect of the proposition. As

with the first phase research, the validity of the responses relies on eliciting honest replies from the respondents, thus disentangling the reality from any rhetoric.

It is acknowledged that there are many other stakeholders who contribute to the culture of a particular HEI. Stakeholder groups other than those involving senior staff include more junior academic and administrative staff, support staff, manual workers, governors, local community groups, the business community and, in some cases, the church. In order to render the research more manageable, these stakeholder groups have not been canvassed for their views on organisational culture and quality management.

Research Design and Method

Cresswell (1994) notes that it is not uncommon for researchers to combine qualitative and quantitative designs in the different phases of a particular study. Mixed research designs can be beneficial in terms of triangulation and validity because the second phase research can be informed from the results of the first phase and the different research designs are complementary, leading to a convergence of the results.

A questionnaire (see APPENDIX C) was chosen as the research instrument for the second phase research for two main reasons. Firstly, as a research instrument it is effective in eliciting information from a relatively large number of people in a comparatively short time (Greenfield, 1996). Secondly, the use of a questionnaire complemented the twenty-one depth interviews by providing more quantitative data to supplement the more qualitative. In terms of validity, reliability and generalisability, whereas depth interviews are more inductive and at the qualitative and subjective end of the continuum, questionnaires are rather more towards the positivist end (Easterby-Smith et al., 1991; Hussey and Hussey, 1997). Questionnaires were an additional research method which strengthened the multiple method approach that already included depth interviews, document analysis and non-participant observation (Bell, 1993).

Although the questionnaires invited comments from the respondents on all of issues that were explored, the main purpose of their use was to provide quantitative data that would lend itself to deductive analysis. Such analysis lead to the production of statistical comparisons and correlations (Easterby-Smith et al., op. cit.).

Research Sample

A stratified random sample (Remenyi et al., 1998) of senior managers, senior administrators and senior academics from ninety-seven HEIs was randomly selected from lists of senior staff in HEIs. These lists were found by consulting university and college computer internet websites, printed prospectuses and the 1999 Edition of The Education Directory and Annual. The senior managers were chosen randomly in roughly equal numbers from the seven main types of HEI funded by HEFCE. Essentially, there were approximately equal numbers from the types of HEI represented by Oxbridge College, Redbrick University, Plateglass University, Technology University, Modern University, College of Higher Education and Art College. In total, two hundred and fifty questionnaires were distributed. One hundred and eight were returned and they represented a 43.2% response rate. Three replies were received from three different Higher Educational Institutions explaining that two of the potential respondents had retired and the other senior manager was absent from the institution due to long term illness. Two senior managers from a particular modern university returned similar letters stating that it was the university's general policy not to respond to research questionnaires. Two other potential respondents wrote saying that they did not have the time to complete and return the questionnaire. In addition to the one hundred and eight questionnaires that were returned, a further four completed questionnaires were received after the return deadline and, consequently, were not included in the questionnaire analysis data. Unfortunately, non-returns were not followed up because there proved to be insufficient time due to the need to commence analysis of the questionnaire responses. Had this been done, it is likely that the response rate would have been higher.

Questionnaire Construction

The questions asked in the questionnaire (APPENDIX C) were similar to those posed in the depth interviews. There were just six questions relating to the key issues of the purpose of higher education, definitions of quality in higher education, cultural change, benchmarking, the degree to which quality review took account of their institution's mission and attitudes about current academic standards. As questionnaires do not involve dialogue, it was necessary to provide definitions of terms for some of the questions. This was because it was important to ensure, as far as was possible, that there was a shared understanding amongst the respondents of concepts such as liberal and vocational education and benchmarking. Space was provided after each question for respondents to add any additional comments if they so wished. Some of the questions involved the use of a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree through uncertain to strongly disagree. In order to limit bias, there were an equal number of positive and negative statements.

A major purpose of asking these particular questions was to explore if there was a significant correlation between respondents' view on purpose of higher education and their attitude to managerialism and quality management and also whether position in the organisation and/or the type of organisation were influential. Also, the responses to these questions would indicate the views of senior staff about the present quality review, the impact of massification in the higher education sector on quality and the perceptions of their institution's dominant organisational culture.

Piloting of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was piloted in the researcher's own institution as this was neither one of the seven fieldwork HEIs nor were senior staff from here asked to take part in this second phase research. Three members of staff - a senior manager, senior administrator and a senior academic - were asked to complete the questionnaire and provide

constructive criticism of the research instrument and the accompanying draft letter to respondents. They were encouraged to suggest possible improvements.

SUMMARY

The use of Schein's and Dopson and McNay's models led to some clear conclusions about the organisational culture of certain of the fieldwork HEIs. There was a dominant collegial culture at Oxbridge College and Redbrick University whereas at Modern University and College of Higher Education the far tighter control of policy and implementation indicated a corporate bureaucracy.

Often the difference of opinion amongst the three stakeholder groups illustrated the dangers of over-simplifying and over-generalising the notion of organisational culture. It is a complex concept and here the research supported one of Trowler's conclusions from his findings at NewU. He contended that the existence of numerous sub-cultures meant that an organisation's culture is often more particularistic than universalistic.

The developing subject benchmarking could lead to greater prescription and standardisation of higher education, causing a less relativist QM approach. If this were the case, it would mean that QM would be less likely to take into account the diversity that exists at the present time in HEIs. However, the Director of QAA – John Randall – rejects the view that the benchmarks will be prescriptive. He claims that they will simply identify overarching intellectual skills and this will not challenge the autonomy of academic staff to determine curriculum content. He also asserts that the benchmarks will allow the great diversity of purpose in HEIs to flourish. Nevertheless, there would seem to be a shift towards a greater emphasis on the identification and assessment of outcomes rather than processes with a consequent concern for fitness *of* purpose as well as fitness *for* purpose.

The trend towards the greater emphasis on outputs and standardisation can be understood through reference to the McDonaldisation thesis. The thesis is that higher education is no

different from any other service industry with consumers (the students) requiring standardisation, reliability and predictability of service. The quality of service is judged on these criteria.

In order to investigate the proposition further, a second phase of empirical research was required. The design of this research was more quantitative than was the case with the initial research. Questionnaires were the research method employed.

CHAPTER TWELVE – SECOND PHASE RESEARCH RESULTS

The second phase research was bounded by the limited size of the stratified random sample of two hundred and fifty senior managers in HEIs. Nevertheless, there was a relatively high questionnaire return rate of 43.2% (one hundred and eight replies). Another four questionnaires were received after the deadline and consequently these were not analysed. The questionnaire results afforded an opportunity for interpretative commentary and they also provided for methodological triangulation (Easterby-Smith et al., 1991) when taken together with the qualitative data from the twenty-one depth interviews and the analysis of documents relating to the seven fieldwork HEIs.

The statistics were obtained through subjecting the raw data (see APPENDIX C) to the application of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). T-tests were used to compare the means of the sets of data relating to stakeholder and HEI-type responses. The t-tests were also used to ascertain the extent of statistical significance in terms of $p > 0.05$ (Rowntree, 1991). The statistical significance, as measured by these tests, was such that the conclusions drawn from the results of the second phase research, taken on their own, were necessarily tentative (see APPENDIX D). As can be seen from the matrices in APPENDIX D, only a small proportion of the results were statistically significant. A larger mailing to many more than two hundred and fifty senior staff would have been desirable and, given the relatively high response rate, would have increased the extent of the statistical significance. However, the time taken to ascertain and check the names of senior staff in particular HEIs, together with the need to establish a final date for questionnaire returns so that the replies could be analysed and written up, meant that a sample larger than two hundred and fifty was not practicable in the time available.

The Purpose of Higher Education

As discussed earlier in this thesis, perceptions of the purpose of higher education can have a significant influence on what is construed as quality. Indeed, fitness of

purpose is one of a number of definitions of quality (Harvey and Green, 1993). Before assessing whether a product or service is fit for purpose, it is necessary to be clear about the purpose (Franklin, 1992).

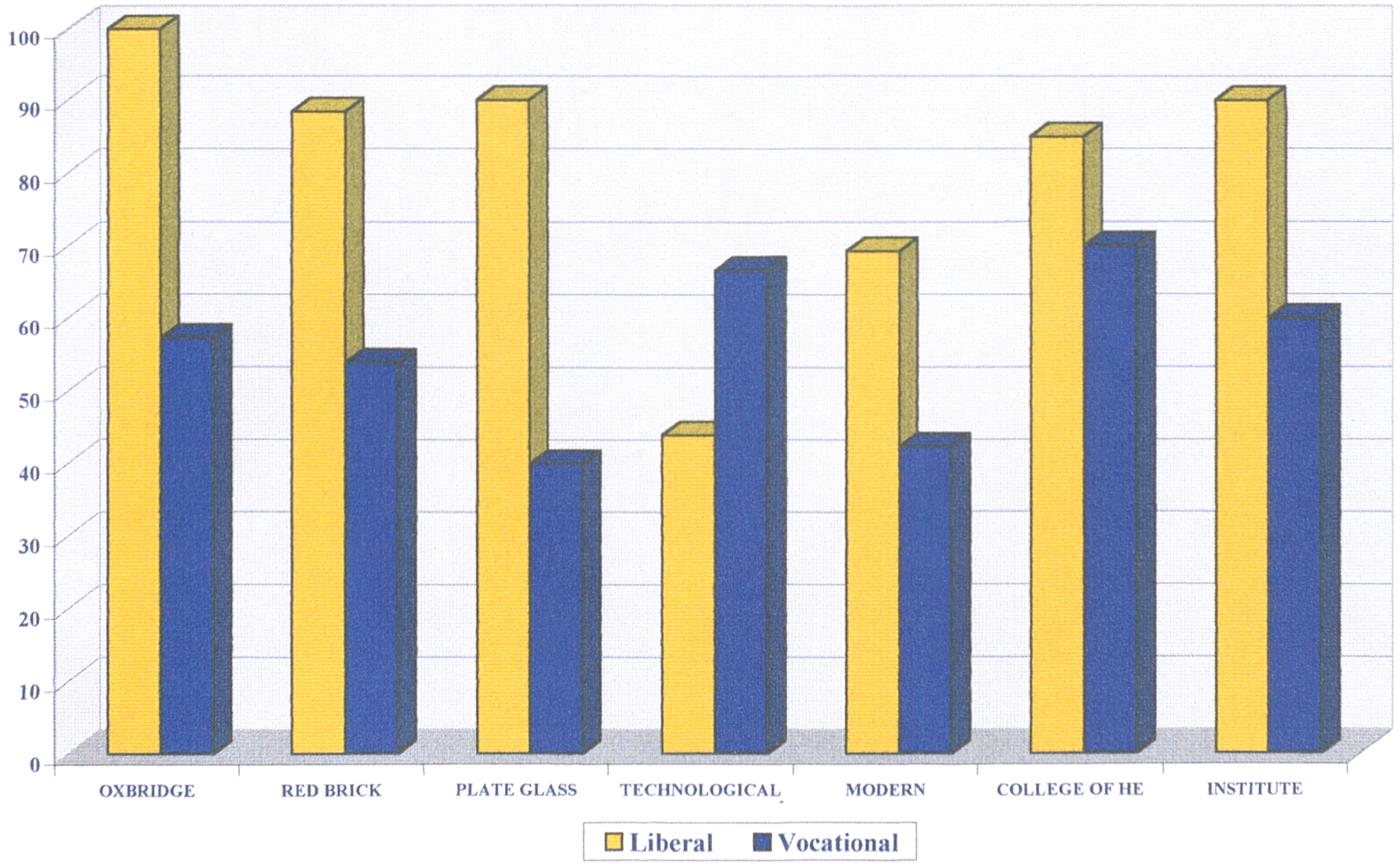
When responding to question one in the questionnaire, respondents were asked to allocate between one and five points for liberal education and, similarly, one to five points for vocational education. This was in order to reflect their views of the purpose of higher education. It was acknowledged that the two types of higher education were neither polar extremes nor were they mutually exclusive. The cross-tabulations based on the views of all three groups of senior staff in the seven types of HEIs are shown in APPENDIX E.

All of the respondents from Oxbridge colleges allocated a score of either four or five for liberal education, thus rating this purpose as either important or very important. The vast majority of these respondents regarded liberal education as very important rather than important. Similar high ratings for liberal education were recorded for plateglass universities and arts institutes (90%), redbrick universities (88%) and colleges of higher education (85%). There were lower ratings for liberal education as a purpose of higher education amongst senior staff of technological (44%) and modern (69%) universities. There is statistical significance (see APPENDIX D) in the comparison between staff's perceptions of liberal education at Oxbridge colleges compared to those of technological universities' staff. The latter group regards liberal education to be far less of a key purpose.

Generally, ratings for vocational education were lower. Again, there was a wide range of scores reflecting opinions concerning its importance as a purpose of higher education. 70% of senior staff from colleges of higher education and 67% from technological universities rated vocational education as important or very important. The figure for arts institutes was 60%. There were lower figures for Oxbridge colleges (57%), redbrick (54%), modern (42%) and plateglass (40%) universities. The strikingly low figures for vocational education were recorded for the modern and plateglass universities.

FIGURE 11: Block Graph to Show Senior Staff's Important and Very Important Ratings of the Purpose of Higher Education

Purposes of Higher Education



The diversity of attitudes of senior staff in the seven types of HEI is illustrated in FIGURE 11. Oxbridge colleges graded liberal education very highly as a purpose of higher education but vocational education was also regarded as important. Colleges of higher education and arts institutes have similar profiles to that of the Oxbridge colleges. The proportion of senior staff rating liberal education as important or very important, compared to the ratings for vocation education, was highest in plateglass universities (see APPENDIX E). Technological universities placed greater stress on vocational than on liberal education. However, the "shorter" blocks for the technological and modern universities indicate that, compared with senior staff from the five other types of HEI, a smaller proportion of their senior staff assessed either of the types of education as important or very important. This suggests that in these two types of HEI the feelings of the senior staff about the purposes of higher education were not so strong or pronounced as in other institutions.

Overall, the block graphs show the divergence of senior staff's views on the purposes of higher education that exist in the seven types of HEI. However, it is interesting to note the apparent similarities of the views of senior staff in Oxbridge colleges, redbrick universities, colleges of higher education and arts institutes.

Perceptions of Dominant Types of Organisational Culture

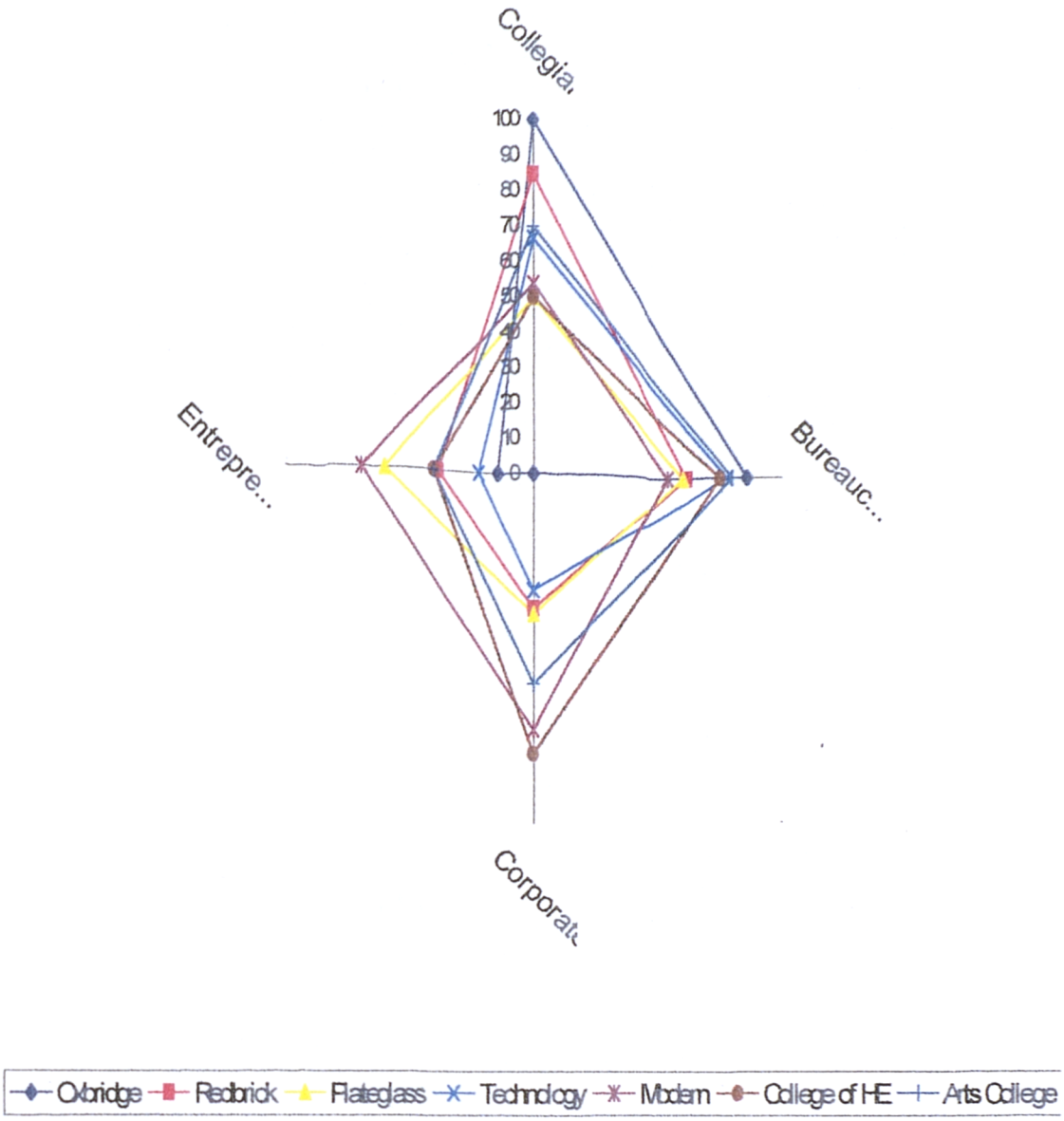
The senior staff's different perceptions of the dominant culture in their type of HEI can be gauged by reference to APPENDIX F. The very different shapes of the seven radial profile graphs point up these differences. The most noticeable contrast was between the perceptions of senior staff in Oxbridge colleges and modern universities. The radial profile graphs of these two types of HEI have been shown on FIGURE 12. 100% of senior staff from Oxbridge colleges rated collegial culture as either very strong (85.7%) or strong (14.3%). This compared with a very strong or strong rating for collegial culture of 53.8% by staff in modern universities. The contrast between the two types of HEIs was seen again when perceptions of corporate culture were examined. 0% of Oxbridge colleges senior staff perceived corporate culture as either

very strong or strong in their institutions. In comparison, the figure for senior staff in modern universities was 73.1%.

Broadly, the two graphs show that senior staff in Oxbridge colleges perceived the dominant cultures to be collegial and bureaucratic (85.7% very strong or strong) yet in modern universities the dominant cultures were corporate and entrepreneurial (69.2% very strong or strong).

The five other HEI types had different and distinct profiles that generally fitted between the maximum and minimum points delineated by the points on the graphs of either Oxbridge colleges or modern universities. There were two exceptions to this prevailing pattern. Colleges of higher education recorded the highest score of 80% for corporate culture rankings of very strong or strong and plateglass universities and colleges of higher education had the joint lowest very strong and strong rankings (50%) for collegial culture.

FIGURE 12: Radial Profile Graphs of the Seven Different Types of Higher Education Institution



Perceptions of Organisational Culture – Percentages Very Strong and Strong

Culture	OXBRIDGE	REDBRICK	PLATE GLASS	TECH-NOLOGY	MODERN	CHE	ARTS COLLEGE
COLLEGIAL	100	84.6	50	66.7	53.8	50	70
BUREAUCRATIC	85.7	61.5	60	77.8	53.8	75	80
CORPORATE	0	38.4	40	33.3	73.1	80	60
ENTREPRENEURIAL	14.3	38.4	60	22.2	69.2	40	40

Senior Staffs' Perceptions of Standards in Higher Education Institutions

Five-point Likert scaling (Bell, 1993) was used to gauge responses to statements, couched alternately in a negative and positive manner, with one for strongly agree through to five for strongly disagree. In response to the statement, "Standards are not falling. There is simply greater diversity and thus there is a broadening of what is being assessed", the mean scores of the three stakeholder groups (see FIGURE 13) suggest that senior academics with a mean score of 3.12 were more inclined to disagree with this statement than senior managers with a mean score of 2.54. Thus, the senior academics, as was the case with the depth interviews, expressed greater concern about falling standards than did their senior manager colleagues.

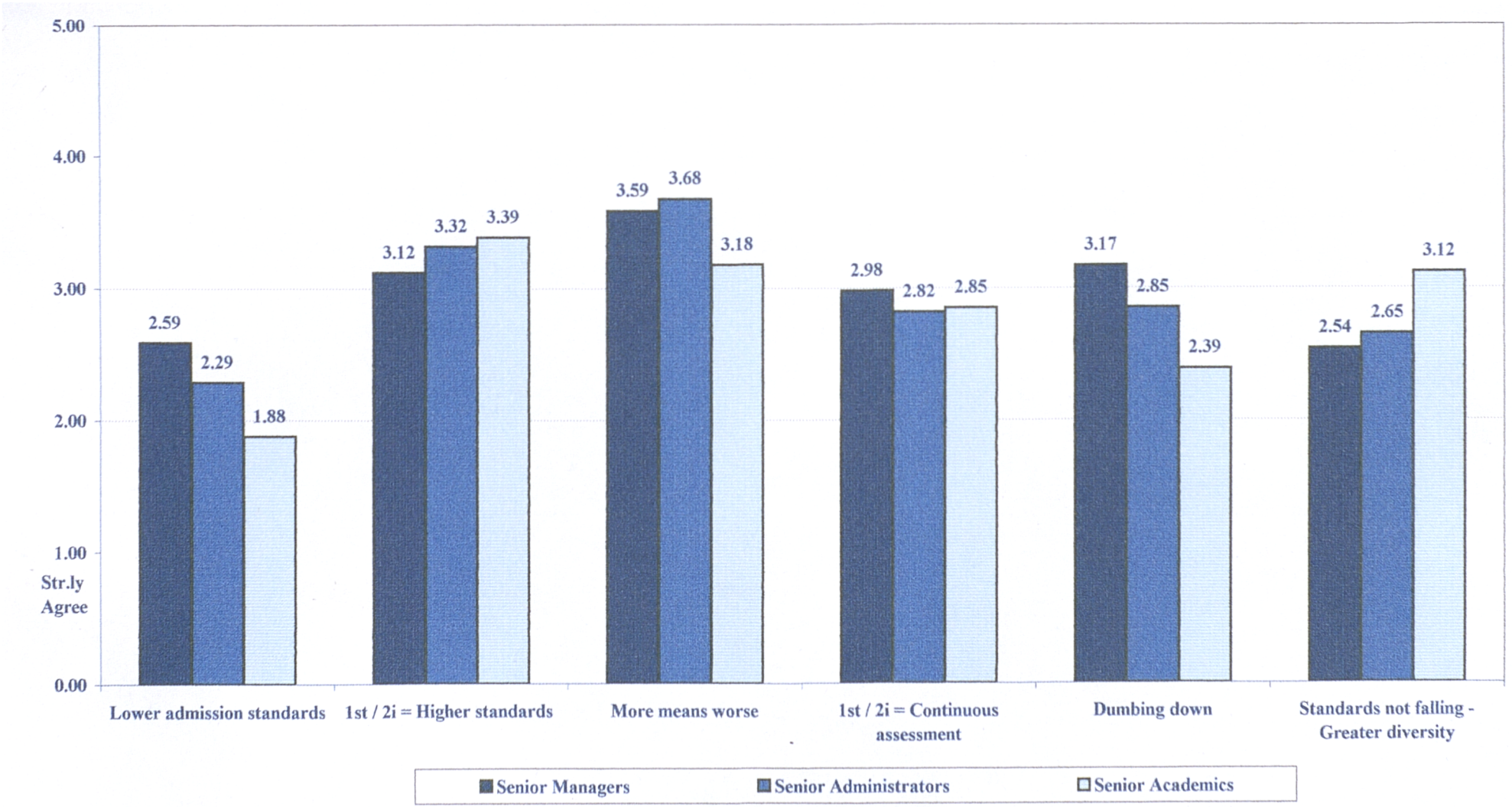
Similarly, when responding to the statement, "Central government's exhortation to increase student numbers during the last twenty years has meant that HEIs have lowered their standards for student admissions", a similar trend emerged. The mean score of 1.88 for senior academics, 2.29 for senior administrators and 2.59 for senior managers show far less agreement with the statement by senior academics compared with senior administrators and senior managers. Again, these figures suggest that senior academics, of the three stakeholder groups, are the most perturbed by the possibility of falling standards in HEIs.

When the results of the responses to the statement, "The need to recruit relatively high numbers of students and to limit the percentage of student withdrawals has led to a 'dumbing down' in the higher education sector" were calculated, the mean score of senior academics was far lower than that of senior administrators and senior managers. This indicates that, of the three groups, the senior academics tended to agree with this statement more than the other two groups and, once again, this demonstrates that senior academics expressed the greatest disquiet over "dumbing down" and falling standards.

FIGURE 13: Perceptions of Standards Amongst Interest Groups

Strongly Disgree

Perception of standards amongst interest groups



Respondents were invited to comment at the end of all six of the questionnaire questions and a sample from the numerous comments illuminates and illustrates the general conclusions from the statistics. A senior academic in a modern university expressed the view that,

> " ... the expansion has led to a reduction in the standards of entry and exit in absolute terms if you look across the whole national cohort. How could it be otherwise unless you have different degree classes to the traditional ones?"

Similarly, a senior academic in a college of higher education considered that the massification of higher education would inextricably lead to lower standards because,

> "The 'modern' system of Higher Education has its roots in the 1950s when it was devised to admit the top 5% of the population. It is now expected to admit the top 30%. Unless our teaching has improved by a tremendous amount or the population's general level of academic ability has risen considerably, there must be a 'dumbing down'."

On the other hand, two comments from senior managers, one in a college of higher education and the other in a modern university, exemplify a different perception of academic standards,

> "Standards for admission have changed rather than been lowered."

> "People have been moaning about declining standards for the last thirty years. I doubt if it is possible to prove anything either way. The standards themselves are probably changing, but the old standards had a great deal wrong with them so it is just possible that these changes may be for the better."

Overall, the statistics and the comments of senior staff suggested that perceptions of standards in HEIs varied between the three different stakeholder groups. This supports the general findings from the depth interviews that there is diversity within HEIs.

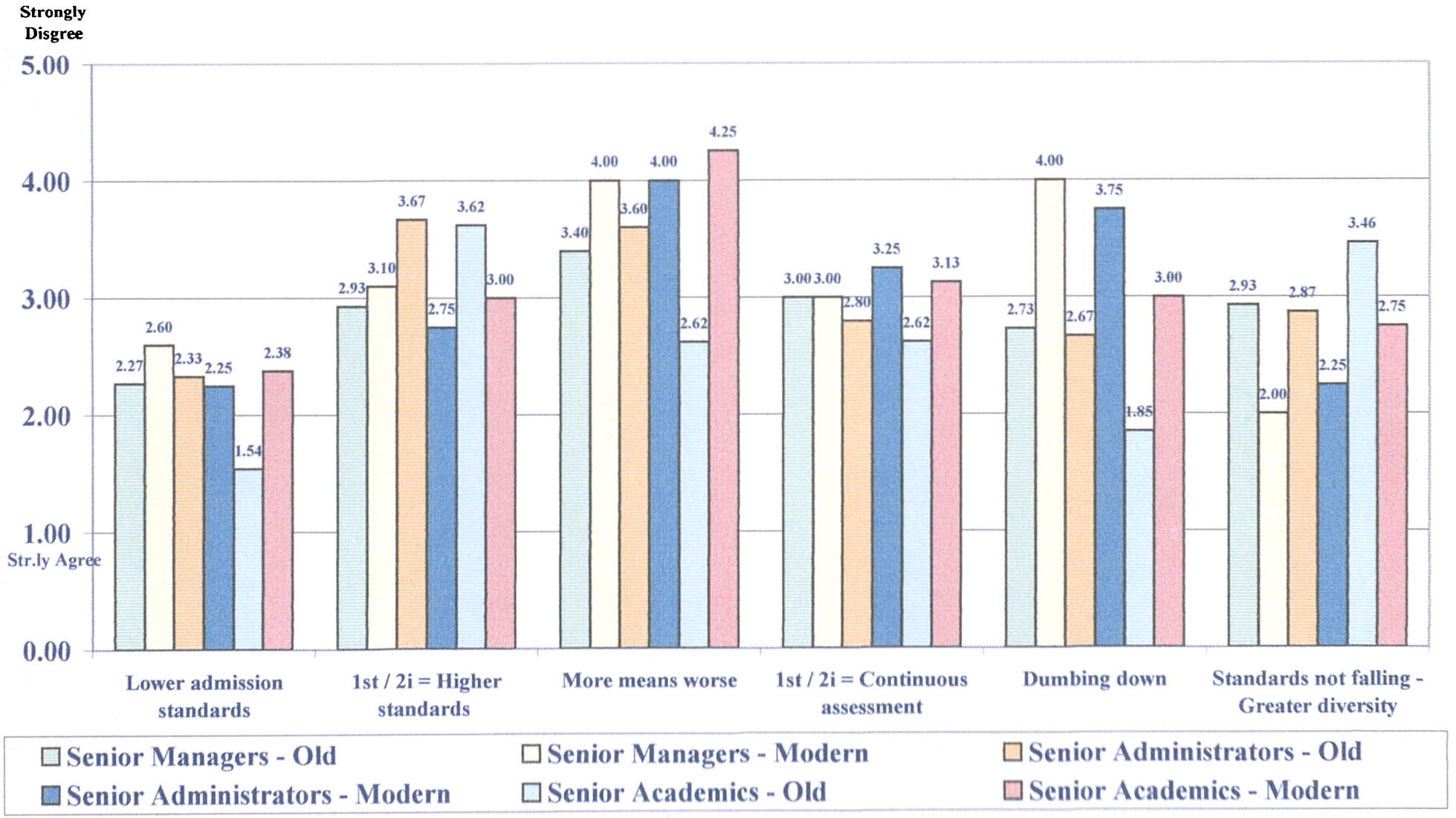
Perceptions of Standards in Different Types of Higher Education Institutions

When considering the responses to the same statements but on the basis of the respondents' institution type, a similar diversity of opinions emerged (see FIGURE 14).

The t-test results (APPENDIX D), the similarities of organisational culture (FIGURE 12) and the relative common QM background led to the grouping together of Oxbridge colleges and redbrick and plateglass universities. These were designated older universities. Aggregated data from the older universities was contrasted with that from modern universities which differed greatly from these older universities in terms of perceptions of organisational culture (FIGURE 12) and, up until 1992 when they were polytechnics, worked within the QM systems and structures provided by CNAA. In comparing the statistics from the questionnaire responses, it was noticeable that senior managers in older universities compared with senior managers in modern universities, were more likely to agree that the government's exhortation to increase student numbers have meant that HEIs have lowered their standards for student admissions. The mean figures were 2.27 and 2.6 respectively. Whereas there was little disparity between the views of senior administrators in the older and the new universities, there were considerable differences in opinion between senior academics. A mean score of 1.54 for senior academics in older universities, compared to a mean score of 2.38 for senior academics in modern universities, suggests that the senior academics' strength of feeling that massification has led to a lowering of admission standards is greater in older than in modern universities.

FIGURE 14: Perceptions of Standards – Older versus modern universities

Perceptions of standards - Old v Modern Universities



The statement that the need to recruit higher numbers of students, and also limit the percentage of student withdrawals had led to a "dumbing down" in the higher education sector, elicited far greater degree of disagreement from senior managers in modern universities (mean of 4.0) than from those in older universities (mean of 2.73). In addition, it can be seen that senior academics in older universities tended to agree with the statement (mean of 1.85). Senior academics in modern universities were less likely than their older university colleagues to agree (mean of 3.0).

There was far more disagreement in modern universities than in older universities to the statement that massification in higher education meant "more means worse". The scale of the disagreement in modern universities is indicated by the relatively high mean scores of senior managers, senior administrators and senior academics that were 4.0, 4.0 and 4.25 respectively.

Again, by looking at the statistics in terms of the respondents' type of HEI, a general pattern can be discerned. Generally, senior managers in older universities expressed far greater concern than those in modern universities about increased student numbers leading to a lowering of standards.

There were no comments from the respondents specifically mentioning that massification had no adverse effect on standards. Thus, the selected comments below do not reflect the overall balance of opinions on this subject. Nevertheless, they do provide an insight into the thinking behind those who expressed the view that the expansion in the number of higher education students has led to a lowering of standards. All of the three comments below were made by senior academics, two of whom taught in redbrick universities and one who was from a plateglass university.
The first of these senior academics believed that,

> "Weaker students are being admitted than were twenty years ago."

Another claimed that,

> "The big mistake was trying to make the polys (sic) universities. They have a different rôle which should be recognised."

The third senior academic warned of the dangers inherent in a polarisation of this particular argument,

> "There is grade inflation. Students cannot do the things they used to be able to do. But remember some of the useless students we used to turn out?"

Just as the analysis of the statistics according to stakeholder group indicated diversity of opinion within an HEI, so the analysis on the basis of HEI-type suggests diversity between the different types of HEI.

Senior Managers', Senior Administrators' and Senior Academics' Perceptions of the Likely Impact of Subject Benchmarking

The opinions of senior staff as a whole on the likely impact of the introduction in 2001 of subject benchmarking are recorded by means of cross-tabulations in APPENDIX G reflect the attitudes to the proposed use of benchmarking on the basis of the three senior staff groups.

The relatively high proportion of "neither agree nor disagree" responses indicates the uncertainty amongst respondents which is understandable considering that benchmarking is not in place in HEIs at the moment and will not be introduced until 2001. As a senior academic in a modern university pointed out,

> "Perceptions of benchmarking vary by area of a particular subject discipline from highly prescriptive (chemistry) to all-inclusive (history)".

For these reasons, it is important that caution is exercised when interpreting particular responses to questions about subject benchmarking.

Nevertheless, the results do suggest that senior staff do have many concerns about subject benchmarking. It remains to be seen whether these concerns are founded or unfounded when subject benchmarking comes into operation. 71.3% of all senior staff either agreed or strongly agreed that "subject benchmarking will lead to a greater prescription of the content of higher education". However, there was only 18.5% disagreement (disagree or strongly disagree) with the statement that "benchmarking involves the definition of overarching general skills and concepts rather than subject

content". There appears to be an inconsistency here as, given the high level of support for the view that benchmarking would prescribe curriculum content, one would have expected a far higher level of disagreement with the second statement. Perhaps this apparent inconsistency could be explained because, even though benchmarks will be defined in terms of overarching skills and concepts, the majority of senior staff who responded to the questionnaire still considered that benchmarks would still influence curriculum content.

There was 66.7% strong or very strong agreement that benchmarking cannot possibly take into account the great diversity of missions, aims and objectives that exists in HEIs in England. 17.6% either disagreed or strongly disagreed with this view. These statistics are particularly relevant to a consideration of the proposition of this thesis and serve to support rather than refute it.

Many senior staff were also worried that subject benchmarking would lead to a reduction in the autonomy of academic staff to determine the curriculum. 63.9% agreed or strongly agreed that there would be this reduction in autonomy whereas 25% disagreed or strongly disagreed.

In terms of improving standards through the introduction of benchmarking, 39.8% agreed or strongly agreed that this was likely compared with a slightly lower figure of 32.5% who disagreed or strongly disagreed

When the responses are looked at in terms of senior staff groups (see APPENDIX H), it can be seen that senior academics and senior managers have far greater concerns than the senior administrators about benchmarking leading to a greater prescription of the Higher Education curriculum. There was an agree or strongly agree figure of 75.8% for senior academics and 75.6% for senior managers. These figures compared with 61.8% for senior administrators. This is not surprising given that senior administrators are less involved with curriculum matters than their senior academic and senior manager colleagues.

In terms of benchmarking providing overarching general skills and concepts, senior academics (36.4% agree or strongly agree) were less convinced than senior managers (56.1%) and senior administrators (47%) that this is a major purpose of its introduction.

Similarly, levels of agreement and strong agreement (72.7%) for senior academics about benchmarking not being able to take account of the great diversity that exists in HEIs are higher than for senior managers (65.8%) and senior administrators (61.7%).

Again, there were higher agree and strongly agree ratings amongst senior academics (72.7%) than for senior managers (61%) and senior administrators (58.9%) in terms of the belief that benchmarking will reduce the autonomy of academic staff in determining the curriculum.

However, when benchmarking is considered in terms of the improvement of academic standards that it is likely to achieve, senior administrators had the highest levels of agreement or strong agreement at 50%. This compares with figures of 36.4% for senior academics and 34.1% for senior managers.

SUMMARY

Generally, the second phase research supported the findings from the twenty-one depth interviews and the document analysis concerning organisational culture, academic standards and benchmarking. The only exception related to views about the purposes of higher education. The questionnaire responses indicated a higher than expected rating by Oxbridge colleges' senior staff of vocational education and also a far higher rating for liberal education from colleges of higher education and arts institutes than was anticipated.

The research also confirmed the findings of the interviews and document analysis that there was diversity within and between HEIs. On the five-point Likert scale, senior

academics tended to have stronger views than the other two senior manager groups on the subjects of academic standards and benchmarking. The radial profile graphs highlighted the differences in the perceptions of organisational culture in the seven different types of HEI. The contrast between Oxbridge colleges and modern universities was particularly noticeable. All three forms of research suggested that organisational culture in HEIs was particularistic and pluralist rather than universalistic and unitary. A most illuminative statistic from the questionnaire responses was that there was 66.7% strong or very strong agreement amongst senior managers that benchmarking cannot possibly take into account the great diversity of missions, aims and objectives that exist in English HEIs. This compares with a disagree or strongly disagree figure of 17.6%, suggesting that well over three times as many senior staff support the proposition of this thesis than disagree with it. However, prior to the implementation of benchmarking, there is a great deal of uncertainty about its impact on HEIs so care is required in order not to overstate the significance of the responses to questions about subject benchmarking.

As was made clear at the beginning of this chapter, the responses from the questionnaire responses were relatively limited in terms of their statistical significance. However, quantitative and qualitative data emanating from the second phase research have provided the basis for a detailed interpretative commentary and have indicated the diversity that exists between and within HEIs.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN - CONCLUSIONS

Two major conclusions, one relating to the organisational culture of HEIs and one to Quality Management, can be drawn as a result of the detailed review of relevant literature, the document analysis, the depth interviews and questionnaire responses.

The first major conclusion is that there is great diversity between and within HEIs. The first and second phase research findings support the earlier work of Trowler (1998) which suggested that the organisational cultures of HEIs were particularistic and pluralist rather than universal and unitarist (Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1997). Trowler (op. cit.) concluded that there were "multiple cultural configurations" on the basis of an in-depth study of the Credit Accumulation and Transfer system at "NewU". His study involved interviewing fifty "ground level" academics. This thesis comes to the same conclusion but through an analysis of twenty-one depth interviews and one hundred and eight questionnaire responses to different issues such as the purpose of higher education, managerialism and perceptions of culture, quality and standards. Also, the opinions of senior staff in many varied HEIs were sought instead of researching the views of "ground level" academics in one modern university.

Dopson and McNay's (1996) model has provided a most useful framework for identifying cultural differences between HEIs and there is no denying its great value as a heuristic device. However, the interview and questionnaire responses elicited as part of this thesis suggest that their model can be developed further in order to reflect the great complexity of organisational culture. Indeed, Barnett (2000) considers that universities need to review and reappraise their basic assumptions during an "age of supercomplexity". Within each of Dopson and McNay's (op. cit.) four quadrants, further subdivisions can be discerned. The focus of this work was on the views of senior managers, senior administrators and senior academics on a range of issues. Their responses on topics such as managerialism, the purposes of higher education and general academic standards, indicated that these different senior staff stakeholders often do not share the same views and, as a

consequence, they can be treated as three distinct groups and sub-divisions. Dissimilar cultural profiles are likely to exist at these three different levels within a particular HEI.

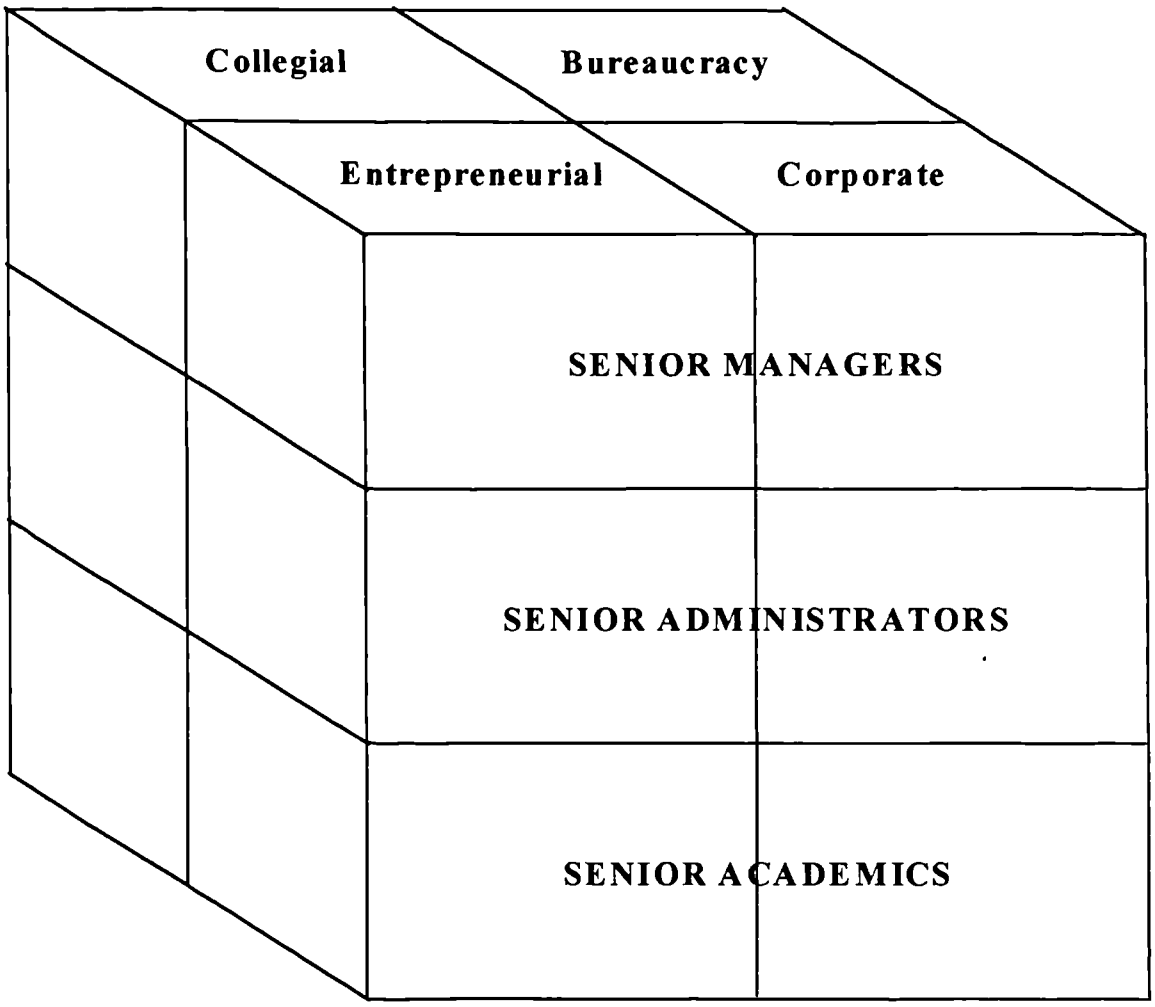


FIGURE 15: Three Dimensional Model to show the Complexity of Organisational Culture Within an HEI

This new model (see FIGURE 15) is an extension and development of Dopson and McNay's work and, as with any model, it should be borne in mind that it is simply an analytical tool. Necessarily, there are likely to be over-generalisations and over-simplifications when attempting to represent organisational cultures in the form of a model

when they are so dynamic, particularistic, pluralist and comprised of a mosaic of sub-cultures (Ybema, 1997). However, this three-dimensional model can be seen as a further aid to understanding such a complex concept such as organisational culture. The model acknowledges, reflects and identifies the plurality and pluralism that exists in the English Higher Education system (Scott, 1995).

This thesis propounds the proposition that emerging QM approaches fail to take account of the diversity of cultures between and within HEIs. Having demonstrated that there is a great diversity of culture in HEIs and having constructed a model to reflect this, it is necessary to develop some conclusions related to QM methods. When discussing Quality Management in higher education earlier, it was noted that Brennan et al.'s (1997) research provided a most interesting evaluation of the quality assessment undertaken by the HEFCE Quality Assessment Division. From interviews with one hundred and eighty managers, administrators and academics in twelve very different HEIs, their report concluded that a large number of the respondents had concerns about the lack of attention to the characteristics of individual academic disciplines and the mission of their institution. This was despite HEFCE's claim that the methodology of the assessment was based on fitness for the purpose of a particular HEI. Although HEFCE assessment was designed to be significantly relativist and take into account the particular purposes of an HEI, the report concluded HEFCE's quality assessment was not as relativist as some of the HEI managerial, academic and support staff would have expected and wanted. HEFCE quality assessments were replaced in 1997 by QAA reviews and subject benchmarking will be introduced as a key part of the review methodology in 2001.

There are many uncertainties about the final form and operation of the subject benchmark standards. Some of the earlier concerns of many HEI staff that the benchmarking process would be applied in a similar manner as in industrial and commercial contexts, are now generally seen to be unfounded. If the QAA did implement benchmarking, developed in private sector industrial and commercial organisations, as rigidly as is the case in this sector where benchmarks are viewed similarly to a surveyor's mark cut in the wall, then QM assessment would have been far more absolutist than now appears likely.

Nevertheless, the second phase research of this thesis conducted during the latter part of 1999 highlighted the worries of senior staff about the proposed subject benchmarking. When responding to two particular statements in the questionnaire, 71.3% of all senior staff either agreed or strongly agreed that "subject benchmarking will lead to a greater prescription of the content of higher education". Also, there was 66.7% strong or very strong agreement that benchmarking cannot possibly take into account the great diversity of missions, aims and objectives that exists in HEIs in England. 17.6% either disagreed or strongly disagreed. These statistics are particularly relevant to an examination of the proposition of this thesis and they tend to support rather than refute the proposition.

This leads to the second major conclusion. Although it is very difficult to be confident when predicting the eventual form of QM based on subject benchmark standards, a general trend can be discerned. QM is gradually placing greater emphasis on:

- outcome rather than process measures;
- fitness *of* purpose rather than fitness *for* purpose;
- standards rather than quality.

The terms "standards" and "quality" are often used interchangeably. Standards are outcome rather than process measures and are more absolutist than most measures of quality. They involve the identification of particular specifications against which a service or product can be measured (Bank, 2000). They allow for a clear and unambiguous judgement about whether a product or service is "up to standard".

There is clearly scope for further research on the links between organisational culture and QM. The relationship between the two concepts could be re-examined when the subject benchmarks and the new form of QAA review have been in operation for a couple of years.

Also, the first and second phase research could be repeated with other staff stakeholder groups in the seven major types of HEI. Given the variety of opinion that exists amongst

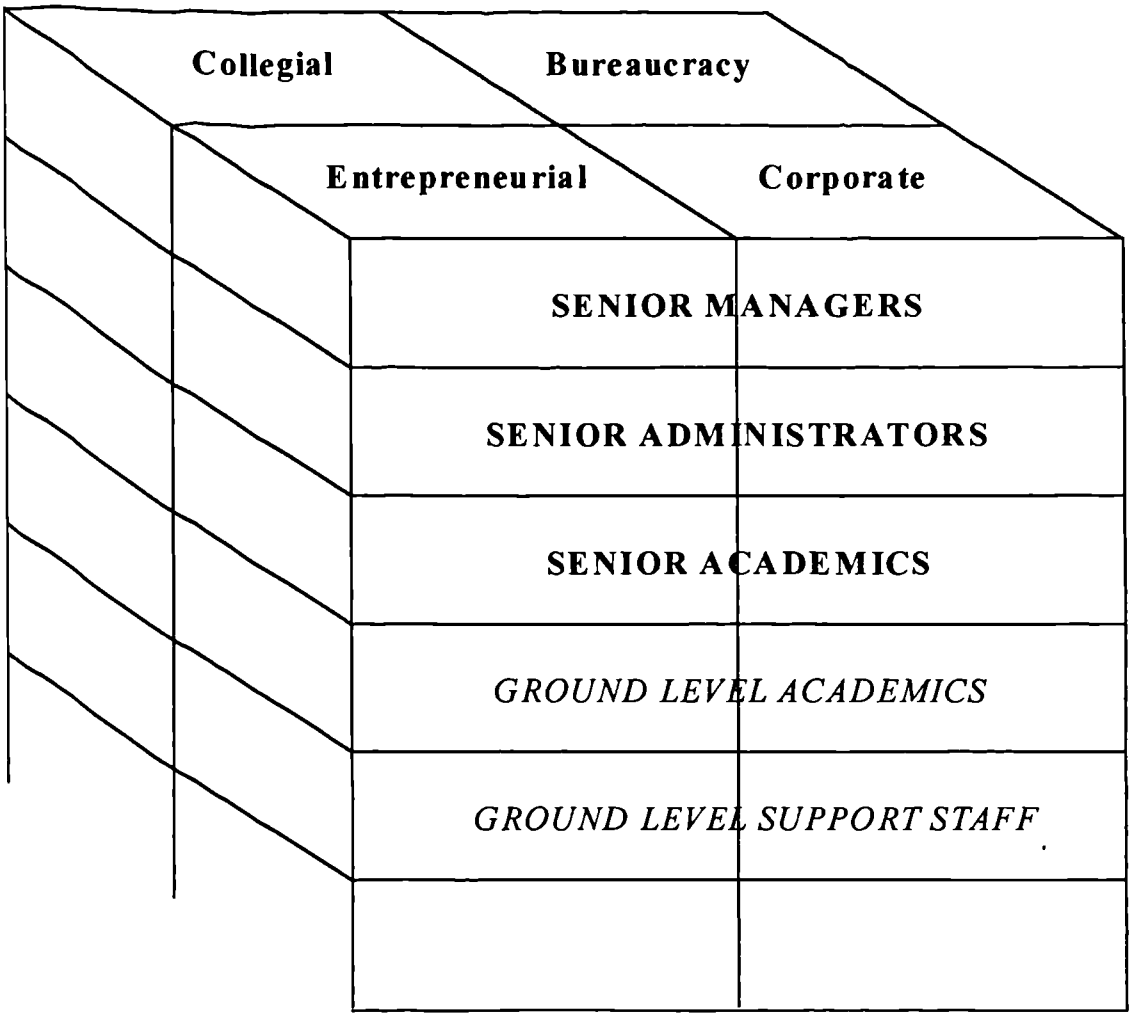


FIGURE 16: Three Dimensional Model of Organisational Culture to show the scope for further research

senior staff, the objective of this further research would be to examine whether these other staff stakeholder groups, such as "ground level" academic and support staff, exhibit a similar diversity of opinion and consequently constitute other distinct groupings and sub-divisions (see FIGURE 16).

The results of the literature review and empirical research would seem to support the proposition that emerging QM approaches fail to take account of the diversity of cultures

between and within HEIs. Successive governments have encouraged HEIs to increase the number of students (Richards, 1997), to continue with the trend towards the massification of higher education (Scott, 1995) and also to widen participation (HEFCE, 1999a). A consequence of this encouragement from Government is the increasing diversity of students attending HEIs in England. However, despite this exhortation for greater diversity in HEIs, the Government, through HEFCE and QAA, appear to be concerned to introduce a standard form of QM assessment that is typified by subject benchmarks.

This thesis has not attempted to explain the apparent contradiction on the part of the Government. The standardising tendency can be more easily understood through reference to Ritzer's (1993, 1996) McDonaldisation thesis. However, the possible reasons for the greater standardisation of QM, at a time when both the further expansion of higher education student numbers and inclusivity are being encouraged, is another area that merits further research.

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Additionally, use has been made of prospectuses, HEQC, HEFCE and QAA reports relating to the seven fieldwork HEIs.

These particular sources have not been specified as this would have clearly identified the institutions when respondents were promised anonymity for themselves and their organisations.

APPENDIX A

Initial letter to interviewees, *Interview* schedule template, Letter of thanks to interviewees

Canterbury Christ Church
University College

Date

Dear

Further to my e-mail, I am writing to give you some background information on my PhD research prior to our discussion. I do hope that you find it helpful.

My PhD focuses on stakeholder perceptions of quality in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and I would greatly welcome your views on the subject as a senior academic member of staff at University.

As ..... University is a ..... , it would be representative of one of the seven major types of Higher Education Institution funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England.

The research methodology involves the use of semi-structured interviews of three people in seven HEIs. The three representatives of an institution are a member of senior management, a senior member of the administrative staff and a senior academic member of staff.

All interviews are confidential and it would not be possible to identify any of the respondents. The interviews will not be tape-recorded. The areas to be discussed will include:

* organisational culture
* the purposes of higher education
* what is quality in higher education?
* Quality Audit, Assessment and Review
* "measuring" quality in HEIs
* issues of professionalism versus managerialism
* Investors in People and ISO 9000 series (if applicable)

I would endeavour to limit each interview to forty-five minutes and I would provide a summary of the interview in order that you could comment upon and agree the content.

As mentioned in my e-mail, I am happy to come over to ..... at a time and on a day that suits you. I know that as a Dean of a University Faculty you are very busy so I am most grateful that you are prepared to help with my research.

Thank you very much.

Yours sincerely

Laurie Lomas
Principal Lecturer

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Web site www.cant.ac.uk

Principal: Professor Michael Wright

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE TEMPLATE

Stakeholder code/HEI type code

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Interview with (post of respondent).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON ..... UNIVERSITY/COLLEGE-CULTURE, etc.

.....'S ROLE AT THE INSTITUTION

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE PRIME PURPOSES OF HIGHER EDUCATION?

WHAT IS QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION?

ARE THERE ANY DIFFICULTIES IN GAUGING QUALITY?

IS THERE A TENSION BETWEEN MANAGERIALISM AND PROFESSIONALISM?

DO YOU SEE ANY VALUE IN YOUR HEI ADOPTING ISO 9000 AND/OR INVESTORS IN PEOPLE?

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE LIKELY MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HE SECTOR?

Canterbury Christ Church
University College

Date

Direct line 01227 782386
Direct fax 01227 454137
Administrator 01227 782389
E-mail l.lomas@cant.ac.uk

Name
Address

Dear .....

Thank you very much for giving so generously of your time and expertise in order to help me with my PhD research. You provided me with a great deal of valuable information on numerous aspects of Quality Management in higher education. Also, I found your analysis of the developing organisational culture of ..... University to be most interesting and helpful. Our discussion has led to the emergence of many more issues to explore.

I have attached a draft report of our discussion. Please let me know if there are any amendments or additions that you would like to make. I know that you are very busy so please do not feel that you have to reply if this draft is accurate.

Thank you once again for all your help.

Best wishes.

Yours sincerely

Laurie Lomas
Principal Lecturer

APPENDIX B

Summaries of the twenty-one depth interviews

Interview with ..... at The School .....of Universitv of ..... .

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

There is a peaceful, calm and reflective atmosphere. Communications between members of the institution are relaxed. There is an academic/intellectual culture which encourages the fullest discussion of issues. Collegiality prevails with all members of the institution being encouraged to participate and contribute to discussions. It is the role of chairs to facilitate discussion. Students attend courses expecting staff from the to be experts on their subject.

.....'S ROLE AT THE INSTITUTION

He is an academic/lecturer who contributes to programmes including the ..... and Advanced Diploma in ..... He undertakes consultancy in schools. He is expected to make a substantial contribution to the School's research work and publications.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE PRIME PURPOSES OF HIGHER EDUCATION?

It is concerned with the production and preservation of knowledge. The role of research here is crucial. All lecturing is a means of "testing out" one's own research. A lecturer needs to know and understand his/her field of study, to be at the frontiers of knowledge and to constantly inquire. Lecturing is a means of engaging people in current educational and academic debates.

WHAT IS QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION?

It is when those people concerned in Higher Education are all engaged in learning and re-appraisal through study or research. Indicators of the quality of this engagement are excitement and enthusiasm.

A lecturer needs to construct learning opportunities which meet the needs of the students and respond to their questions. In order to test the quality of a lecturer's approach, questions need to be asked. For example, is the lecturer's knowledge up-to-date, will his/her teaching and learning strategies encourage engagement?

ARE THERE ANY DIFFICULTIES IN GAUGING THESE QUALITY INDICATORS?

Essays can be used to gauge quality as can students' evaluations of courses. Sometimes these course evaluations are very loose and often some tightening up is required. This can be achieved by a more robust and rigorous approach to student evaluations. As in many other Higher Education Institutions this is required at the ..... .

Lecturers should have the autonomy to express course aims and objectives in a variety of ways. Some lecturers might use specific performance indicators. Some might prefer to define course aims and objectives and the their assessment on the basis of a detailed discussion with course participants. This use of negotiation is more prevalent and fits with the collegial culture of the institution.

Quality Assurance is beginning to be influenced to a far greater degree by the expectations of a variety of external agencies.

DOES QM INVOLVE TENSION BETWEEN PROFESSIONALISM AND MANAGERIALISM?

Professional autonomy has many merits but there are problems with numerous talented people "doing their own thing". Some students can be let down by a lecturer's lax approach. Greater managerialism can help here. It is possible to over-empathise the autonomy of the profession and this can lead to a lack of induction for new colleagues and a lack of clear lines of responsibility.

Gaps in quality can sometimes be closed with the managerialistic approach of new systems and new structures.

Overt and hidden messages tell the lecturer that (s)he is special and his/her work is regarded to be of high quality. These high expectations can lead to the development of high quality work but. if everything is left to the talented individual, there is a danger that certain student needs are not-met and there is a lack of coherence.

IS THE ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE AT YOUR HEI CONDUCIVE TO THE ACCEPTANCE AND ASSIMILATION OF QUALITY MANAGEMENT APPROACHES?

Generally, there is an individualistic and collegial culture. This fosters talent

Recently there has been a greater awareness amongst lecturers of the need to earn a living. It is expected that 61,000 per annum is generated by each lecturer. There is some nervousness and discomfort in coming to terms with these new demands.

Artefacts which are a manifestation of organisational culture (Schein, 1985) are changing. The School has a Business Plan. Practice is gradually being altered. However, one cannot be sure whether beliefs, values and basic assumptions are changing to any significant degree.

Nevertheless, thinking on QM has become much tighter with, perhaps, a reactive response from lecturers to a changing environment. Lecturers are responding to external demands for greater accountability. An example of this response is the establishment of structures:

EVALUATIONS - COMMITTEE - ACTION PLAN

There are also RAGs (Research Activity Groups). Part of the role of a RAG is to ensure greater coherence and structure in research activity with less "following one's nose". It also introduces greater accountability. Again, there is a clear structure of accountability:

RAG - RESEARCH COMMITTEE - HEAD OF SCHOOL

DO YOU SEE ANY VALUE IN YOUR HEI ADOPTING ISO9000 AND/OR INVESTORS IN PEOPLE?

Essentially, an attitude prevails that the School is the best because of its tradition, its resources, talent and the perceptions and expectations of its clients. It has no need for a quality badge such as ISO 9000 or I.I.P.. Indeed, some members of the School would see the processes of ISO 9000 and I.I.P. as demeaning as well as unnecessary.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE LIKELY MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HE SECTOR?

Quality Management can be seen as part of the "Thatcherite Drift" and part of an awakening of people's expectations. The Research Assessment Exercise is part of this drift and the increased expectations of people within our society.

It is right and proper that lecturers should be responsible and accountable for public money. Even Oxbridge colleges have to be accountable. No doubt there will be vigorous resistance to the drive for greater accountability from the richer Oxbridge colleges.

Greater accountability is part of the democratic process. However, there is a danger that central government could exploit the situation for its own ends - greater central control and a reduction in resources.

AC/RED

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Interview with Dr ....., School of ..... , University of ..... .

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON UNIVERSITY OF .....- CULTURE. etc.

There are three sites (..... - general academic degree courses and agriculture. ..... - education. ..... - continuing education.
Overall. there is a traditional attitude to higher education and a desire to pursue the excellence associated with the University of Oxford. The buildings on the ..... site have many similarities in terms of architecture to those at Oxford. Indeed. at one time University of Oxford extension courses were delivered on the site.
This aspiration to emulate Oxford is shown by the high status of the Faculty of Letters and the Faculty of Science.
The University shows very little market orientation. Emphasis is placed on developing high quality academic courses which will attract students interested in such relatively rigorous courses.
Certain courses have a vocational element. e.g. agricultural courses. but it is essential that they have the same level of academic rigour expected of other courses.

.....'S ROLE AT THE INSTITUTION

..... co-ordinates all Physical Education courses and he is also responsible for increasing the research profile in this curriculum area in readiness for the next RAE. He is the Faculty of ..... representative on the University Research Committee.
At present. he is writing a ..... degree for the University which is progressing through the Quality Assurance procedures.
There are templates for these QA procedures which have been established by academic staff.
There are four stages:

- QA1 - proposal/consultation
- QA2 - Faculty Committee (similar to Canterbury Christ Church College's internal scrutiny)
- QA3 - Faculty Board
- QA4 - Senate (generally just "rubber stamping" here)

QA is generally seen to be about convincing one's peers of the academic worth of a proposal.

There is an atmosphere of trust with academics being trusted to develop new courses in their areas of expertise. This is implicit.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE PRIME PURPOSES OF HIGHER EDUCATION?

- believes that Higher Education Institutions should provide a broad education which develops and opens the students' minds. He subscribes to the liberal education notion of knowledge for its own sake. There is an intrinsic rather than an extrinsic justification of higher education.

Society does benefit from a well-educated population.

He makes the distinction between non-HE which is preparation for adulthood and HE which is for personal growth.

Vocationalism does not sit comfortably with HE.

WHAT IS QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION?

Criteria for quality are implicit. By being part of a "community of scholars" you become aware of what is acceptable or unacceptable and what is work of high quality.

It is vital to trust the academic staff who devise the curriculum.

Standards and competences are not needed. These are appropriate for training where there is certainty.

In HE there should not be certainty. Some people cannot cope with a lack of certainty. For these people, training rather than development is appropriate. Training provides certainty (e.g. PGCE courses) whereas development involves uncertainty and reflection. Probably only 5-10% of a particular section of community can cope with this uncertainty and have cognitive skills to reflect upon academic arguments.

There are difficulties with the benchmarking process. For example, in philosophy there are at least three schools of thought - (i) the "Greats" (e.g. Oxford), (ii) post-enlightenment (e.g. UKC), (iii) English ethics and German philosophy (e.g. Reading). The benchmark for philosophy will be dependent on the subject benchmarking committee and the particular school of thought supported by the members of this committee.

ARE THERE ANY DIFFICULTIES THESE DEFINITIONS OF QUALITY?

Anything interesting does not have a hard edge. It is by necessity "woolly". If it were clear-cut, it would not be interesting nor worthy of study at HE level.

This liberal education definition of quality has been around for many years and there have been very few problems with it. HE in the UK compares very favourably with that in other parts of the world. Indeed, the education provided by Oxbridge and "Russell group" universities is regarded as something to aspire to.

There are some poor lecturers whose students suffer. This is unfair and accountability is needed to protect such students.
There has been a move to mass HE with an increase in the last 30 years from 5% to 34% of the 18-21 year old age group embarking on undergraduate courses. Such an expansion in HE provision can either be achieved by (i) accepting lower levels of performance or (ii) drastically improving the cognitive development for pre-HEI students.

DO YOU SEE ANY VALUE IN YOUR HEI ADOPTING ISO 9000 AND/OR INVESTORS IN PEOPLE?

The University appears to have no interest in adopting IIP or ISO 9000. Such awards seem to have more market value for those HEIs that rely on teaching rather than research for their income. The University of ..... receives a very high proportion of its income from research and therefore such Quality badges are of little interest.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE LIKELY MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HE SECTOR?

There is a distinction between what ..... would like to happen and what he expects to happen.
What he would like to happen:
A strict distinction between HEIs providing traditional academic courses and those providing vocational courses. Arguably, vocational courses could be provided by FE colleges rather than HEIs.
Less control of HEIs by Central Government.
Greater trust of academics by all other HE stakeholders.
What is likely to happen:
HE to become even more market-led with a continued emphasis on numbers.
A "dumbing down" of HE.
A growth of vocational courses and NVQ awards.
The danger that HEFCE penalties for withdrawn students mean that poor students are encouraged to stay on a course, leading to a consequent fall in general standards.

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Interview with Professor ....., Professor of ..... at the University of ..... .

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON UNIVERSITY ..... - CULTURE. etc.

The University was established using a collegial approach to organisation. administration and pastoral care. There are now four Colleges. However. there has been a movement away from the collegial system with far greater emphasis on departments. Departments are formed into three faculties - (i) humanities. (ii) science. technology and medical studies and (iii) social sciences.
There are some arguments over resources amongst these faculties with the Social Science faculty claiming that it should have some of the resources that are, at present. being allocated to the science. technology and medical studies faculty. The major dispute is over space. At present. two floors of the Chemistry Building are being rented by Pfizers.
There are also tensions between departments within faculties. often caused by issues relating to the Research Assessment Exercise. The RAE is invidious in that it pits one colleague against another.

.....'S ROLE AT THE INSTITUTION

..... is the Director of the Centre for .... There are seven postgraduate students at the Centre who are predominantly involved with research into synthetic and other materials.
The Centre receives research funding from a variety of sources including EPRSC. Europe. and industry in Japan and the United Kingdom. There is a trend towards more institutions competing for diminishing amounts of research funds.
As well as being Director of the Centre. ..... delivers 60-70 lectures per academic year and is responsible for overseeing the examination all chemistry students.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE PRIME PURPOSES OF HIGHER EDUCATION?

HEIs should take the most able from a particular cohort (either direct from school or after some work experience) and then prepare them for positions in society which require the use of intellectual ability. either judgementally or numerically. There should be the

development of knowledge in specialist areas so that these students can serve the national interest in industry, commerce, the community or academia.
HEIs are dropping into lower ability groups for first and higher degree students as the proportion of any cohort undertaking Higher Education rises from 5% in the 1960s to 33% at the present time.

WHAT IS QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION?

External Examiners set standards in particular subject areas. With the expansion of higher education, standards have fallen. More means worse. There has been a "dumbing down". There is pressure to achieve good results from students even though the general ability of new entrants, as measured by 'A' level points scores, is lower.
The Research Assessment Exercise does mean that that quality of research in different HEIs can be compared.

ARE THERE ANY DIFFICULTIES THESE DEFINITIONS OF QUALITY?

The intakes of different HEIs vary greatly as does the resourcing. This means that it is difficult to make meaningful comparisons in terms of quality. The current attempts to establish benchmarks and define what is, say, a II1 degree throughout all UK HEIs are fraught with difficulties because of the varying inputs. Students and their work do not lend themselves to the standardisation process and it is futile and a waste resources attempting to do so.
Student evaluations can be simply a reflection of the preferences of students for a particular style of lecturing and, as such, are not helpful in gauging the quality of teaching.
Also, Teaching Quality Assessment (TQA) does not lead to the removal of inadequate lecturers when these are identified by QAA lecture room observations.
Senior management rarely look round academic departments and therefore tend to lose touch with what is happening i.e. the resource needs, the demands, the challenges and the problems of lecturers and students.
The demands of managerialism with an emphasis on market forces are not always compatible with the needs of professionals and the desire to maintain high academic standards.
There has been a "Quango-isation" of Higher Education.

DO YOU SEE ANY VALUE IN YOUR HEI ADOPTING ISO 9000 AND/OR INVESTORS IN PEOPLE?

No. You cannot make people faultless as one can in Japanese industry with the products of an industrial process. People do not regularly get it right first time. HEIs are not just about helping people to obtain a degree. They are concerned with the whole person.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE LIKELY MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HE SECTOR?

There will be the emergence of top ranking universities which are able to "cream off" circa 80% of all research funding. As these universities receive a greater proportion of the available research funding, so their position is strengthened. There would be an upward spiral with success breeding further success.
Some HEIs will be forced into being all-teaching institutions if they are unable to attract sufficient research funds. Thus, there will be a polarisation into (a) research and teaching and (b) highly valued and lowly valued institutions.
The government will continue to resist the demands of Russell Group universities to introduce differential funding.

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Interview with Professor ....., Dean of .....

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON ..... UNIVERSITY - CULTURE, etc.

..... University's culture is a function of its background. Essentially, there are three strands:

(i) culture associated with the pre-1995 ..... University that takes pride in its background as a traditional university from 1966 when it received its Royal Charter;

(ii) culture associated with the former ..... and the influence of its ex-constituent monotechnics of ..... Colleges;

(iii) culture associated with the "new" ..... University, that is, post-1995.

During the last eighteen months significant thought and attention has been given to the mission of the "new" ..... University. Consideration has been given to how it is to face the challenge of a rapidly changing external environment

There is a comfortable environment sustained by the merger in 1995 that gave the institution security in terms of being "the right size" to benefit from economies of scale.

It considers itself to be a research-led institution and it aspires to be in the top third of all Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

There are four campuses. Three of the five faculties operate across two sites but no faculty operates across three sites.

PROFESSOR .....'S ROLE AT THE INSTITUTION

The organisational structure of senior managers is comprised of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, the Vice-Principal, three Pro-Vice-Chancellors, five Deans of Faculty and the Heads of Departments. Three of the Deans are also Heads of Department.

Professor ..... is Dean of ..... and also Head of the Department of ..... The other two departments in the faculty are those of Social Work and Sports Science.

He has both managerial and professional responsibilities. As Dean, he is responsible for all appraisals, budgets, departmental plans and performance targets. He has overall operational control over the Department of Education and contributes as a senior manager to the strategic plans of the University.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE PRIME PURPOSES OF HIGHER EDUCATION?

The University's mission is "to produce high quality graduates and research which are of use to the community."
This statement suggests a strong link with the economy, business and employers.
This link with employers is demonstrated by the predominance of "thick" and "thin" sandwich programmes particularly in the Faculty of Technology.
Here, in particular, the notion of "knowledge for use" prevails.
Decisions relating to the purpose of higher education and the nature of knowledge have been made recently in the Faculty of Professional Education. Masters programmes in education at the former ..... University were funded through HEFCE whereas those at the former ..... received funding through the Teacher Training Agency. It was agreed to standardise all Masters programmes in education in the present organisation and to seek funding through HEFCE. This suggests a belief that these programmes should be predicated on a less instrumental and a more epistemological notion of study at higher degree level.

WHAT IS QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION?

Higher Education should aim to develop students as autonomous, lifelong learners.
The University makes use of relatively narrow performance indicators such as the Research Assessment Exercise and QAA subject reviews in order to gauge quality.
These indicators tend to be quantitative. They are helpful comparators. ..... University would expect to be in the top half of any league table.
However, there are very few underpinning qualitative indicators. The overall student learning experience is very important in terms of quality and some attempt should be made to assess this. Social and other facilities are important here and these vary greatly across the four campuses.
Other issues that are very important elements of high quality provision include the extent to which the institution is a self-critical and learning community and the extent to which it accepts responsibility for custody of public money.
An over-emphasis on audit means that an assessment of these more qualitative issues tends to be neglected.

IS THERE A TENSION BETWEEN MANAGERIALISM AND PROFESSIONALISM?

There need not be tension if academic autonomy is seen to embrace accountability. If accountability is seen as a natural part of the internal cycle of quality enhancement, then quality management will not be regarded by academic staff as a hurdle to be cleared and an irritant imposed by managers at the centre of the organisation.
By involving academic staff in the quality management process and giving them some ownership of it, quality management will cease to be viewed as an annual MOT vehicle

test which, when passed, is forgotten about for a year until the next one. Instead, the process is considered as contributing to the improvement of provision.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE LIKELY MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR?

Benchmarking is an attempt to provide greater transparency relating to what it means to have a degree. At present, there is considerable variance in HEIs' definitions of, say, an upper second class degree.

All this fine tuning and standardisation of particular degree classes would not be necessary if the recommendation of the Dearing Report to remove degree classifications was adopted.

There is a danger that there will be over-specification when compiling the benchmarks. This could lead to a form of national curriculum in higher education. It is vital that the creativity in higher education is protected.

A worry is the lack of consultation over subject benchmarks. Generally, the subject benchmarking panels make the decisions relating to learning outcomes.

It is possible that benchmarks, as was the case with the CNAA criteria, could inhibit change.

Self-evaluation should be the key aspect of quality management with external scrutiny and verification of an HEI's self-evaluation processes.

The expansion of higher education should continue. With the notion of lifelong learning, higher education could be appropriate for everyone at some point in time.

More effort should be made to make higher education accessible to groups which, to date, have made relatively little use of it – for example, women with young children, "mature" people and those people from certain ethnic backgrounds who have been seriously under-represented.

Greater use of technology and the more intensive and imaginative use of HEI premises and support services during evenings, weekends and vacations would help here.

Higher education provision needs to be matched more closely to an individual's needs and development.

AC/NEW

Interview with Ms ....., Programme Director of the ..... at The University of ..... .

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON .....

The original College was founded in the 1850s. It became an amalgamation of several colleges and. until 1992. was known as the ..... From that date it has been re-designated as the ..... The University is on several sites such as .... , ... and .....
The University's strategic plan involves decentralisation on four campuses. Each site would have financial control and would be regarded as a cost centre. Certain functions. such as student counselling. would remain as a centralised function and would be delivered across all four campuses.
The University makes use of a relatively large number of part-time staff.
The University has had some financial difficulties. During the academic year 1995/6 there was a deficit of £2 million.

.....'S ROLE AT THE INSTITUTION

.....'s area of specialism is psychology. She used to contribute to the Social Studies degree programme. In 1990 she joined the Business and Management School. She was Programme Director of the Diploma in Management Studies. She is now Programme Director of the .....

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE PRIME PURPOSES OF HIGHER EDUCATION?

There are purposes which relate to the individual and society.
HEIs facilitate the development of students' cognitive and critical abilities.
Employability is an important issue to both the students and the wider community. HEIs need to respond to societal as well as individual needs here.
HEIs are involved in the dissemination of knowledge to the next generation of students.
Lecturers have a role. through research. of developing knowledge in their particular field of study.

WHAT IS QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION?

It involves the creation of an environment in which staff and students can develop

curiosity and knowledge and also engage in research. A lack of creativity and the presence of stagnation would be indicators of a lack of quality.

ARE THERE ANY DIFFICULTIES IN GAUGING THESE QUALITY INDICATORS?

Two groups need to be considered when attempting to gauge quality: the students and staff. There needs to be some assessment of students at the end of their courses. Outcomes can be specified. Sometimes these can be quantitative and clear-cut but often they are mercurial. It is sometimes problematic to gauge the level of knowledge development and the amount of progress in terms of cognitive development and critical analysis. Any assessment of this. by means of assignments for example, is likely to be subjective to a significant degree.
The contribution of staff in terms of quality of research and their contribution to the academic community are also indicators of quality. Their ratings through the Research Assessment Exercise are a useful measure and provide comparability between organisations. However. RAE tends to be largely quantitative. As there is a link between RAE rating and funding. there can be the danger the RAE directs research into "safer" areas. For this reason. lecturers may not want to take the risk of attempting to open up new areas of research. Accountability. together with the quantity and qualitty, are three key research issues in HEIs. Accountability affects the focus of research and may limit risk-taking. (Whiston. T. (1992) "Issues in British Higher Education Policy" in Whiston. T. & Geiger. R. (eds) *Research in Higher Education* Buckingham. Open University Press

DOES QM INVOLVE TENSION BETWEEN PROFESSIONALISM AND MANAGERIALISM?

Often there is the perception that academics are a "lazy bunch" who need to work harder and managerialism is seen as a way of achieving this. Managerialism is based on contractual obligations whereas traditionally the relationship between managers and academics was based to a large extent on good will.
Managerialism can pose a threat to professionalism but this does not have to be the case. Indeed. managerialism can enhance professionalism by providing appropriate helpful. time-saving systems and structures.
However. there is a tension because of inadequate resources. This leads to managerialism being concerned with cutting costs rather than enhancing professional practice. A manifestation of cost-cutting is academics having to undertake all their own clerical work. Often professionals feel that they are being manipulated by their managers.
At the University. cost centres have been created. However. at an academic level this militates against cross-departmental co-operation amongst staff. Also. students are not encouraged to take cross unit modules because a transfer of fees across cost centres would be required. This is a practical example of the tension and conflicting goals of managerialism and professionalism.

DO YOU SEE ANY VALUE IN YOUR HEI ADOPTING ISO9000 AND/OR INVESTORS IN PEOPLE?

The Business School already has I.I.P. status. This was achieved at the second attempt. The University's strategic plan shows a commitment to all departments working towards and then eventually receiving the I.I.P. award.
However, many lecturers have been surprised that the Business School received I.I.P. status as there has been relatively little staff development. Indeed, staff development is frozen at the moment due to the University's financial difficulties. Communication is regarded as poor and there is very little monitoring of resources. This lack of monitoring led to the financial difficulties in 1995/6.
Despite either limited or no staff development, there is a successful research culture. In the recent RAE, the University received the highest score of all the "new" universities. The general feeling amongst academic staff is that the University wanted I.I.P. as a badge in order to increase its competitive advantage.
I.I.P. can undoubtedly influence organisational culture but at the University Business School it did not have any obvious effects.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE LIKELY MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HE SECTOR?

There has been an increase in the proportion of those in the 18-21 year old age range undertaking higher education. In 1980 (when MR first worked at the University of .....) it was 12% of the age range. It is now over 30%. This increase in access is to be welcomed.
QM needs to be seen in the context of increasing student numbers but not a commeasurate increase in resources.
QM is linked with the drive to achieve a decrease in unit cost.
In view of this, it is likely that students will have to contribute far more to the costs of higher education. Unfortunately, less well-off students will be at a disadvantage and access to HE is likely to narrow. Thus the trend towards greater access will be reversed.
There is likely to be less tutorial support because it is a high cost activity.
Teaching approaches will change with a greater use of multi-media and open learning.
The modular system at the University has atomised student experiences.
The module approach has cost advantages because numerous programmes can make use of common modules e.g. accounting.
It is possible to lecture to circa 400 students in a former cinema which the University has converted for use as a lecture theatre.
This use of a common module is ideal in terms of QUALITY CONTROL but, perhaps, questionable in terms of QUALITY OF EXPERIENCE.
This is a manifestation of what Ritzer calls the "McDonaldisation of society".

HE in the UK will very likely follow the pattern in the United States with sameness and consistency being equated with quality. However, will the needs of particular students be met?

The distinction between Quality Control and Quality of Experience is a manifestation of the tension between managerialism and professionalism.

Interview with Mr ....., Programme Director at ..... .

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WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE PRIME PURPOSES OF HIGHER EDUCATION?

Different stakeholders would have different responses to this question but from an academic member of staff's perspective it involves:
(i) developing the ability of students to think critically and question assumptions. This is the key process of higher education:
(ii) preparing students for entering the workplace. One cannot ignore the point that students are entering the job market. Higher Education is NOT concerned with the disinterested pursuit of knowledge. Society cannot afford this luxury. After all, HE is funded to a very large degree by the State.
However, students on non-vocational courses generally have better career destinations than those on vocational courses [Source: Roizen, J. & Jepson, M. (1985) *Degrees for Jobs: Employers Expectations of Higher education* Guildford, NFER-Nelson] A specific example of this is cited by Fisher, R. & Murphy, V. (1994) "A pariah profession? Some student perceptions of accounting and accountancy." *Studies in Higher Education 20, 1 pp 45-58* They found that students from Oxbridge colleges had far better entry rates to top accountancy careers yet their colleges did not offer accountancy courses. This could be related more to the status of a student's Higher Education Institution (HEI), with those of higher status less inclined to offer vocational courses.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER CONSTITUTES QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION?

Quality is related to an HEI's success in developing students' ability to think critically. If lecturers are to develop this ability in students, then it is important that they are engaged in research and, consequently, thinking critically. Research is part of a lecturer's contract.
Thus, quality in HE involves (i) the quality of teaching and (ii) the quality of research. (i) The quality of teaching is concerned with the experiences of the students. How good is it?
(ii) Research is broadly defined and should not just be considered as the writing of articles for refereed journals. Quality involves the assessment of a whole range of activities, not just those identified and assessed in the recent Research Assessment Exercise.
There should be a link between the ability to teach with the ability to research. A good researcher challenges assumptions and this is a skill demonstrated by an effective lecturer. Lecturers involved in research are more likely to challenge students' perceptions (Rowley, J. (1996) "Making the Tension Between Research and Teaching Creative in Business and Management: A Pilot Study" *Journal of Further and Higher Education* 18.2 pp 76-84
There is an interdependence between teaching and research and a synergy with each gaining from the other Whiston, T. (1992) "Issues in Higher Education Policy" in Whiston, T. & Geiger, R. (eds) *Research and Higher Education* Buckingham, Open University Press

ARE THERE ANY DIFFICULTIES IN GAUGING THESE QUALITIES?

No. With regard to (i), it is matter of watching lecturers teach. Self-reporting is not generally valid. There is too much self-reporting, such as the subjective interpretation by lecturers of student evaluations. Trained assessors are required here rather than relying on

course directors' interpretations of the evaluations. Quality assessment and audit are both of value but quality assessment is of far greater significance. It is necessary to view assessment from the students' perspective. Quality is "in the eye of the beholder". What matters is the students' perceptions. There should be greater accountability in HE. The systems and structures ensuring accountability in schools would provide a good model to follow. More training for lecturers is required in order to improve the quality of teaching.

IS THE ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE AT YOUR HEI CONDUCIVE TO THE ACCEPTANCE AND ASSIMILATION OF QUALITY MANAGEMENT APPROACHES?

Change is the responsibility of an individual. not just the organisation. An individual is responsible for developing and improving his/her teaching and research ability. Often the blame for a lack of development is ascribed to an unconducive organisational culture. Rather it is a matter of professional laziness.
The separation of teaching and research, with posts for Readers and College Research Centres, polarises teaching and research when they should be integrated. It is worrying that the Dearing Committee when it reports in July 1997 will be likely to reinforce this distinction between teaching and research by encouraging research-only and teaching-only HEIs. By further breaking the link between teaching and research, quality in HE would be affected adversely.

DOES QM INVOLVE TENSION BETWEEN PROFESSIONALISM AND MANAGERIALISM?

Professionals are often arrogant. Lecturers must be aware of clients' (students') needs. Certain management qualities are required if a lecturer is to meet these needs (for example. to ability to organise courses effectively). Professionalism and managerialism should not be seen as polar extremes. Professionals should accept some managerial responsibilities. Lecturers often feel "under attack" but these feelings are generally unfounded. Many professionals in HE have no right to call themselves professionals due to their inappropriate behaviour and attitude. Individuals should strive to make themselves more professional. The philosophy of Samuel Smiles has much to commend it here.

DO YOU SEE ANY VALUE IN YOUR HEI ADOPTING ISO9000 AND/OR INVESTORS IN PEOPLE?

There should be no need for such external systems and structure. An academic member of staff educated to a relatively high level should take his/her own individual responsibility for improvements in teaching and research ability. ISO 9000 and I.I.P. are looking for defaulters. If lecturers were truly professional. there would not be any defaulters.
Many non-academic staff are not educated to such a high level as academic staff so they cannot be expected to take total responsibility for there own development. In their case. quality management systems and structures such as ISO 9000 and I.I.P. could be appropriate.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Interview with ....., Head of ..... Department at ..... .

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON ..... - CULTURE. etc.

The Institute has a two semester academic year.
Before the academic programmes were validated by ..... , they were validated by CNAA.
Relatively great use is made of part-time staff. These members of staff have a high level of involvement in professional practice.
Staff are relatively homogeneous as the narrow subject base means that there is a high degree of shared experience. Although some efforts are made, there is very little cross-fertilisation between academic disciplines. Essentially, there are academic "tribes".
There are three sites, each site concentrating on particular areas of art and design. The student experience varies according to which site the student is on. However, senior management would probably argue that there is a common culture and a clear understanding of the Institute's mission statement on all three sites.
In the school of architecture there are approximately 200 students. There are 26 nationalities. 37% of these students are from the UK. 43% from European Union countries and 20% from other overseas countries.
Unlike many other HEI students, the students of architecture undertake a large number of projects. The year group is the most influential organisational structure. There is often a very strong sense of identity amongst members of the same year group.

.....'S ROLE AT THE INSTITUTION

..... is Head of the School of ..... He is responsible of two programmes - the ..... and the .....
The professional organisation - RIBA - has a significant influence on curriculum issues. There can be some tension between the Institute and RIBA. Although RIBA has a great deal of influence, it does allow ..... significant autonomy.
Internal Quality Management procedures involve weekly year group meetings attended by the programme director/year master and student representatives. These weekly meetings are a forum for planning, reviewing and evaluation. Views of student representatives are canvassed and acted upon wherever possible. The programme director/year master will sometimes withdraw from the weekly meeting in order to encourage open and frank discussion.
There is an annual review of each programme with the establishment of an action plan.
..... oversees the Quality Management procedures.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE PRIME PURPOSES OF HIGHER EDUCATION?

There is a case for developing knowledge for its own sake (liberal education) but HE is essentially about personal development - encouraging students to think for themselves. tackle a problem. draw conclusions. have a point of view and defend it.
There is a crucial difference between training and development and HE should be about development.
However. as the proportion of the 18-21 age group undertaking undergraduate programmes has risen from 5% to 34% during the last thirty years. there are a number of undergraduates who would be more suited to training rather than development.

WHAT IS QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION?

- good critical appraisal
- design skills
- well thought out solutions to problems
- good research skills
- good presentation skills
- ability to realise concepts

All these elements of high quality HE are articulated in programme aims and objectives.

ARE THERE ANY DIFFICULTIES THESE QUALITY PROCEDURES?

There is subjective judgement in the assessment of projects.
In order to reduce subjectivity. a panel of assessors from varying backgrounds is used.
Internal assessment takes place twice a year.
There is an end of course review for each student conducted by the Head or Deputy Head of the School.
Final assessment of portfolios of work includes assessment by three external examiners.
Overall. the large number of lecturers/professionals involved in assessment leads to moderation of the scores and a reduction in the subjectivity.

DO YOU SEE ANY VALUE IN YOUR HEI ADOPTING ISO 9000 AND/OR INVESTORS IN PEOPLE?

Senior management at the Institute is interested in achieving the award of IIP. However. many staff question the motives of senior management in striving for this. Indeed. many of them regard the whole process as rather vacuous. Nevertheless. IIP does focus the attention of members of staff on the issue of quality.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE LIKELY MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HE SECTOR?

Quality is related to the level of resources. Senior management and the government view quality as an issue of value for money.
Quality involves making the best of existing resources.
Generally, levels of degree classification are either stable or rising and so senior management is able to say, "...the number of firsts is rising so there is obviously not a problem of under-resourcing!"
At the Institute, senior management has issued a decree - "Resourcing is not an issue".
There is likely to be a divide between teaching and research institutions.
In the future, HEIs need to push responsibility back on to the students, encouraging greater self-reliance. This will allow the more able students to flourish.

Interview with ..... , Bursar of ..... College, ...

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Background to the College

Collegiality dominates the organisational culture at ..... College.

The culture of the College is very caring and humane. It is much less "hard-nosed" than is the case in other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

The College can be considered to be under-managed. The manager is very much the gentleman amateur.

It is an organic organisation and the organisational structure and management style has evolved as an appropriate means of achieving the best from the academic staff. The whole approach can be seen as rather like "growing rhubarb".

The College develops organically with the maximum of local flexibility.

The academic relationship between a member of staff and a student is concerned with creativity and this is very difficult to manage formally.

Collegiality means that the academics have a significant part to play in the management of the College. There is a democratic and participative approach to decision-making.

The structure of the College can best be described by reference to Handy's notion of Federalism and the "inverted doughnut" theory.

Quality Management

At the College, Quality Management is by means of:

1. Innate Commitment
Most, if not all, academic staff want to do their best most of the time. The College strives to select the best people for the job and its reputation helps here. Managerialism, through appraisal and formal Quality Assurance systems, would only be of marginal assistance in terms of quality management.

2. Informal Student Feedback
There is the student "grapevine". The students are knowledgeable (4 grade A 'A' levels) and articulate (selected by means of competitive interviews) and therefore keep the lecturers "on their toes".

the Admissions Office without interview. This impersonal selection method is often the case in "New" universities.
The tutorial system at the College reinforces this commitment to the student.

3. Peer Pressure
The academic staff work in teaching teams and any poor performance would be identified. Other team members would be keen to do something about this. Also, the poor performer would not want the shame of "letting the side down". This can be compared to the Japanese notion of *giri.*

4. Competition between Oxbridge Colleges
The Colleges vie with each other to recruit the "best" students. They are concerned to achieve the greatest number of first choice applicants. This acts as an informal quality management mechanism.

5. Informal Market Forces - Feeder Schools
The feeder schools will know if the College is not performing as well as it should and, consequently, would not be so willing to recommend its students to apply to the College.

6. Informal Market Forces - Employers
Employers recruit from Colleges with good reputations and any fall in standards would adversely affect the number of College students progressing to prestigious appointments.

7. Reputation
The College needs to preserve its reputation in the UK and abroad. This is particularly important in order to attract overseas students. There are advantages in terms of fee income through the recruitment of overseas students.

If the performance of an academic member of staff causes concern, a senior tutor might take action. This action would be *ad hoc.* Collegiality means that often this academic member of staff would be sidelined by, for example, the granting of a sabbatical term or year.

Quality management at the College is informal although it is becoming more formal through its response to HEFCE assessment and the Research Assessment Exercise. It is learning "to play the game".

Quality is maintained by means of collegiality. Collegiality pervades all aspects of the College's operation and development.

The Management of Non-Academic Staff

A very professional management approach is adopted. Again, collegiality means that the approach is far more humane and flexible than would be the case in most other HEIs.

The College is relatively small so there is less need for formal management systems.

There is very little value in employing a Total Quality Management approach and striving for ISO9000 and/or Investors in People status because it does not fit with collegiality. In addition, the College does not need the marketing advantage which allegedly accrues from this form of badging.

Also, confident, efficient and effective managers do not need TQM, ISO 9000 or I.I.P..

The Future

Future developments will be greatly influenced by the report of the Dearing Committee.

There is likely to be much more of a market approach.

The Committee could recommend a voucher system. A voucher would have a set value, probably enough to cover a basic level of higher education.

Students and their families would need to undertake a cost/benefit analysis to determine the amount that it would be worth paying in terms of top-up fees. Top-up fees for Oxbridge colleges and institutions in the "Russell group" of universities would be much higher. Students would need to make a decision - assuming that they had the appropriate entry qualifications and passed the competitive interview - as to whether it was worth the extra cost.

Oxbridge colleges will need to determine the level of premium price that they can charge.

Their costs are much higher than those for other HEIs. This is in large part due to the reliance on a tutorial system.

It is likely that future changes in HE will reduce the proportion of students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds accessing places at Oxbridge. At present circa 20% of students at the College are on full grants and students come from a very wide range of backgrounds.
Bursaries could be awarded to ameliorate the situation but endowment income is limited so this would likely to be the case with bursaries.

HEIs could be privatised.

AD/RED

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Interview with ....., Academic Secretary and Senior Assistant Registrar of the University of ..... .

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON UNIVERSITY OF ..... - CULTURE. etc.

University College background. University of ..... unique in that its University Charter was granted between the two world wars (1926).

The academic and support structure of the University can be considered as traditional.

The Senior Management Team comprises:

a Vice-Chancellor
Deputy Vice-Chancellor responsible for resources (tenure of 4 years)
Pro-Vice-Chancellor with general responsibility for teaching (tenure of 4 years)
Pro-Vice-Chancellor with general responsibility for research (tenure of 4 years)

It is not intended that the two Pro-Vice-Chancellors are seen as competing with each other and lobbying the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for resources.

There is a great mixture of academic subjects (traditional and modern) in the five faculties. The Faculty of Education and Community Studies tends to be rather isolated from the other four faculties through its geographical location at the
site and the more vocational nature (teaching, nursing, midwifery, health visiting and social work) of its academic programmes.

The Faculty Board is the main instrument of business in the University. A Faculty Board is chaired by the Dean who is supported by an administrator - the Sub-Dean.
The maximum period of office for a Dean is 3 years.
Within the faculties, there is a general trend towards creating Schools by amalgamating particular Departments. This is based on the belief that "bigger is slightly more beautiful."

The organisational culture is based on a belief that change should only occur if it is required. The University enjoys a good academic reputation and recruitment is buoyant. Thus, an "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" attitude prevails.
"Sensible" change is welcomed and this largely involves some re-alignment in response to environmental (Political, Economic, Social, Technological) developments.
It is a traditional university but there are some "movers" and "shakers" who are more enthusiastic about change. These people are concerned that the traditional academic structure militates against effective cross-faculty collaboration.

There is a danger that some outsiders will perceive the University's five faculties as five monotechnics.

The University of ..... tends to align itself with the pre-CPVC meeting 1994 group of universities - e.g. Essex, Durham, Bath, Goldsmiths', Exeter, Surrey, UMIST, etc. rather than the Russell group of universities such as UCL, Birmingham, Bristol, Oxford, Cambridge, Manchester, etc..

.....'S ROLE AT THE INSTITUTION

..... is a senior administrator. He is Academic Secretary to the Committee of Deans. This Committee deals with an increasing amount of University business with the Senate meeting less regularly to oversee and generally ratify decisions made by the Committee of Deans.
He has many dealings with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching) and the Quality Management unit - Quality in Learning and Teaching (QUILT).
QUILT has developed a University-wide Quality Assurance system involving course leaders, Heads of Departments, Boards of Study, Faculty Quality Assurance Committees, External Examiners, Deans' Committees and Senate.
He is the Review Co-ordinator when Departments are subject to assessment by the Quality Assurance Agency. Although it is the Department's and the Faculty's responsibility to provide the required documentation, advice on the compilation of reports and minutes, as well as feedback from previous QAA visits, is available from the Registry.

..... also has responsibility for staff training and development, the university calendar, degree congregations and numerous other University Registry functions. At a national level, he has been heavily involved in Quality Audit as a member of numerous audit teams.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE PRIME PURPOSES OF HIGHER EDUCATION?

Extending the intellect. Developing intellectual attributes. Giving students the opportunity to sample different ideas and approaches. Cognitive development i.e. Liberal Education. It is important that all these cognitive developments are transferable to a wide range of situations, including the work place.
Essentially, ... values the academic approach of traditional universities and does not consider that Higher Education should be directly related to vocationalism. Higher Education is NOT a matter of ticking off items on a skills check-list.
Academic programmes should be structured in terms of the intellectual attributes that they are intended to develop.

QA has assisted greatly in identifying learning outcomes and in Higher Education these outcomes should be largely cognitive.

WHAT IS QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION?

Quality relates to the achievement of the above stated learning outcomes.

To some extent, quality is determined by input. The University accepts students with relatively high 'A' level points scores. Also, the University enjoys a good reputation amongst overseas students.

ARE THERE ANY DIFFICULTIES IN GAUGING QUALITY?

Some Departments are not accustomed to the rigours of Internal Review. On the other hand. Departments containing subject areas which - many years ago - were validated by the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA), find the subject review process far less daunting. This is the case with vocational subject areas such as media studies.
Overall, academic staff at the University of..... are less comfortable with the notion of subject review than their colleagues in "modern" universities who have experienced the robust systems of CNAA validation and review and where these systems and structures of Quality Assurance are more likely to have been embedded.

Assessment is simply a "snapshot" and, as such, just looks at what is happening at one particular time. It is possible for an HEI to "put on a show" and "play the Quality Assessment game". The proposed extended role of external examiners should lead to the assessment of academic standards over a longer period and thereby reduce the snapshot effect. Also. it should make the assessment process less confrontational.

Do academic staff and lay people fully understand the Quality Management reports that are produced? For example. the Collaborative Audit Report required some "reading between the lines" by members of staff and only people with a very clear understanding of audit processes would be able to interpret the report accurately. Also. how many parents and/or prospective students consult audit or assessment reports before selecting a university?

From an administrative perceptive. it would be helpful if Central Government stated clearly what they expected. Codes of Practice and Benchmarks will reduce uncertainty about what external audit/assessment will be looking for.

DO YOU SEE ANY VALUE IN YOUR HEI ADOPTING ISO 9000 AND/OR INVESTORS IN PEOPLE?

No. There is no demand at the University for the "External Betokening of Quality". On the basis of cost/benefit analysis. it would not be worth working towards as (i) the "badge/badges" would not impress members of the potential client groups and (ii) the seeking of ISO 9000 and IIP would take academic and support staff members' time away from dealing directly with students.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE LIKELY MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HE SECTOR?

Continuation of the move to mass higher education.

Continued trend towards larger groupings within HEIs and also between HEIs through mergers and acquisitions. Larger units offer cost savings.

Need for a rationalisation of further and higher education programmes with a ladder of qualifications in order to head off problems of duplication of courses and confusion over awards.

Present government seems to be showing less direct interest in Higher Education. There is now less intense scrutiny than was the case with the last government. There is a "much lighter touch". At HE meetings. the government adviser is taking a more passive role in discussions.

AD/PGL

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Interview with Dr ....., Senior Assistant Registrar at University of ..... .

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE UNIVERSITY OF .....

The University is a traditional university which used to cater for the top 5% of academically qualified applicants to Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). There has been a widening of access with some students undertaking the first year of their degree programme at a college of further education before transferring to ..... Although the University is less exclusive, nevertheless it does not have any HND programmes and it still tends to recruit students with relatively high 'A' level grades.

The University had a most democratic style of management with a high level of discussion taking place and decisions being made at various levels - Senior Common Room, Faculty and Senate. This has changed and is changing further with greater centralisation and the growth of managerialism.
The organisational culture has changed in response to academic audit and other aspects of Quality Management (QM). The "culture shock" has been greater at the "old" universities than at the "new" universities and colleges of higher education because the last two types of HEIs have been used to the academic scrutiny of teaching programmes. This was through the Council for National Academic Awards in the case of the former polytechnics/"new" universities and through validation by "old" universities in the case of colleges of higher education. Generally, the "new" universities already had Quality Management structures in place when HEQC audit and HEFCE assessment were introduced. The "old" universities tended to allow academic departments a high degree of autonomy and so there was a need for adjustment with internal systems and structures having to be developed to monitor and record Quality Assurance issues.

At the University of ..... there is the standard QM process with course evaluations by students and staff, annual programme reviews, reports to quality assurance committees, external examiners' reports and the compilation and monitoring of action plans.

DR .....'S ROLE AT THE INSTITUTION

Dr .....'s responsibilities include the validation of academic programmes, the scrutinising of proposals for new programmes and the internal Quality Assurance process. He is also responsible for the appointment and payment of external examiners and the presentation of their reports to Examination Boards and academic committees. He has

involvement with, and responsibilities for, aspects of the work of the University's examination, awards and timetable offices. He is secretary to the Collegiate Board and secretary to the Board of Undergraduate Studies.

..... was an academic - a mathematics lecturer - before commencing a career in university administration.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE PRIME PURPOSES OF HIGHER EDUCATION?

There are two key purposes:
1) Teaching - at university level this is advanced teaching to fit students for work and life:
2) Research - at ..... there is a tradition of research at ..... and even though the culture has changed significantly it is still difficult for an academic member of staff to achieve promotion without being research active.

WHAT IS QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION?

1) Teaching - the classroom teaching experience. With the broadening of access, the value added by an HEI to students' knowledge, skills and their ability to analyse and reflect critically on issues is a key measure of quality.
2) Research - Quality as measured by the Research Assessment Exercise in terms of publications in refereed journals.

Quality Assessment and Quality Audit have achieved a great deal in "old" universities. Audit, in particular, has ensured that QM systems have been put in place to monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of academic programmes.

ARE THERE ANY DIFFICULTIES IN GAUGING THESE QUALITY INDICATORS?

It seems incongruous to separate out assessment and audit when there is a good deal of overlap.

The law of diminishing marginal returns prevails - QM had a great deal of value and impact initially but this has diminished over time. Also, QM has very high opportunity costs which are increasing. Some of the money spent on QM could be used more effectively.

There are problems with the use of External Examiners' reports in the QM process. Generally, External Examiners are poorly paid and it is doubtful whether the fees encourage the necessary level of engagement and scrutiny. Often External Examiners

give conflicting advice to different HEIs. When there is a change of External Examiner on a particular programme. programme directors and students can be given advice that conflicts greatly with that given by the previous Examiner.
It is difficult to propose an alternative to the use of External Examiners although QM in universities in the USA is dealt with internally.

DOES QM INVOLVE TENSION BETWEEN PROFESSIONALISM AND MANAGERIALISM?

Yes. there is a tension here. Professionals often feel that academic freedom is diminishing although the culture is changing and academics are starting to come to terms with the "New Order".
There is also a diminution in autonomy with regard to research with academics being very strongly encouraged to research in those areas where significant funding is on offer.

DO YOU SEE ANY VALUE IN YOUR HEI ADOPTING ISO 9000 AND /OR INVESTORS IN PEOPLE?

There is no value to UKC in acquiring ISO 9000 status. certainly not in academic matters. Investors in People (?)

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE LIKELY MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HE SECTOR?

There is likely to be an increase in part-time students with a consequent widening of the age range. There could be different structures and timescales for delivering undergraduate programmes.
The Credit Accumulation Transfer scheme is not likely to be used to any great extent in traditional universities.
There could be a polarisation of the functions of HEIs with research being concentrated in a few selected institutions.
The £1000 per annum fee for undergraduate students starting in the academic year 1998/9 will probably lead to a small initial drop in applicants but, as in Australia. people will come to accept the fees and student numbers would then rise back to previous levels.
Internal QM systems (evaluations. review, external examiners' reports. action plans) will remain largely unaltered.
Externally. a lighter. gentler touch is to be hoped for. However. there are vested interests and there are some external administrators who would like to see external QM maintained at the present relatively high level of activity.

AD/TEC

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Interview with Mr ....., Senior Assistant Registrar, ... University.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON UNIVERSITY - CULTURE, etc.

The recent merger of ..... University with ..... is crucial to an understanding of organisational culture.
There is a blending of the various cultures with the consequent inevitable tensions that such a coming together of cultures brings.
These tensions have been manifested in recent Senate meetings over the issue of PhD study. Generally, staff from the former ..... have a more professional/vocational approach to research degrees. This has led them to propose at Senate that PhDs should be awarded on the basis of published work as well as through the more traditional route of writing a thesis. Members of staff with a traditional university background have tended to oppose the proposal on the grounds that it would lead to a fall in standards of work.
Such tensions are to be expected at such an early stage in the merger. A more consensual culture is likely to develop over time.
There is a highly decentralised admissions policy. Students are not offered a place at the university without the agreement of academic staff.
A departmental admissions tutor is responsible for agreeing offers to prospective students. There are very clear guidelines on an admission tutor's role and responsibilities. Most departments allocate the post of admissions tutor on a collegial basis with members of the academic staff "taking turns".

MR .....'S ROLE AT THE INSTITUTION

Mr .....'s responsibilities include admissions, student records, research degree supervision, the appointment of External Examiners and student discipline.
He previously worked in university administration at ..... College and ..... College. During his time at these institutions, he noted the increasing level of autonomy enjoyed by the "schools" of the Federated University of London.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE PRIME PURPOSES OF HIGHER EDUCATION?

Essentially, the purpose of higher education is to address the needs of individuals and those of society.

1. to enable individuals to fulfil their potential;
2. to provide leaders and experts in particular sectors of society and the economy.

MEASURING QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION?

Much of this can be achieved by peer review; formally through the External Examiner system and more informally with a particular academic community coming together at a conference. At such conferences there can be a useful interchange of ideas and a tacit understanding of what constitutes quality and "graduateness" in a specific academic discipline.
However, it is necessary for academic staff to be accountable to the funders of higher education such as central government, local education authorities and, in many cases, employers and the students.

WHAT INTERNAL QUALITY PROCEDURES ARE THERE?

There are the standard internal quality management produces with student and programme team evaluative comments forming part of an annual programme review that is reported to the faculty boards. These annual academic programme reviews lead to the development of action plans.

IS THERE A TENSION BETWEEN MANAGERIALISM AND PROFESSIONALISM?

Some academic members of staff are well used to the quality message and the need for accountability. There is an understanding that accountability does involve some limitations on academic autonomy.
However, there are other academic members of staff who consider there was a "golden age" in higher education when their views were paramount and the influence from stakeholders outside of the university was very limited.
Gradually, more academics are accepting the quality approach. Engineering staff are used to external scrutiny as engineering degrees usually involve some form of professional accreditation which, in turn, requires external validation.

ISO 9000 SERIES AND INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

There is no intention to undertake ISO 9000. There is a move towards service level agreements in, for example, the registry. These service level agreements do not signal potential competition with outside providers. Instead, they are seen as a way of highlighting areas that need attention and require additional resources. At present, the registry would be able to meet relatively stringent levels of service.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE LIKELY MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR?

The broadening of access to higher education is very desirable but greater numbers in HEIs can lead to a greater proportion of students with academic and/or financial

difficulties. Thus, if there is a 5% increase in student numbers, there is likely to be a greater than 5% increase in resource requirements.
As numbers increase, it is more difficult to maintain academic standards as pressure on resources mounts.
There could well be the development of (a) research only institutions (b) teaching and research institutions and (c) teaching only institutions. Again, resources will be crucial here. HEIs will need to specialise and decide whether to target either research or teaching funds. Only the higher status HEIs will be able to compete effectively for research funds.
There is already differential funding for taught Master's programmes. Differential funding for undergraduate programmes is fraught with problems. If it were to be allowed, a lower fee might be taken to indicate lower quality and/or an inability to recruit students at the standard fee. Differential funding for undergraduate programmes, if permitted, would herald a system of higher education based to a significant extent on market forces.

AD/NEW

Interview with Ms....., Senior Assistant Registrar at The University of .....

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE UNIVERSITY OF .

The original College was founded in 1838. It became an amalgamation of several colleges and, until 1992, was known as the ..... From that date it has been re-designated as the University of ..... The University is on several sites such as .... and ..... Many of the buildings were built in the 1950s and 1960s and are constructed of concrete and glass. The University's Strategic Plan involves decentralisation on four campuses. The social focus for students will be the campus. Previously the emphasis was on faculties, both geographically and academically. Schools will provide the academic structure. Each site will have financial control and will be regarded as a cost centre. Certain functions, such as student counselling, would remain as a centralised function and would be delivered across all four campuses.

The organisational culture is multi-faceted and has varied over time. The recent appointment of ..... as Vice-Chancellor has led to cultural change. The University in its strategic plan and elsewhere is committed to an admissions policy of wide access, encouraging applications from people of diverse ages, race, ethnicity, academic background, etc..

The present Vice-Chancellor has encouraged openness with staff being encouraged to express their opinions freely and, for example, to comment on a draft of the University's Strategic Plan. Staff views were taken into account when the final draft was written. The University is not status-conscious like many more traditional Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

Many of its academic programmes are linked to professional qualifications and there are numerous links between the University and professional bodies.

.....'S ROLE AT THE INSTITUTION

was formerly an academic - an art historian. She joined the University as an administrator in 1989 and is now Senior Assistant Registrar with responsibility for Quality Assurance (QA).

She considers that one of her prime rôles is giving advice and support to academic staff. Specific responsibilities include overseeing the QA team, the nomination and appointment of external examiners, the regulations governing assessment, the training of elected student representatives on University committees, programme validations and re-

validations and the University's links with other colleges and universities in Britain and abroad.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE PRIME PURPOSES OF HIGHER EDUCATION?

1. To provide an opportunity to a wide range and diversity of individuals - in terms of class, age and ethnicity - to develop themselves to either degree or postgraduate level. This broad access is ensured through the University's admissions policy.
2. Also, if possible, to allow the parallel development of professional skills and qualifications e.g. management, accountancy, the built environment, law.
3. To focus on individual development - "life-long learning" as described in the Dearing Report.
4. To provide a better educated workforce.
5. To develop citizenship and, consequently, more participative and informed members of society.

WHAT IS QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION?

An HEI has two key functions: teaching and conducting research.
TEACHING: The quality of the teaching and learning experiences of students.
This needs to be defined clearly with explicit aims and objectives, learning outcomes and either academic and/or professional rationale for the curriculum. There should be academic coherence.
RESEARCH: The quality of research.
Clear objectives for research with peer group review (through the Research Assessment Exercise).

ARE THERE ANY DIFFICULTIES IN GAUGING THESE QUALITY INDICATORS?

Often lecturers are neither adept nor confident at making clear the aims, objectives and learning outcomes of their academic programmes. This is where senior administrative staff can help lecturers frame aims, objectives and learning outcomes.
Heads of Department and Deans, etc. were not trained to cope with the increase in managerialism in HEIs and this led to initial difficulties with the management of change and management functions such as monitoring quality.
Firm QA structures are helpful. The "Modern" universities had this firm structure provided by CNAA when they were polytechnics.
The structure for monitoring quality is provided through academic committees and the external examiner system. There is the need for plain English.

DOES QM INVOLVE TENSION BETWEEN PROFESSIONALISM AND MANAGERIALISM?

There is a well-structured QA process which includes the compilation of data. an annual programme/module review and the reports of external examiners. Some staff felt that information relating to QA was being asked for on more than one occasion. This caused resentment amongst certain academic staff. Senior administrators have been making an effort to reduce the amount of paperwork involved in the QA process. Senior management has recently adopted a more consultative approach and has shown an awareness of the present demands on the time of academic staff.
Internal communication could be improved and also the sense of insularity amongst academic and non-academic staff could be addressed.
Improvements in communication could come from initiatives launched by the Vice-Chancellor and the Provosts of the campuses. A forum for all staff could be established to discuss the Dearing Report, for example. More effective and comprehensive Management Information Systems are needed.
The establishment of external advisory groups and networks could break down insularity. something that is a problem experienced by many HEIs.
Attention to both these issues would lead to a more effective QA system.

DO YOU SEE ANY VALUE IN YOUR HEI ADOPTING ISO9000 AND/OR INVESTORS IN PEOPLE?

Some non-teaching departments have service standards.
The Faculty of Business. Management and Social Studies has achieved Investors in People status and other faculties and units have been encouraged to follow their example.
There is a commitment to continuous improvement (but not TQM) in the 1996 Strategic Plan.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE LIKELY MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HE SECTOR?

Quality Audit is of little value to HEIs. It tends to be mechanistic and superficial and has told the University nothing that it did not already know. There are high opportunity costs involved as something more useful could be achieved with the funds that are required for audit.
Quality Assessment is a learning process and has led to the introduction of peer observation and better information. Greater emphasis should be placed here in future.
Assessment has brought about greater public scrutiny with clients gaining information about an HEI's strengths and weaknesses. However. the league tables that have been compiled on the basis of assessment have been damaging. They fail to take into account an HEI's Mission Statement and do not show value-added. It is very important that

assessors adhere to procedures and protocols in order that consistency of assessment is achieved.

There is scope for improvement in the external examining system. At present, there is a tendency for external examiners to act as adjudicators when the internal markers cannot agree on a mark. Also they often just come into an HEI for examination board meetings. This means that there is relatively little engagement with academic staff or students. The recommendations of the Dearing Report do not offer a solution to the shortcomings of external examining as the establishment of a pool of academics who could be called upon to examine by HEIs is not likely to solve many problems. The University of is inviting its external examiners to visit more regularly thereby promoting far more discussion and debate about standards, procedures and processes.

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Interview with ..... , Academic Standards Officer at ..... .

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON ..... - CULTURE. etc.

The Institute was formed through the merger of two teacher training colleges - one Anglican foundation and one LEA - in 1977. The governance of the Institute reflects his background with equal numbers of representatives on the Board of Governors from the Church of England and the LEA. The Director is required to be a communicant member of the Church of England as is one of the Deputy Directors.
The two sites have distinct cultures although the Director, appointed relatively recently, has attempted to breakdown this division and develop a corporate culture. There is now a greater diversity of academic programme provision with less emphasis on teacher education.
The pace of change has increased recently.

.....'S ROLE AT THE INSTITUTION

..... is the Academic Standards Officer. She is responsible for ALL matters relating to Quality Management at the Institute. This includes the appointment of External Examiners and assessors, internal scrutiny of programmes, validation, re-validation and annual review. She reports to the Deputy Director.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE PRIME PURPOSES OF HIGHER EDUCATION?

To provide education and training in the context of life-long learning. There should be academic quality and students should be encouraged to examine critically their views and values. The provision of this education and training is within a supportive environment. As a relatively small organisation, the Institute can treat each student as an individual and maintain the highest possible level of one-to-one contact with academic staff. This helps to provide high quality education and training.

WHAT IS QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION?

It requires checking the stated programme aims and objectives against the perceptions of various stakeholders as to what is being provided. The narrower this gap. the higher the quality of provision.

Quality requires clarity of procedures. responsibility and accountability. There should be no ambiguity here. Sound quality systems and structures assist in the provision of high quality education and training by highlighting and then correcting any problems. Sound systems and structures illuminate what is being done well, what needs attention and who is responsible for taking action. Action is initiating through the use of Action Plans at various stages of the procedure.

The interaction of these Quality Assurance procedures and resource planning ensures that the resources are provided to deal with those issues which the Institute considers to be of high priority.

The procedures for academic review at the Institute are as follows:

Each programme is subject to annual review which requires programme directors to reflect on their programme in the October following an academic year. A programme review report is compiled by a Programme Board through a combination of self-assessment (using the six Quality Assurance Agency assessment areas). External Examiners' reports and student and staff evaluations. The review report concludes with a programme Action Plan. The Dean discusses the self-assessment scores with programme directors before they are finalised. The programme review report is considered by the Academic Standards Committee in the following January and any non-academic issues (e.g. car parking. teaching facilities) are drawn out and put into an Institute Action Plan. Items on this Action Plan are prioritised. At all stages. the degree of student involvement is significant. The whole process is open with all parties having access to information. The only exception to this is when. for example. a student is named in an External Examiner's report.

ARE THERE ANY DIFFICULTIES THESE QUALITY PROCEDURES?

At present. the Institute has its academic programmes accredited by the local university. It is sometimes difficult to match Institute deadlines with those of the university.

Some programme directors find it difficult to suggest external examiners. There are rigorous criteria for the appointment of External Examiners and assessors.

Generally. academic staff are co-operative and complete their programme review reports diligently and punctually.

Programme data has. in the past. been provided to programme directors later than is desirable.

DO YOU SEE ANY VALUE IN YOUR HEI ADOPTING ISO 9000 AND /OR INVESTORS IN PEOPLE?

The Institute is aiming for I.I.P. status although other priorities such as the application for Degree Awarding Powers has limited the effort that can be expended upon it.
Also. a former Deputy Director was responsible for I.I.P. when it was launched at the Institute about three years ago. At this time. there was a great deal of scepticism surrounding I.I.P.and this needs to be overcome if any progress is to be made.
..... believes that it could be implemented effectively on a department by department basis.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE LIKELY MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HE SECTOR?

There is likely to be far greater autonomy for Higher Education Institutions. Those HEIs with poor internal quality systems and structures will find difficulty with this shift from central to local responsibility.
There are more likely to be "snapshot" inspections rather than the present one-week base room visits. With these week-long visits. the HEI receives ample notice and. to an extent. if you know how to play the "quality game". you do well.
There will be a move to subject benchmarking. However. this pre-supposes that all HEIs provide single honours degrees. What about joint degrees and major/minors? How will these be benchmarked?
Also. the benchmarks that are set will depend on the composition of the subject panels. If they are largely made up of academics from the traditional universities. then the benchmarks will reflect their backgrounds and values.
The benchmarks will provide thresholds - minimum acceptable standards. These thresholds will be helpful.

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Interview with ....., Head of Quality Assurance, ...

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON ..... - Culture. etc.

Art and design has historically been located in monotechnic organisations as these subjects have only rarely been taught in universities.

..... formed through the amalgamation of 3 Colleges (....., ... and .....) in 1987.
At the ..... site there is the specialism of fine art and architecture. at the ..... site it is visual communication and at ..... it is three dimensional design.

Prior to amalgamation. the ..... and ..... Colleges had their courses validated through CNAA whereas ..... College had its courses validated by BTEC.

APPROACHES TO QUALITY MANAGEMENT

The influence of CNAA has been most significant. even at the site which did not have a tradition of CNAA validated courses. The Deans and Principal and College staff generally accept rigorous. critical self-appraisal which is a significant part of the CNAA approach. The impact of CNAA has continued unabated after its disestablishment.

The QA/QM culture is based on CNAA-type systems and procedures.

Validation events involve detailed discussions with panels of staff and students. QM generally embraces the HEQC methodology of triangulation with views sought from senior staff. staff and students. Re-validation occurs three years after validation. "Good standing reviews" can be used where a course receives very good reports from external examiners and where student experiences are deemed to be most favourable. Such reviews deal with strategic issues only and are not very much concerned with the course documentation. Any course that is a cause for concern is subject to intensive review. Usually there is one such course per year. Action is taken on the basis of the review.

..... is now making great use of student opinion in its QM. An extensive and detailed questionnaire was issued to students in November 1997. The data analysis was facilitated through the use of an optical mark reader. League tables showing student

opinion on courses were constructed. The academic staff did not respond to these tables as defensively as might have been expected. It was made clear to staff that the league tables were just one of a number of performance indicators.

.....'s approach to QM is very similar to that of the University of Greenwich's through its Academic Quality Unit. This unit not only considers academic matters but it also reviews issues such as marketing materials issued by itself and collaborative partner organisations. ..... is now broadening the scope of its QM and looks at such additional issues.

Great use is made of audit methodology - Is there variation? If so. is it within tolerable limits?

Overall, QM at ..... is detailed. extensive and most robust.

.....'S ROLE AT THE INSTITUTION

.....'s academic background is the history and philosophy of science. He was a lecturer at College and. just prior to the amalgamation in 1987, was Acting Vice- Principal. Upon amalgamation. he was an Academic Co-ordinator. He is now .....'s Head of Quality Assurance. As his academic background is not related to any of the art and design disciplines. he is seen as unbiased and not favouring any of the "academic tribes".

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE PRIME PURPOSES OF HIGHER EDUCATION?

To promote:

* life-long learning
* flexibility
* reflection as a practitioner
* transferable skills

Higher Education Institutions have a role in career development and. as a consequence. skill development needs to be related to careers in the field of art and design. However. the rate of change is so great that any over concentration on particular skills (as is often the case with BTEC) would mean that they would soon be out of date. On the other hand. the development of transferable skills and the encouragement of the reflective practitioner are of long-standing value.

WHAT IS QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION?

The presence of the skills/attitudes above.

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ARE THERE ANY DIFFICULTIES IN GAUGING THESE QUALITY INDICATORS?

In order to gauge quality, it is necessary to consider the degree to which transferable skills have been developed and the extent to which students are reflective practitioners.
This process is subjective but the students' work - a painting, a sculpture, photographs, video, etc. - can easily be assessed by a number of academic staff when it is on public display. The use of a number of assessors reduces the subjectivity of assessment.

On a more practical level, there is some variation over the three sites. There is less variation at higher organisational levels because academic staff from pathway leaders upwards are heavily involved in academic reviews and validations. Peer review is central to QM at ..... and, again, senior staff are involved here.
The variation that exists tends to be at lecturer level with differing project briefs and differences in the amount of course information provided to students by lecturers.

Self-appraisal tends to head off many problems with this self-appraisal being strongly linked to the aims and objectives of particular courses.

DO YOU SEE ANY POTENTIAL FOR TENSION BETWEEN MANAGERIALISM AND PROFESSIONALISM

Undoubtedly, academic staff are often irritated by the paperwork and the judgements associated with QM.
However, peer review does involve academic staff in QM and this is helpful in terms of acceptability. The validation and re-validation process also greatly involves staff and, when an external assessor is appointed, (s)he is nominated by the Head of School or, if not, the nomination is discussed fully with the Head of School.

DO YOU SEE ANY VALUE IN YOUR HEI ADOPTING ISO 9000 AND/OR INVESTORS IN PEOPLE?

..... has not been involved with ISO 9000.

There has been an interest in IIP for the last eighteen months. This has signalled an interest in a broader approach to QM, encompassing finance, staff development, marketing and computer services as well as academic issues.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE LIKELY MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS IN
QUALITY MANAGEMENT IN THE HE SECTOR?

This depends on the QAAHE. The Head of QAAHE, John Randall, has a relatively small staff of ex-HEQC and HEFCE Quality Assurance Division members.

The small staff is likely to mean that there will be a pulling away from very detailed teaching assessments.

After the existing round of assessments are completed by 2000, it is likely that far greater use will be made of Codes of Practices.
As long as internal systems adhere to these codes, then QAAHE will simply be involved in some "light touch" sampling.
Such an approach would be more cost effective than relying on regular, detailed assessments of teaching.

Tile development of a National Curriculum in HE would seem to be a massive undertaking which would require very high levels of resourcing.

Interview with Dr ....., Warden of ..... College, Oxbridge.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON ..... COLLEGE - CULTURE, etc.

At ..... College, a collegial culture dominates and encompasses all staff; support staff as well as academics.

There is a relatively relaxed management style that is very much more people than task orientated.

Collegiality means that all academic members of staff play a significant part in the management of the College and thus there is a participative approach to decision-making.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE PRIME PURPOSES OF HIGHER EDUCATION?

A major purpose is to develop an individual's propensity to embrace the life of the mind. This involves encouraging criticality with the elimination of "loose" thinking. In essence, the achievement of this particular aim is encouraged by the notion of liberal education.
Oxbridge College is an institution that is highly suited to the provision of liberal and challenging academic programmes. It is an "elite university" in the sense that it can demand the highest grades at A level and it draws its students disproportionately from an "elite" of moderately well-to-do families.
However, there is a need for a continuation of the diversity in higher education with other types of HEI providing very different but equally worthwhile academic programmes.
Sadly, there is the obsession of certain academics from Oxbridge and Redbrick universities with the higher education "gold standard" that existed up until the 1950s and involved catering for just a very small minority of school leavers.
Oxbridge and Redbrick universities should attempt to address the old problem of capturing the imagination and energy of bright children from poorer backgrounds.

WHAT IS QUALITY IN HE?

This relates to the educational encounter with the broadening and deepening of a student's awareness and thinking. It also requires the student to be more challenging and to ask in-depth questions. It is the lecturer's rôle to encourage the student to be more interrogative.
A democratic, collegial and learning environment is required if the intellectual process is to flourish.

MEASURING THIS QUALITY

Quality is "measured" in terms of the outcomes of students' work – essays and examination scripts, for example. However, there cannot be precision when attempting to "measure" depth and breadth of thinking. The marks for essays and examinations are just indicators. Evidence of a student's intellectual development can be found through encounters during seminar discussions and during tutorials.
There is necessarily a subjective judgement by the lecturer but this is reasonable as (s)he is an authority on the particular academic subject. This subjective judgement made on the basis of a range of indicators can determine a student's progress away from "intellectual infancy" towards greater criticality and intellectual awareness.

DO YOU SEE ANY VALUE IN YOUR HEI ADOPTING ISO9000 AND/OR INVESTORS IN PEOPLE?

No. Schemes such as these have little or nothing to offer ..... College and similar universities and colleges. There are other more relevant and long-standing indicators of the quality of higher education provision.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE LIKELY MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HE SECTOR?

For universities such as Oxbridge, the most immediate "burning issue" is the debate about cautiously lifting the cap on tuition fees. Although uncapping is needed by the dozen or so "elite" universities in order to provide greater resource levels to absorb the "triple-A" applicants, new universities whose students are both hard up and possess few formal qualifications also need appropriate and adequate resources.
If the lid on tuition fees is to be lifted, realism is needed all round. Students must forget the mantra of "free" higher education. Justice demands that those who get most out of Higher Education, must pay the most. The best-off families ought to contribute more than they do and ought to be induced to do it sooner rather than later with discounts for upfront payment.
In practical terms, students could pay back the higher levels of loans through the mechanism of a graduate tax that is triggered when earnings are at a reasonable level.

SM/RED

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Interview with Professor **Pro-Vice-Chancellor of the University of**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON UNIVERSITY OF - CULTURE, etc.

considers itself to be a traditional, research-orientated university.
There are 40 academic departments and this leads to a high level of diversity in terms of the academic programmes offered to students. In turn, this provides for flexibility of student choice, often needed as many students are not always sure of what they want to study in their first year. Students are able to change courses in the early part of their period of undergraduate study.
The University emphasises research and its Vice-Chancellor is a member of the "94 Group", which is a pressure group like the "Russell Group" that is determined to protect the interests of research and researchers in universities. The "94 Group" is smaller than the "Russell Group" and does not have any members from Medical Schools.
There is a benign management system.

PROFESSOR 'S ROLE AT THE INSTITUTION

Senate elected Professor as a Pro-Vice-Chancellor for a period of four years.
The Senior Management Team consists of the Vice Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and two Pro-Vice-Chancellors; one for teaching and learning (Professor) and one for research.
He is both a senior academic, with professorial duties in the Department of Archaeology, and a senior manager with strategic responsibilities for teaching and learning. He has drafted recently a strategy document for teaching and learning. At present academic staff are discussing this document before it is submitted to Senate for adoption. The extent of discussion illustrates the collegial approach that predominates. However, recent financial imperatives and constraints have necessitated the greater use of a "top down" approach.
Professor has a significant involvement with all QAA reviews. He considers the QAA to be an agent of change.
Lessons have been learnt from reviews and the changes that have been made as a result of these reviews have become embedded and part of general professional practice.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE PRIME PURPOSES OF HIGHER EDUCATION?

To develop critical, work and lifelong skills (Dearing, 1997). There are liberal and vocational purposes in higher education and it is necessary to balance the two. An emphasis on either of the two polar extremes is not appropriate as a total concentration on liberal education ignores the world of work and similar concentration of vocational education suggests training rather than education.

WHAT IS QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION?

Quality requires the development and enhancement of higher education provision.
This is more likely to be achieved if academic staff, as with students, are encouraged to reflect critically on their work. The Dearing Report acknowledged the value of staff development in enhancing the quality of provision.
The role of research in informing teaching is a vital one and contributes greatly to the quality of higher education provision.
The Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) is a reasonable and a robust measure of research.

ARE THERE ANY DIFFICULTIES IN GAUGING QUALITY?

A criticism of the RAE has been that it tends not to recognise applied research to the same extent as other forms of research and, in general, this has disadvantaged the modern universities who are more likely to adopt this approach.
As departments are the unit of assessment, another problem with the RAE is that it can work against inter-disciplinarity.

IS THERE A TENSION BETWEEN MANAGERIALISM AND PROFESSIONALISM?

Recent financial constraints have meant that there is more tension now. However, there have been no redundancies involving academic staff in the twenty-five years that Professor has been a member of staff at University.
This could change, though, if financial pressures increased through, for example, the need to fund a relatively large pay award to staff.
Essentially, academic staff should take charge of quality management. This has largely been the case at University and so there has been little tension between managerialism and professionalism.
There is little central support for departments during a subject review. Academics are left to "get on with it" and it is "left to them".
There is a very light touch from the centre and the central services have a high level of trust and confidence in the departmental staff.

DO YOU SEE ANY VALUE IN YOUR HEI ADOPTING ISO 9000 AND/OR INVESTORS IN PEOPLE?

There is no interest in either of these quality management systems.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE LIKELY MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HE SECTOR?

Ten to fifteen years ago, the Archaeology Department established agreed criteria for the study of the subject. This was a similar process to that to be undertaken by the subject benchmarking groups. However, the term benchmarking seems to be inappropriate as in higher education the process is very flexible and not nearly as rigid and prescriptive as in business and industry.
At the moment, the pilot benchmarks and thresholds for chemistry, history and law have been uncontentious.
Benchmarks will have little impact in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) where good practice already exists. They will not be challenging in these institutions.
Some HEIs will find it very difficult to sustain research. Each successive RAE is causing further polarisation into either research-dominant or teaching-dominant institutions.

Interview with ....., Pro Vice-Chancellor of the University of .....

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WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE PRIME PURPOSES OF HIGHER EDUCATION?

Essentially, HE has two main purposes - research and professional development. These functions can be considered in five areas.
(i) To provide the infrastructure for the "disinterested" development of knowledge and understanding. "But for" universities, this would not be provided.
(ii) To provide education in recognised academic disciplines. Again, "but for" universities, this would not be provided.
(iii) To provide higher level technical, professional and vocational development. There is a functional imperative here with the need to respond to the demands of a variety of stakeholders. Not a "but for" because other institutions are also able to discharge this function.
(iv) To help develop an equal opportunity society.
(v) To contribute to the economic development of a region.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER CONSTITUTES QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION?

Quality relates back to the above objectives of HE and a consideration as to how closely they have been achieved.

Research - The extent to which there is genuine understanding by the students and a conformance with the canons and epistemology of the particular academic disciplines. Quality also relates to the degree to which students' knowledge is accepted as insightful by the relevant academic communities.

Professional development - At the end of the educational process, is the student an effective practitioner in a particular field and able to use autonomously the appropriate skills?

ARE THERE ANY DIFFICULTIES IN GAUGING THESE QUALITY INDICATORS?

Where there are clear aims and objectives, it is possible to assess how far these have been met. However, not all aims and objectives in HE are clear-cut and, consequently, the assessment of certain indicators is problematic. Overall, the HEFCE methodology is appropriate and generally operates effectively.

WHAT IS YOUR VIEW ON THE RELATIVE MERITS OF QUALITY AUDIT AND QUALITY ASSESSMENT?

There is very little point in Quality Audit. It is possible to establish effective systems but these systems do not, *per se*, ensure that there is high quality educational provision. The establishment of HEFQ was largely an attempt by Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) to satisfy a sceptical and increasingly demanding Government, without having to submit themselves to a Quality Management (QM) approach based on Quality Assessment.
Quality Assessment provides information on whether aims and objectives are being achieved. These aims and objectives will vary according to the mission statements of the various HEIs. It concentrates on outputs and not inputs. If there was an emphasis on inputs, many HEIs would be disadvantaged - e.g. "new" universities - whereas others would be advantaged - e.g. Oxford and Cambridge colleges.

IS THE ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE AT YOUR HEI CONDUCIVE TO THE ACCEPTANCE AND ASSIMILATION OF QUALITY MANAGEMENT APPROACHES?

There is some resistance to the new ways and methods. However, academics do not have the power to resist outright these developments. Not all members of senior management teams in HEIs are totally committed to QM and this is often sensed by academics.

DOES QM INVOLVE TENSION BETWEEN PROFESSIONALISM AND MANAGERIALISM?

Yes. This tension would be worrying if QM involved an undermining of professional autonomy. However, this is not generally the case. Professionals are involved with the establishment of academic aims and objectives. It is often the case that poor practice is being excused through reference to a diminution of professional autonomy. The structure of the Senior Management Team (SMT) at this HEI assists with an accommodation of professional and managerial demands. Links between the two are developed through the posts of Pro Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Vice-Chancellor. Both are temporary posts (up to six years) and are held by academics who are part of the SMT.

DO YOU SEE ANY VALUE IN YOUR HEI ADOPTING ISO9000 AND/OR INVESTORS IN PEOPLE?

Not as far as academic provision is concerned. There is often some difficulty in discerning and establishing academic aims and objectives in relation to ISO9000 and I.I.P.. In non-academic contexts, ISO9000 and I.I.P. have something to offer. With service provision (e.g. catering, maintenance, security, etc.) at the HEI, it is possible

to identify clear quality criteria. Whether these QM approaches are adopted in service areas of the HEI will depend on an assessment of the costs and benefits that would accrue.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE LIKELY MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HE SECTOR?

The Dearing Committee is likely to recommend that levels 0 and 1 should be provided by Colleges of Further Education where unit costs are lower. Provision of levels 2 and 3 would be by HEIs.
There will be a move towards HE being considered as a product with clear standards being established.
There could be greater use of educational packages to ensure the standard of provision through standardisation. This might well be seen as a threat to academic autonomy but it would help to ensure tighter control. It would also help ensure that the education provided was "fit for purpose".

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Interview with Professor ....., Pro-Vice-Chancellor of ..... University.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON ..... UNIVERSITY - CULTURE, etc.

The university is situated on four campuses. As there are self-contained subject specialisms at these campuses (e.g. design at ....., education at ..... and sports science at .....), the need to integrate them is not so pressing as it would be if this were not the case. Most of the administration is conducted at the ..... site.
Generally, it is a traditional, conservative university with some pockets of radicalism.
The culture of the university has been shaped by significant expansion during the last five years, particularly with the incorporation of the ..... into the University in 1995. There is now a wider spread of subjects offered to students although engineering is still the largest subject area.

PROFESSOR .....' ROLE AT THE INSTITUTION

Professor ..... allocates approximately two days a week to her professorial duties – teaching, programme administration, research supervision and publishing – and three days a week to work relating to her position as Pro-Vice-Chancellor. This involves taking a leading role during a continuation audit and Teacher Quality Assessment and all matters relating to the QAA such as subject reviews, for example. She chairs the University Strategic Planning Committee that oversees functions such as finance, site services and the responsibilities of the registry.
She is a member of the Senior Management Team that comprises the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, the Vice-Principal and the three Pro-Vice-Chancellors.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE PRIME PURPOSES OF HIGHER EDUCATION?

The major purposes are to give access to lifelong learning and develop in students an awareness of what it is to be a learner with a knowledge of themselves as learners. An important learning outcome is students having the confidence to cope with unknown and/or uncertain situations.
As well as the universities' role at the individual student level, universities should foster the learning of research teams and encourage the search for new knowledge.

There is also the issue of academic standards. Society allows universities to set these. At present, much of university work is content driven. There needs to be a balance between content and context with greater emphasis at this time required on the latter.
The debate involving the dualism of liberal education and vocational education is of some value as an analytical tool but it is generally unhelpful because it has no practical value in terms of student learning outcomes.

WHAT IS QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION?

At an institutional level, quality can be gauged using a number of performance indicators developed by the Treasury Working Group. These indicators include:

- Proper standards for academic awards with complete trust in these standards;
- Financial probity;
- Good research record;
- High quality teaching;
- Help for students in achieving fulfilling employment;
- Development of students as open-minded and responsible members of society;
- Creation of a pleasant learning environment;
- Effective planning for the future.

At an academic programme level, quality relates to the student experience, the development of self-critical students and the fulfilment of the programme's stated aims and objectives.

IS THERE A TENSION BETWEEN MANAGERIALISM AND PROFESSIONALISM?

Members of academic staff need to be "sharp" in their self-evaluation. Universities receive a great amount of public money and it is important that staff are accountable. It is too easy for staff to be self-satisfied.
There needs to be a balance between accountability and academic autonomy.
Accountability is through the institution. It is possible to provide this with the model used in the National Health Service Trusts where a Chief Executive, often without a health service background, deals with outside agencies. Thus, it is the centre rather than the professionals that collates and passes on the information that is required. The centre asks the professionals for the information and this can cause tension. It can imply a lack of trust in the professionals by the centre.
The QAA is developing a system that involves professionals in direct engagement with the outside agency, thereby reducing tension.

DO YOU SEE ANY VALUE IN YOUR HEI ADOPTING ISO 9000 AND/OR INVESTORS IN PEOPLE?

ISO 9002 is a contractual requirement of the Ministry of Defence for certain academic programmes provided by the which is part of the Faculty of Technology. Senior managers are not interested in Investors in People in terms of the "badge" and the marketing advantage it is claimed to give. Its value is in terms of helping to release the potential of all members of staff.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE LIKELY MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR?

Benchmarking, thresholds (set for pass/third class honours degrees) and codes of practice would seem to be establishing a "lighter touch" approach to quality management for those institutions able to demonstrate that their review and Quality Assurance systems are robust. These institutions will be largely "left alone".
The benchmarks will be written by academics and relate to general learning outcomes rather than content. There is little danger of a national curriculum developing in higher education, as has been the case in the primary and secondary sectors.
The pass degree/third class honours degree statements for chemistry, law and history are challenging and suggest that standards are not being compromised.
There is likely to be a continued increase in higher education student numbers. More does not mean worse as the skills of university entrants have both changed and improved. For this reason, it is to be expected that a higher proportion of any cohort should be able to benefit from higher education.
At present, about 33% of a particular cohort study in Higher Education Institutions. There should be an expectation of a rise to circa 60% as, for example, is the case in Sweden and parts of south-east Asia.

Interview with Mr ....., Director of Resources at the University of ..... .

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE UNIVERSITY OF ..... – CULTURE, etc.

The University of ..... was formed by an amalgamation of several colleges and, until 1992, was known as the Polytechnic of .....
The University's Strategic Plan involves decentralisation on four campuses.
There is a very broad organisational culture. The appointment of a new Vice-Chancellor has led to a great amount of cultural change. Widening student access is a major aim and this is likely to lead to an even more diverse culture.
The senior management team encourage members of staff to participate in the decision-making process and the Vice-Chancellor has encouraged a more participative approach to management.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE PRIME PURPOSES OF HIGHER EDUCATION?

The dissemination of knowledge related to moral-based activities. It is not the traditional "navel-gazing" approach to knowledge but one involving the development of knowledge related to industry, commerce and public service. There is a clear focus on what is required and there are unambiguous objectives and outcomes that are linked to relevant industries.
There is not the dissemination of knowledge in terms of traditional liberal education although the knowledge development processes associated with liberal education may be used.
It is important to be aware of the needs of the customers.
However, lecturers are often arrogant and more concerned with their own needs than those of the customers.

WHAT IS QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION?

The "more means worse" argument is flawed as there is confusion about what is quality, what is being measured and how it is measured. It is important to be clear about the purpose of an academic programme and then assess whether it is fit for that purpose.

There is the importance of encouraging students to be concerned for lifelong learning and be analytical and reflective. However, the key purpose is to develop transferable skills that can be used in the workplace. After all, employability is an important issue to students and the wider community

Outcomes if a quality education is provided are:
* Understanding of concepts

* Good written and verbal communication skills
* The development of a questioning mind
* The development of specific vocational skills
* Enthusiastic, committed, flexible and adaptable students

ARE THERE ANY DIFFICULTIES IN GAUGING THESE QUALITY INDICATORS?

These outcomes above need to be "measured".
There are the usual QM internal processes - student evaluations, programme team views, reviews and reports to either undergraduate or postgraduate Standards and Development Committees, Examination Boards, External Examiners Reports and Programme Action Plans.
Quality is gauged against academic programme aims and objectives - the University Subject and Department Boards establish these.
All proposed courses undergo internal scrutiny and then external scrutiny when representatives of the business community sit on the validation or re-validation panel.
A major problem with this QM process is that there is a lot of writing down. This can be seen as a lack of trust in an organisation. Academic staff infer that this is an indication that they are not being trusted. This does create tension between the professional and managerialist approaches within an HEI.

DO YOU SEE ANY VALUE IN YOUR HEI ADOPTING ISO9000 AND/OR INVESTORS IN PEOPLE?

Yes. The University makes use of both ISO 9000 series and IiP. Both of these schemes help to monitor key input and process indicators and thereby ensure that the quality of service provision is of the appropriate level.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE LIKELY MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS IN THE H.E. SECTOR?

The slow expansion in the HE sector, particularly in areas where there are links with Colleges of Further Education.
Curriculum changes as highlighted by the Dearing Report. In the past, there have been very few changes here. There could be a move towards more student-led learning as the major means of delivering mass Higher Education with a diminishing unit of resource.
Greater use of Information Technology.
A move to criteria-referenced rather than norm-referenced assessment.
The requirement of explicit statements of learning outcomes.
An emphasis on the development of core generic skills.

SM/CHE

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Interview with ....., ... of ..... at ..... .

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ..... - CULTURE, etc.

There are two sites. The ..... site is relatively small with a mixture of old and new buildings. Some of the older buildings date from the late 1830s.
There is a friendly, welcoming atmosphere with the visitor being put at ease by academic and support staff.
The prominent position of the College Chapel *reflects the Christian ethos of the* Institution.

.....'S ROLE AT THE INSTITUTION

There are three faculties - Arts and Humanities. Education and Science.
.....is ..... and Head of the School ..... As well as having responsibility for all academic and pastoral matters relating to the Faculty, he has responsibility for academic fields and programme management. The Faculty of Arts and Humanities provides the academic input to the ..... degree programme.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE PRIME PURPOSES OF HIGHER EDUCATION?

Higher Education should help students to think independently by being thought-provoking. It should encourage students to be analytical and reflective. It should empower them. Ian subscribes to the notion of liberal education.
As well as developing the mind. Higher Education should provide students with transferable skills. "Semesterisation" at the Institute has necessitated the re-validation of degree programmes and all the modules of these programmes, which are due to start in September 1999, have details of the transferable skills that are to be developed. Such skill development is reflected in the learning outcomes of the modules.
Achieving these aims and objectives requires the development of teaching and learning strategies appropriate to the students at the Institute. A large proportion of the students are mature and have gained entry through Access courses. With reductions in naval personnel locally, there are a number of former Royal Navy employees. Teaching and learning strategies at the Institute have to take account of the diversity of student age. ability and background. The needs of such a range of students are thought to be best met

by teaching and learning strategies that provide for high levels of engagement between the students and between the students and the academic staff. Contact time between a student and an academic member of staff is maintained at the highest possible level.

WHAT IS QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION?

Measuring "graduateness" requires gauging skill and knowledge acquisition. The Institute has level (1, 2, 3, M) descriptors in terms of learning outcomes. Programme aims and objectives are clearly stated. Quality programmes are those that most nearly attain the stated aims, objectives and learning outcomes.

There is a very clear Institute Quality Assurance procedure which is designed to gauge the quality of academic programmes. Each programme is subject to annual review which requires programme directors to reflect on their programme in the October following an academic year. A programme review report is compiled by a Programme Board through a combination of self-assessment (using the six Quality Assurance Agency assessment areas), External Examiners' reports and student and staff evaluations. The review report concludes with a programme Action Plan. The Dean discusses the self-assessment scores with programme directors before they are finalised. The programme review report is considered by the Academic Standards Committee in the following January and any non-academic issues (e.g. car parking, teaching facilities) are drawn out and put into an Institute Action Plan. Items on this Action Plan are prioritised. At all stages, the degree of student involvement is significant. The whole process is open with all parties having access to information. The only exception to this is when, for example, a student is named in an External Examiner's report.

ARE THERE ANY DIFFICULTIES IN GAUGING THESE QUALITY INDICATORS?

External Examiners' reports, feedback on ex-students from employers and academic tutors (when they have undertaken postgraduate studies at another Higher Education Institution) and the interaction of Institute staff with lecturers and managers at other Higher Education Institutions all help to indicate the quality of academic programmes.

However, there can be some tension between the Directorate and academic staff over the rating given for resource provision. The latter will sometimes give a low rating here (1 or 2) in order to press for more resources for their programme area.

Also, the level of commitment to the review process can vary because some academic staff are particularly hard-pressed for time or because they lack either the ability or willingness to be reflective and objective with regard to their programme during the last academic year.

DO YOU SEE ANY VALUE IN YOUR HEI ADOPTING ISO 9000 AND /OR INVESTORS IN PEOPLE?

I.I.P. status was pursued over three years ago but it was the responsibility of a particular Deputy Director who is no longer at the Institute. Interest in I.I.P. waned when this particular person left.

WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE LIKELY MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS IN THE HE SECTOR?

More aspects of Quality Management will be devolved to Higher Education Institutions with a reduction in the direct Quality Assurance role for central bodies such as the QAA. The days of week-long assessment and audit visits are numbered. This is a most time-consuming process for all concerned. There will be more "snap" visits. Greater emphasis will be placed on the perceived quality of students' work.

Interview with Mr ....., Assistant Director of ..... College

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON ..... - CULTURE, etc.

Staff are homogeneous because of the relatively narrow range of subjects offered by the College. There are three sites, each site concentrating on particular areas of art and design. Much work has been undertaken during recent years to integrate the staff from the three sites that comprise the College. Generally, there is a common culture with the staff being fully aware of the College's mission statement.

WHAT DO YOU REGARD AS "QUALITY" IN HIGHER EDUCATION?

The formal enshrinement of institutional consciousness. There should be a reflection on what is happening. The institution should state what it wants to achieve and should then take stock and consider whether it is achieving its objectives. If it is not achieving its objectives, then it should analyse what has gone wrong and why it went wrong. Quality involves assessing fitness for purpose.

HOW DOES THIS FIT WITH WHAT YOU SEE AS THE PURPOSE OF HIGHER EDUCATION?

This institution is vocationally focused. Approximately 86% of students find employment soon after graduating. There is a relatively homogeneous group of students who are aiming to develop a career in the Arts. The purpose and motives of the students at this College are paramount when considering whether the institution adopts a "liberal" curriculum or one that is more vocational. The development of transferable skills is important for the students.

HOW DOES THE QUALITY ASSURANCE/AUDIT SYSTEM OPERATE AT THE COLLEGE?

There are clear and explicit aims and objectives for all courses. Courses are evaluated termly by staff and students. The courses are evaluated in terms of whether the aims and objectives are being met.

WHAT IS THE BALANCE BETWEEN PROCESS-ORIENTATION AND PEOPLE ORIENTATION WITH REGARD TO QUALITY ASSURANCE/AUDIT?

Managerialism is growing in importance and Quality Assurance (Audit) is a key component of this. Often lecturers will consider that there is a tension between professionalism and managerialism. If they are a course director, then they have managerial responsibilities. Quality Assurance is a part of these responsibilities. If

there is conflict between managerial and professional aspects of their post, then the former should be given emphasis and priority.

WHAT IS DONE TO ASSIST COURSE DIRECTORS TO DISCHARGE EFFECTIVELY THEIR MANAGERIAL RESPONSIBILITIES?

Training is important here but it is acknowledged that some members of staff are not prepared to reduce the professional component of their post. Sometimes professional staff have had problems with the managerial demands of their work. Such people should not consider applying to be a course director if they are not prepared or are unable to undertake managerial tasks.

IS THE ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE CONDUCIVE TO QUALITY MANAGEMENT?

The quality assurance (audit) structure is linked to organisational structure. There are weekly staff meetings, School Boards, a Quality Assurance Board and an Academic Board. These committees perform a course review function. Quality Management systems and structures parallel the institutional chain of responsibility and thus there is a close link between responsibility and accountability.

DOES THE GREATER ACCOUNTABILITY IMPOSED BY QUALITY MANAGE SYSTEMS REDUCE LECTURER AUTONOMY?

No. The academic aims and objectives of all courses are established and then evaluated by academic staff. This is done at course level by the course team and at the Academic Board by senior academic staff.

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE / IS09000

Initiatives such as these can help to structure Quality Management systems but they are not needed by this institution at this time. There is a danger that the paperwork required by IIP and IS0 9000 can hamper the institution's efficiency.

WHAT DO YOU THINK SHOULD BE THE BALANCE BETWEEN QUALITY AUDIT AND QUALITY ASSESSMENT?

Quality audit should be paramount. This is undertaken by the institution. A problem with quality assessment is that it can be used as a means of controlling Higher Education Institutions. However, political factors are likely to mean that quality assessment rather than quality audit will predominate in the new Quality Management agency.

IS THERE A PROBLEM IN ESTABLISHING OBJECTIVES FOR ARTISTIC SUBJECTS WHICH ARE TAUGHT BY THIS COLLEGE?

No. It is not a problem to establish agreed and acceptable levels of knowledge and understanding for primary, secondary and tertiary education. Anyone who is not clear of their objectives at a Higher Education Institution should not be working there. Objectives in higher education are measurable. The aims of various levels of higher education are very clear. For example, at first degree level a student should be able to know and reconstruct the totality of what they have studied. The ability to do this is reflected in the class of the degree that is awarded. There is no difficulty with measurement. HEIs and their staff should be properly accountable.

APPENDIX C

Letter to prospective questionnaire respondents, Questionnaire, Questionnaire data sheet

Canterbury Christ Church
University College

Date

Dear

Senior Staff Perceptions of Quality in Higher Education Institutions

I am undertaking research, as part of my PhD studies, into senior members of staff's perceptions of quality in Higher Education Institutions.

I would be most grateful if you would give me some of your time and expertise to assist with this research. Your name has been selected randomly from a cluster sample of senior staff. I am able to assure complete confidentiality and anonymity for you and your organisation.

The letter coding on the questionnaire refers to the stakeholder group (Senior Manager, Senior Administrator or Senior Academic) and the numeric coding to the type of university or college.

At the back of the questionnaire is a coloured control slip which, on receipt of the completed questionnaire, will be removed immediately by secretarial staff. The purpose of the control slip is to monitor the returns without respondents being identified.

There are just six questions on the questionnaire and, although they are detailed, I anticipate that it would take between five and ten minutes to complete the questionnaire. Please feel free to add comments in the blank boxes if you so wish.

A post-paid envelope has been attached for the convenience of your reply.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking you very much indeed in anticipation of your most valued assistance.

Yours sincerely

Laurie Lomas
Principal Lecturer

The [illegible]

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Web site www.cant.ac.uk

Principal Professor Michael Wright

Q1. Based on the following two definitions, please circle the point on the continua below which represents your opinion about the purpose(s) of higher education.

Definitions:

Liberal education is, "... based on the nature of knowledge itself, and not on the predilections of (students), the demands of society, or the whims of politicians. Liberal education is concerned with developing the mind and helping students to understand their culture."
Hirst, P. (1965) 'Liberal education and the nature of knowledge', in Archambault, R. (ed.). *Philosophical Analysis and Education.* London: Routledge. p.115.

Vocational education involves a product-orientation towards higher education with, "The need for graduates who are in tune with the enterprise culture, who are aware of the needs of industry and commerce, who know how to learn and have had the experience of the world of work."
Training Agency (1989*) Enterprise in Higher Education.* Sheffield: Department of Employment.

Liberal
Education

Very unimportant **1** **2** **3** **4** **5** Very important

Vocational
Education

Very unimportant **1** **2** **3** **4** **5** Very important

Comments: (To include other key purposes of Higher Education that you regard as important.)

Q2. Below are four definitions of quality from Harvey, L. and Green, D. (1993) Defining Quality. *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, vol.18 no.1, pp 9-34.

a. Quality as Perfection

This is the traditional, classic notion of quality that equates it with excellence. For example, a Rolls Royce car is often regarded as perfect.

b. Quality as Fitness for Purpose

Fitness for purpose requires that the product or service fulfils a customer's needs, requirements or desires.

c. Quality as Value for Money

Quality is assessed in terms of return on investment or expenditure. If the same outcome is achieved at a lower cost then, as a consequence, the customer has a quality product or service.

d. Quality as Transformation

Quality is viewed in broader terms by taking a transformative view of change. It involves a change in form from one state to another, just as water can be transformed into ice. In higher education, it is the student who is transformed by the higher education experience.

Please allocate 100 points amongst these definitions to indicate your opinion regarding what **should** be the balance of quality in higher education.

(a) Quality as Perfection _____

(b) Quality as Fitness for Purpose _____

(c) Quality as Value for Money _____

(d) Quality as Transformation _____

Total 1 0 0

Comments:

Q.3 Below are summarising statements of the four major types of organisational culture to be found in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

These categories, which are not mutually exclusive, were discerned by Dopson, S. and McNay, I. (1996) 'Organisational Culture', in Warner, D. and Palfreyman, D. (eds.). *Higher Education Management.*

Please indicate by a tick in the appropriate box your perception of the strength of each of these cultures in your HEI.

Collegial Culture

The intense desire to protect and preserve a particular field of specialist knowledge and practice. Emphasis on the academic autonomy and freedom of the individual. Very much a person culture with senior management seeking consensus.

Very Strong	Strong	Weak	Very Weak

Bureaucratic Culture

Great use is made of hierarchies and committees in the decision-making process. There are clear rules and regulations with most of an HEI's business being conducted through meetings. Bureaucracy offers consistency of treatment for all in the organisation with decisions being based on rationality.

Very Strong	Strong	Weak	Very Weak

Entrepreneurial Culture

A keen awareness of the needs and demands of clients and customers in the higher education sector. Examples of an entrepreneurial culture in HEIs are the development of business development units and the use of franchising as a means of increasing market share.

Very Strong	Strong	Weak	Very Weak

Corporate Culture

Power is centralised and held by an HEI's Directorate or Senior Management Team. Key appointments are made through selection (by the Directorate/Senior Management Team) rather than election. Major decisions are made by members of an executive rather than a committee, often because of the need for a speedy response to outside agencies such as HEFCE, for example.

Very Strong.	Strong	Weak	Very Weak

Q.3a Please rank in order below (1= most applicable and 4= least applicable) the culture or cultures that most suit your philosophy of Higher Education and your style of management.

COLLEGIAL	
BUREAUCRATIC	
ENTREPRENEURIAL	
CORPORATE	

Comments:

Q4. On a scale of 1 to 5:

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements:

	1 - 5
Central government's exhortation to increase student numbers during the last twenty years has meant that HEIs have lowered their standards for student admissions.	
The continued high proportion of 1st and Upper 2nd class degrees shows that standards are being maintained.	
As there has been a move to mass higher education in the UK, "more means worse".	
The continued high proportion of 1st and Upper 2nd class is explained by the greater use of continuous assessment and less reliance on "traditional" examinations.	
The need to recruit relatively high numbers of students and to limit the percentage of student withdrawals has led to a "dumbing down" in the higher education sector.	
Standards are not falling. There is simply greater diversity and thus there is a broadening of what is being assessed.	

Comments:

Q5. On a scale of 1 to 5:

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	2	3	4	5

please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement with the following statements:

	1 - 5
Subject benchmarking will lead to a greater prescription of the content of the Higher Education curriculum.	
Benchmarking involves the definition of overarching general skills and concepts rather then subject content.	
Benchmarking cannot possibly take into account the great diversity of missions, aims and objectives that exists in the Higher Education Institutions in England.	
Benchmarking will facilitate the comparison of standards in a particular subject area across the whole range of Higher Education Institutions	
Benchmarking will reduce the autonomy of academic staff in determining the curriculum.	
Benchmarking will help to improve academic standards by defining minimum acceptable levels of attainment.	

Comments:

Thank you very much for completing the questionnaire. Your time and assistance are greatly appreciated. Please return in the enclosed pre-paid envelope.

QUESTIONNAIRE DATA SHEET

StC	HEIc	1LE	1VE	2P	2F	2V	2T	3CC	3BC	3EC	3CpC	3aC	3aB	3aE	3aCp	4i	4ii	4iii	4iv	4v	4vi	5i	5ii	5iii	5iv	5v	5vi	
A	6	5	3	10	40	10	40	1	2	2	4	1st	3rd	2nd	4th	2	3	4	2	4	2	4	2	2	2	4	2	1
B	6	5	4	0	10	20	70	2	3	2	3	4th	3rd	2nd	1st	1	4	3	2	2	4	2	2	2	4	4	4	50
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B	2	3	3	25	25	10	40	4	3	1	2	2nd	1st	3rd	4th	2	3	4	3	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	3	33
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B	5	5	3	0	40	30	30	3	2	2	3	2nd	1st	4th	1st	2	3	4	2	5	2	3	3	2	3	2	4	57
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C	6	4	4	10	30	20	40	2	4	2	3	2nd	4th	1st	3rd	3	4	4	2	4	2	2	2	3	3	2	5	81

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C	2	4	2	0	40	0	60	4	1	2	1	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	1	5	1	3	2	3	2	4	2	2	2	3	20
A	2	4	3	40	15	20	25	3	3	3	2	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	2	4	3	3	2	4	4	2	2	3	2	4	120
A	4	5	5	10	50	20	20	3	3	4	3	9	9	1st	9	5	4	2	4	2	4	1	4	2	4	1	4	141
A	2	3	5	25	25	25	25	2	2	3	3	2nd	4th	3rd	1st	2	1	3	5	3	2	2	1	4	2	2	2	183
A	1	5	3	10	15	0	75	4	3	1	2	1st	2nd	4th	3rd	1	5	2	3	1	2	1	2	1	4	1	3	156
B	1	5	4	30	30	20	20	4	4	2	1	2nd	4th	1st	3rd	3	4	3	3	3	2	2	3	2	3	2	3	174
C	4	4	3	60	20	5	15	2	3	3	2	3rd	1st	2nd	4th	1	4	3	4	2	2	2	2	3	3	4	2	187
C	3	4	3	100	0	0	0	2	3	3	2	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	2	4	3	2	2	4	4	2	4	3	5	3	195
C	2	4	3	15	15	10	60	4	3	1	3	1st	3rd	1st	3rd	3	4	3	1	2	3	1	4	2	3	2	2	190
A	5	3	3	50	50	0	0	3	3	2	2	3rd	4th	2nd	1st	1	3	3	2	4	2	2	1	1	3	2	3	138
B	4	2	4	15	30	15	40	3	2	2	2	4th	3rd	1st	2nd	1	3	4	2	2	2	1	3	1	4	2	3	113
C	3	5	3	10	10	10	70	1	2	3	4	1st	3rd	4th	2nd	1	4	1	4	1	4	1	4	2	4	2	4	200
C	5	5	3	70	10	10	10	2	3	3	4	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	1	4	2	4	2	4	2	4	4	2	4	2	198
B	1	5	5	25	25	25	25	4	3	2	1	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	1	5	1	5	1	5	1	3	1	5	1	5	207
B	7	4	3	10	30	15	45	3	3	2	2	2nd	1st	3rd	4th	2	2	4	3	3	2	2	4	2	2	2	2	194
C	2	5	2	30	0	0	70	4	2	3	2	1st	4th	2nd	3rd	3	3	3	3	3	3	9	9	9	9	9	9	165
C	6	4	4	10	15	15	60	2	4	3	4	4th	2nd	3rd	1st	2	3	4	2	4	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	87
A	6	3	4	10	40	10	40	3	3	2	3	2nd	4th	1st	3rd	4	3	5	2	5	1	2	4	2	3	4	3	48
C	4	3	4	0	40	20	40	3	3	2	2	1st	4th	2nd	3rd	1	3	3	2	4	3	2	2	3	2	2	2	191
B	2	5	4	10	70	0	20	1	3	3	4	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	4	4	5	3	4	2	2	2	2	2	1	4	182

A	6	5	1	0	20	0	80	3	2	2	2	1st	4th	3rd	2nd	1	5	1	4	1	5	1	3	2	4	5	5	29
B	5	4	3	5	40	40	15	2	2	3	3	2nd	4th	3rd	1st	3	2	4	3	4	2	1	4	1	2	2	4	161
B	6	5	4	20	30	10	40	2	3	3	2	3rd	1st	2nd	4th	3	3	4	4	2	2	1	2	3	4	2	3	196
B	7	4	5	24	26	24	26	3	2	3	4	3rd	4th	2nd	1st	4	3	4	2	4	2	3	2	3	2	4	2	211
A	6	4	4	25	25	20	30	3	3	2	3	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	4	4	4	2	3	2	2	4	4	2	3	2	163
C	3	5	3	25	25	25	25	4	3	3	1	1st	2nd	2nd	4th	1	3	3	2	2	2	1	3	1	1	1	3	121
C	4	5	3	15	35	15	35	3	3	2	3	1st	3rd	2nd	4th	2	4	3	4	3	4	1	4	2	4	1	4	214
A	5	5	5	0	50	25	25	4	3	3	2	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	2	2	4	2	4	2	3	2	3	4	3	4	226
B	7	4	3	10	50	5	35	3	2	2	3	3rd	4th	1st	2nd	2	3	5	3	2	3	2	4	1	4	2	5	39
C	6	5	5	30	20	20	30	2	3	2	4	1st	3rd	2nd	4th	2	4	4	2	2	3	1	3	3	2	2	3	235
A	5	4	3	10	30	20	40	1	1	3	3	4th	3rd	1st	2nd	4	5	4	4	4	3	2	2	2	2	2	4	231
B	4	3	4	5	25	20	50	2	3	2	2	4th	4th	1st	4th	2	4	4	3	2	2	4	2	4	4	4	2	192
A	2	5	5	40	20	10	30	3	2	2	2	1st	3rd	2nd	3rd	2	3	2	3	2	4	1	2	2	3	2	3	220
C	5	3	3	10	40	10	40	4	2	3	2	1st	4th	2nd	3rd	5	3	5	3	5	1	5	2	2	4	5	2	225
C	5	5	3	10	30	30	30	4	3	2	2	1st	4th	2nd	3rd	2	1	5	3	5	1	1	5	1	2	1	2	228
C	5	4	2	10	20	20	40	3	3	3	3	3rd	2nd	4th	1st	2	2	5	4	3	2	2	4	4	2	2	2	241
A	7	5	5	10	50	30	10	1	3	3	3	9	9	1st	9	2	4	4	2	3	2	2	4	2	2	2	4	219
A	6	3	2	10	60	20	10	3	3	2	3	3rd	2nd	4th	1st	5	1	5	5	5	1	2	4	5	1	1	4	212
A	7	5	5	9	9	9	9	4	3	2	2	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	2	4	2	1	2	4	2	2	2	4	1	4	213
A	2	5	5	25	25	25	25	3	3	3	2	3rd	4th	2nd	1st	3	2	4	2	4	2	3	2	2	2	3	3	246
A	1	5	5	25	25	25	25	3	2	4	2	1st	1st	1st	1st	2	3	5	3	3	2	1	3	1	5	2	3	229
C	6	4	4	30	30	20	20	2	2	2	3	1st	3rd	2nd	4th	3	3	4	4	3	2	4	3	2	2	4	2	209
A	3	5	5	60	25	15	0	3	2	3	2	1st	4th	2nd	3rd	2	3	3	4	3	3	2	3	1	5	2	5	234
A	6	5	5	0	33	33	33	3	3	3	2	1st	3rd	2nd	4th	4	3	5	3	5	1	2	3	2	4	2	3	162
A	2	4	4	0	80	10	10	3	3	2	1	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	1	3	3	2	2	3	1	3	3	2	2	4	236
C	5	5	3	0	40	0	60	1	3	3	3	1st	4th	3rd	2nd	1	5	4	2	2	4	1	4	2	4	2	4	237

A	5	3	4	10	40	10	40	2	2	3	3	3rd	4th	1st	2nd	2	3	4	4	4	2	2	2	3	3	4	2	233
A	2	5	5	0	100	0	0	4	3	2	2	1st	4th	4th	4th	2	2	9	4	2	4	4	1	4	5	5	3	143
A	5	4	3	53	14	5	28	2	3	3	4	3rd	4th	1st	2nd	5	2	5	4	5	1	2	3	4	1	2	2	247
A	2	4	3	0	35	30	35	3	3	2	2	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	2	4	3	2	2	4	2	2	2	3	2	4	91
A	5	3	5	15	25	30	30	3	3	2	2	1st	3rd	3rd	2nd	2	2	5	4	5	1	2	2	1	4	2	4	151
C	5	5	5	0	40	30	30	3	3	4	3	9	9	1st	9	5	9	5	9	1	5	1	9	2	9	1	4	239
B	5	5	3	25	25	15	35	3	2	2	3	1st	4th	2nd	3rd	2	3	3	4	2	4	4	2	4	4	4	4	250
C	3	5	4	100	0	0	0	2	2	3	2	1st	3rd	2nd	4th	1	5	3	2	1	5	1	3	2	5	2	4	168

APPENDIX D

T-tests to show examples of Statistical Significance of Questionnaire data

Perceptions of Liberal Education by Institutional Type

	Oxbridge	Red Brick	Plate Glass	Technological	Modern	College of HE
Oxbridge						
Red Brick	1.26					
Plate Glass	0.57	-0.83				
Technological	3.17	2.94	2.99			
Modern	1.11	1.75	2.06	-1.59		
College of HE	1.92	0.69	1.45	-2.47	-1.04	
Institute	2.46	0.91	1.72	-1.84	-0.5	0.37

Not Significant

Perceptions of Vocational Education by Institutional Type

	Oxbridge	Red Brick	Plate Glass	Technological	Modern	College of HE
Oxbridge						
Red Brick	-1.52					
Plate Glass	-1.4	-0.14				
Technological	-1.89	-0.66	0.47			
Modern	-1.3	0.25	0.32	0.82		
College of HE	-1.6	-0.48	-0.24	0.21	-0.68	
Institute	-2.15	-1.23	-0.92	-0.51	-1.37	-0.7

Not Significant

Perceptions of the Influence of Broadening of Assessment by Institutional Type

	Oxbridge	Red Brick	Plate Glass	Technological	Modern	College of HE
Oxbridge						
Red Brick	-3.9					
Plate Glass	1.57	2.79				
Technological	0.18	1.1	-1.12			
Modern	-0.76	-0.21	-2.29	-1.02		
College of HE	-1.37	-0.96	-3.42	-1.65	-0.62	
Institute	-0.74	-0.13	-3.2	-1.04	0.04	0.64

Not Significant

Perceptions of Standards by Institutional Type

	Oxbridge	Red Brick	Plate Glass	Technological	Modern	College of HE
Oxbridge						
Red Brick	0.42					
Plate Glass	0.43	0.21				
Technological	0.02	-0.5	-0.58			
Modern	1.25	1.47	0.83	1.54		
College of HE	0.47	0.11	-0.13	0.6	-1.29	
Institute	0.85	0.79	0.43	1.23	-0.36	0.71

Not Significant

Perceptions of More Means Worse by Institutional Type

	Oxbridge	Red Brick	Plate Glass	Technological	Modern	College of HE
Oxbridge						
Red Brick	-0.12					
Plate Glass	0.62	1.13				
Technological	0.83	1.42	0.25			
Modern	-1.85	-2.75	-3.46	-3.85		
College of HE	-0.96	-1.4	-2.1	-2.37	0.97	
Institute	0.28	0.6	-0.37	-0.61	2.69	1.54

Not Significant

Perceptions of Dumbing Down by Institutional Type

	Oxbridge	Red Brick	Plate Glass	Technological	Modern	College of HE
Oxbridge						
Red Brick	-0.61					
Plate Glass	1.48	2.68				
Technological	0.2	0.98	-1.53			
Modern	-2.29	-3.01	-4.4	-2.87		
College of HE	-1	-0.91	-2.67	-1.37	1.62	
Institute	-0.38	0.27	-2.69	0.75	2.44	0.88

Not Significant

Perceptions of Influence of Continuous Assessment by Institutional Type

	Oxbridge	Red Brick	Plate Glass	Technological	Modern	College of HE
Oxbridge						
Red Brick	1.57					
Plate Glass	1.94	0.7				
Technological	1.02	-0.6	-1.1			
Modern	0.82	-1.3	-1.74	-0.34		
College of HE	1.57	-0.1	-0.78	0.54	1.16	
Institute	0.86	0.07	-0.44	0.71	1.23	0.27

Not Significant

Perceptions of Benchmarking Skills and Concepts by Institutional Type

	Oxbridge	Red Brick	Plate Glass	Technological	Modern	College of HE
Oxbridge						
Red Brick	0.15					
Plate Glass	-0.54	-0.83				
Technological	0.54	0.18	0.83			
Modern	0.55	0.33	1.27	0.05		
College of HE	0.65	0.31	1.23	0.06	0	
Institute	0.37	-0.43	0.41	0.79	-0.97	1.06

Not Significant

Perceptions of Benchmarking, Facilitates Comparison by Institutional Type

	Oxbridge	Red Brick	Plate Glass	Technological	Modern	College of HE
Oxbridge						
Red Brick	0.34					
Plate Glass	-0.04	-1.35				
Technological	1.5	-0.19	0.99			
Modern	1.27	-0.18	1.27	0.06		
College of HE	2.73	0.86	2.15	1.18	1.1	
Institute	1.9	0.18	1.3	0.47	0.35	-0.65

Not Significant

Perceptions of Benchmarking, Reduced Autonomy by Institutional Type

	Oxbridge	Red Brick	Plate Glass	Technological	Modern	College of HE
Oxbridge						
Red Brick	-1.89					
Plate Glass	-1.15	0.22				
Technological	-1.37	0.83	0.39			
Modern	-1.93	1.05	0.44	-0.22		
College of HE	-2.32	0.59	0.16	-0.56	-0.49	
Institute	-1.97	0.8	0.36	-0.11	0.1	0.49

Not Significant

APPENDIX E

Cross-tabulations to show views of Senior Staff on the Purposes of Higher Education

			UNIMPORTANT	NEUTRAL	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	Total
gher ucation itution	OXBRIDGE	Count			1	6	7
		% within Higher Education Institution			14.3%	85.7%	100.0%
		% within LIBERAL EDUCATION			3.0%	11.1%	6.5%
		% of Total			.9%	5.6%	6.5%
	RED BRICK	Count	1	2	7	16	26
		% within Higher Education Institution	3.8%	7.7%	26.9%	61.5%	100.0%
		% within LIBERAL EDUCATION	25.0%	11.8%	21.2%	29.6%	24.1%
		% of Total	.9%	1.9%	6.5%	14.8%	24.1%
	PLATE GLASS	Count		1	1	8	10
		% within Higher Education Institution		10.0%	10.0%	80.0%	100.0%
		% within LIBERAL EDUCATION		5.9%	3.0%	14.8%	9.3%
		% of Total		.9%	.9%	7.4%	9.3%
	TECHNOLOGICAL	Count	2	3	2	2	9
		% within Higher Education Institution	22.2%	33.3%	22.2%	22.2%	100.0%
		% within LIBERAL EDUCATION	50.0%	17.6%	6.1%	3.7%	8.3%
		% of Total	1.9%	2.8%	1.9%	1.9%	8.3%
	MODERN	Count	1	7	8	10	26
		% within Higher Education Institution	3.8%	26.9%	30.8%	38.5%	100.0%
		% within LIBERAL EDUCATION	25.0%	41.2%	24.2%	18.5%	24.1%
		% of Total	.9%	6.5%	7.4%	9.3%	24.1%
	COLLEGE OF HE	Count		3	8	9	20
		% within Higher Education Institution		15.0%	40.0%	45.0%	100.0%
		% within LIBERAL EDUCATION		17.6%	24.2%	16.7%	18.5%
		% of Total		2.8%	7.4%	8.3%	18.5%
	INSTITUTES	Count		1	6	3	10
		% within Higher Education Institution		10.0%	60.0%	30.0%	100.0%
		% within LIBERAL EDUCATION		5.9%	18.2%	5.6%	9.3%
		% of Total		.9%	5.6%	2.8%	9.3%

Higher Education Institution * VOCATIONAL EDUCATION Crosstabulation

			VOCATIONAL EDUCATION					
			VERY UNIMPORTANT	UNIMPORTANT	NEUTRAL	IMPORTANT	VERY IMPORTANT	Total
gher ucation itution	OXBRIDGE	Count		1	2	2	2	7
		% within Higher Education Institution		14.3%	28.6%	28.6%	28.6%	100.0%
		% within VOCATIONAL EDUCATION		11.1%	5.1%	7.1%	6.5%	6.5%
		% of Total		.9%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%	6.5%
	RED BRICK	Count		3	9	8	6	26
		% within Higher Education Institution		11.5%	34.6%	30.8%	23.1%	100.0%
		% within VOCATIONAL EDUCATION		33.3%	23.1%	28.6%	19.4%	24.1%
		% of Total		2.8%	8.3%	7.4%	5.6%	24.1%
	PLATE GLASS	Count			6	1	3	10
		% within Higher Education Institution			60.0%	10.0%	30.0%	100.0%
		% within VOCATIONAL EDUCATION			15.4%	3.6%	9.7%	9.3%
		% of Total			5.6%	.9%	2.8%	9.3%
	TECHNOLOGICAL	Count			3	4	2	9
		% within Higher Education Institution			33.3%	44.4%	22.2%	100.0%
		% within VOCATIONAL EDUCATION			7.7%	14.3%	6.5%	8.3%
		% of Total			2.8%	3.7%	1.9%	8.3%
	MODERN	Count		3	12	4	7	26
		% within Higher Education Institution		11.5%	46.2%	15.4%	26.9%	100.0%
		% within VOCATIONAL EDUCATION		33.3%	30.8%	14.3%	22.6%	24.1%
		% of Total		2.8%	11.1%	3.7%	6.5%	24.1%
	COLLEGE OF HE	Count	1	2	3	8	6	20
		% within Higher Education Institution	5.0%	10.0%	15.0%	40.0%	30.0%	100.0%
		% within VOCATIONAL EDUCATION	100.0%	22.2%	7.7%	28.6%	19.4%	18.5%
		% of Total	.9%	1.9%	2.8%	7.4%	5.6%	18.5%
	INSTITUTES	Count			4	1	5	10
		% within Higher Education Institution			40.0%	10.0%	50.0%	100.0%
		% within VOCATIONAL EDUCATION			10.3%	3.6%	16.1%	9.3%
		% of Total			3.7%	.9%	4.6%	9.3%

APPENDIX F

Cross-tabulation to Show Senior Staff Groups' Perceptions of Organisational Culture in the Seven Types of Higher Education Institution

Higher Education Institution * COLLEGIAL CULTURE Crosstabulation

			COLLEGIAL CULTURE					
			VERY WEAK	WEAK	STRONG	VERY STRONG	9	Total
Higher Education Institution	OXBRIDGE	Count			1	6		7
		% within Higher Education Institution			14.3%	85.7%		100.0%
		% within COLLEGIAL CULTURE			2.1%	26.1%		6.5%
	RED BRICK	Count	2	2	15	7		26
		% within Higher Education Institution	7.7%	7.7%	57.7%	26.9%		100.0%
		% within COLLEGIAL CULTURE	25.0%	7.1%	31.3%	30.4%		24.1%
	PLATE GLASS	Count	1	3	1	4	1	10
		% within Higher Education Institution	10.0%	30.0%	10.0%	40.0%	10.0%	100.0%
		% within COLLEGIAL CULTURE	12.5%	10.7%	2.1%	17.4%	100.0%	9.3%
	TECHNOLOGICAL	Count		3	6			9
		% within Higher Education Institution		33.3%	66.7%			100.0%
		% within COLLEGIAL CULTURE		10.7%	12.5%			8.3%
	MODERN	Count	3	9	11	3		26
		% within Higher Education Institution	11.5%	34.6%	42.3%	11.5%		100.0%
		% within COLLEGIAL CULTURE	37.5%	32.1%	22.9%	13.0%		24.1%
	COLLEGE OF HE	Count	1	9	10			20
		% within Higher Education Institution	5.0%	45.0%	50.0%			100.0%
		% within COLLEGIAL CULTURE	12.5%	32.1%	20.8%			18.5%
	INSTITUTES	Count	1	2	4	3		10
		% within Higher Education Institution	10.0%	20.0%	40.0%	30.0%		100.0%
		% within COLLEGIAL CULTURE	12.5%	7.1%	8.3%	13.0%		9.3%
Total		Count	8	28	48	23	1	108
		% within Higher Education Institution	7.4%	25.9%	44.4%	21.3%	.9%	100.0%
		% within COLLEGIAL CULTURE	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Higher Education Institution * BUREAUCRATIC CULTURE Crosstabulation

			BUREAUCRATIC CULTURE					
			VERY WEAK	WEAK	STRONG	VERY STRONG	9	Total
Higher Education Institution	OXBRIDGE	Count		1	4	2		7
		% within Higher Education Institution		14.3%	57.1%	28.6%		100.0%
		% within BUREAUCRATIC CULTURE		3.0%	6.7%	16.7%		6.5%
	RED BRICK	Count	1	9	16			26
		% within Higher Education Institution	3.8%	34.6%	61.5%			100.0%
		% within BUREAUCRATIC CULTURE	50.0%	27.3%	26.7%			24.1%
	PLATE GLASS	Count		3	5	1	1	10
		% within Higher Education Institution		30.0%	50.0%	10.0%	10.0%	100.0%
		% within BUREAUCRATIC CULTURE		9.1%	8.3%	8.3%	100.0%	9.3%
	TECHNOLOGICAL	Count		2	6	1		9
		% within Higher Education Institution		22.2%	66.7%	11.1%		100.0%
		% within BUREAUCRATIC CULTURE		6.1%	10.0%	8.3%		8.3%
	MODERN	Count	1	11	13	1		26
		% within Higher Education Institution	3.8%	42.3%	50.0%	3.8%		100.0%
		% within BUREAUCRATIC CULTURE	50.0%	33.3%	21.7%	8.3%		24.1%
	COLLEGE OF HE	Count		5	10	5		20
		% within Higher Education Institution		25.0%	50.0%	25.0%		100.0%
		% within BUREAUCRATIC CULTURE		15.2%	16.7%	41.7%		18.5%
	INSTITUTES	Count		2	6	2		10
		% within Higher Education Institution		20.0%	60.0%	20.0%		100.0%
		% within BUREAUCRATIC CULTURE		6.1%	10.0%	16.7%		9.3%

Higher Education Institution * CORPORATE CULTURE Crosstabulation

			CORPORATE CULTURE					
			VERY WEAK	WEAK	STRONG	VERY STRONG	9	Total
Higher Education Institution	OXBRIDGE	Count	3	4				7
		% within Higher Education Institution	42.9%	57.1%				100.0%
		% within CORPORATE CULTURE	33.3%	10.0%				6.5%
	RED BRICK	Count	3	13	9	1		26
		% within Higher Education Institution	11.5%	50.0%	34.6%	3.8%		100.0%
		% within CORPORATE CULTURE	33.3%	32.5%	21.4%	6.3%		24.1%
	PLATE GLASS	Count	2	3		4	1	10
		% within Higher Education Institution	20.0%	30.0%		40.0%	10.0%	100.0%
		% within CORPORATE CULTURE	22.2%	7.5%		25.0%	100.0%	9.3%
	TECHNOLOGICAL	Count	1	5	3			9
		% within Higher Education Institution	11.1%	55.6%	33.3%			100.0%
		% within CORPORATE CULTURE	11.1%	12.5%	7.1%			8.3%
	MODERN	Count		7	15	4		26
		% within Higher Education Institution		26.9%	57.7%	15.4%		100.0%
		% within CORPORATE CULTURE		17.5%	35.7%	25.0%		24.1%
	COLLEGE OF HE	Count		4	11	5		20
		% within Higher Education Institution		20.0%	55.0%	25.0%		100.0%
		% within CORPORATE CULTURE		10.0%	26.2%	31.3%		18.5%
	INSTITUTES	Count		4	4	2		10
		% within Higher Education Institution		40.0%	40.0%	20.0%		100.0%
		% within CORPORATE CULTURE		10.0%	9.5%	12.5%		9.3%
Total		Count	9	40	42	16	1	108
		% within Higher Education Institution	8.3%	37.0%	38.9%	14.8%	.9%	100.0%
		% within CORPORATE CULTURE	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Higher Education Institution * ENTREPRENEURIAL CULTURE Crosstabulation

			ENTREPRENEURIAL CULTURE					
			VERY WEAK	WEAK	STRONG	VERY STRONG	9	Total
Higher Education Institution	OXBRIDGE	Count	1	5		1		7
		% within Higher Education Institution	14.3%	71.4%		14.3%		100.0%
		% within ENTREPRENEURIAL CULTURE	20.0%	9.4%		12.5%		6.5%
	RED BRICK	Count	2	14	9	1		26
		% within Higher Education Institution	7.7%	53.8%	34.6%	3.8%		100.0%
		% within ENTREPRENEURIAL CULTURE	40.0%	26.4%	22.0%	12.5%		24.1%
	PLATE GLASS	Count		3	5	1	1	10
		% within Higher Education Institution		30.0%	50.0%	10.0%	10.0%	100.0%
		% within ENTREPRENEURIAL CULTURE		5.7%	12.2%	12.5%	100.0%	9.3%
	TECHNOLOGICAL	Count	1	6	1	1		9
		% within Higher Education Institution	11.1%	66.7%	11.1%	11.1%		100.0%
		% within ENTREPRENEURIAL CULTURE	20.0%	11.3%	2.4%	12.5%		8.3%
	MODERN	Count	1	7	15	3		26
		% within Higher Education Institution	3.8%	26.9%	57.7%	11.5%		100.0%
		% within ENTREPRENEURIAL CULTURE	20.0%	13.2%	36.6%	37.5%		24.1%
	COLLEGE OF HE	Count		12	7	1		20
		% within Higher Education Institution		60.0%	35.0%	5.0%		100.0%
		% within ENTREPRENEURIAL CULTURE		22.6%	17.1%	12.5%		18.5%
	INSTITUTES	Count		6	4			10
		% within Higher Education Institution		60.0%	40.0%			100 0%
		% within ENTREPRENEURIAL CULTURE		11.3%	9.8%			9.3%

APPENDIX G

Cross-tabulations to Show the Views of Senior Staff on the Likely Impact of Subject Benchmarking

BENCHMARKING = GREATER PRESCRIPTION

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	STRONGLY AGREE	24	22.2	22.2	22.2
	AGREE	53	49.1	49.1	71.3
	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	16	14.8	14.8	86.1
	DISAGREE	12	11.1	11.1	97.2
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	1	.9	.9	98.1
	9	2	1.9	1.9	100.0
	Total	108	100.0	100.0	

BENCHMARKING = SKILLS AND CONCEPTS

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	STRONGLY AGREE	5	4.6	4.6	4.6
	AGREE	46	42.6	42.6	47.2
	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	35	32.4	32.4	79.6
	DISAGREE	19	17.6	17.6	97.2
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	1	.9	.9	98.1
	9	2	1.9	1.9	100.0
	Total	108	100.0	100.0	

BENCHMARKING - NO ACCOUNT OF DIVERSITY

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	STRONGLY AGREE	23	21.3	21.3	21.3
	AGREE	49	45.4	45.4	66.7
	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	15	13.9	13.9	80.6
	DISAGREE	18	16.7	16.7	97.2
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	1	.9	.9	98.1
	9	2	1.9	1.9	100.0
	Total	108	100.0	100.0	

BENCHMARKING FACILITATES COMPARISON

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	STRONGLY AGREE	4	3.7	3.7	3.7
	AGREE	44	40.7	40.7	44.4
	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	19	17.6	17.6	62.0
	DISAGREE	32	29.6	29.6	91.7
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	6	5.6	5.6	97.2
	9	3	2.8	2.8	100.0
	Total	108	100.0	100.0	

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	STRONGLY AGREE	15	13.9	13.9	13.9
	AGREE	54	50.0	50.0	63.9
	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	10	9.3	9.3	73.1
	DISAGREE	22	20.4	20.4	93.5
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	5	4.6	4.6	98.1
	9	2	1.9	1.9	100.0
	Total	108	100.0	100.0	

BENCHMARKING WILL HELP IMPROVE ACADEMIC STANDARDS

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	STRONGLY AGREE	1	.9	.9	.9
	AGREE	42	38.9	38.9	39.8
	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	28	25.9	25.9	65.7
	DISAGREE	29	26.9	26.9	92.6
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	6	5.6	5.6	98.1
	9	2	1.9	1.9	100.0
	Total	108	100.0	100.0	

APPENDIX H

Cross-tabulations to Show the Views of Senior Managers, Senior Administrators and Senior Academics on the Likely Impact of Subject Benchmarking

BENCHMARKING = GREATER PRESCRIPTION * Stakeholder Group Crosstabulation

			Stakeholder Group			Total
			Senior Managers	Senior Administrator	Senior Academic	
BENCHMARKING = GREATER PRESCRIPTION	STRONGLY AGREE	Count	7	7	10	24
		% within BENCHMARKING = GREATER PRESCRIPTION	29.2%	29.2%	41.7%	100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group	17.1%	20.6%	30.3%	22.2%
		% of Total	6.5%	6.5%	9.3%	22.2%
	AGREE	Count	24	14	15	53
		% within BENCHMARKING = GREATER PRESCRIPTION	45.3%	26.4%	28.3%	100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group	58.5%	41.2%	45.5%	49.1%
		% of Total	22.2%	13.0%	13.9%	49.1%
	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	Count	6	6	4	16
		% within BENCHMARKING = GREATER PRESCRIPTION	37.5%	37.5%	25.0%	100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group	14.6%	17.6%	12.1%	14.8%
		% of Total	5.6%	5.6%	3.7%	14.8%
	DISAGREE	Count	4	6	2	12
		% within BENCHMARKING = GREATER PRESCRIPTION	33.3%	50.0%	16.7%	100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group	9.8%	17.6%	6 1%	11.1%
		% of Total	3.7%	5.6%	1.9%	11.1%
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	Count			1	1
		% within BENCHMARKING = GREATER PRESCRIPTION			100.0%	100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group			3.0%	.9%
		% of Total			.9%	.9%

BENCHMARKING = SKILLS AND CONCEPTS * Stakeholder Group Crosstabulation

			Stakeholder Group			
			Senior Managers	Senior Administrator	Senior Academic	Total
BENCHMARKING = SKILLS AND CONCEPTS	STRONGLY AGREE	Count	4	1		5
		% within BENCHMARKING = SKILLS AND CONCEPTS	80.0%	20.0%		100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group	9.8%	2.9%		4.6%
		% of Total	3.7%	.9%		4.6%
	AGREE	Count	19	15	12	46
		% within BENCHMARKING = SKILLS AND CONCEPTS	41.3%	32.6%	26.1%	100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group	46.3%	44.1%	36.4%	42.6%
		% of Total	17.6%	13.9%	11.1%	42.6%
	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	Count	12	12	11	35
		% within BENCHMARKING = SKILLS AND CONCEPTS	34.3%	34.3%	31.4%	100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group	29.3%	35.3%	33.3%	32.4%
		% of Total	11.1%	11.1%	10.2%	32.4%
	DISAGREE	Count	6	5	8	19
		% within BENCHMARKING = SKILLS AND CONCEPTS	31.6%	26.3%	42.1%	100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group	14.6%	14.7%	24.2%	17.6%
		% of Total	5.6%	4.6%	7.4%	17.6%
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	Count			1	1
		% within BENCHMARKING = SKILLS AND CONCEPTS			100.0%	100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group			3.0%	.9%
		% of Total			.9%	.9%
	9	Count		1	1	2
		% within BENCHMARKING = SKILLS AND CONCEPTS		50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group		2.9%	3.0%	1.9%
		% of Total		.9%	.9%	1.9%

BENCHMARKING - NO ACCOUNT OF DIVERSITY * Stakeholder Group Crosstabulation

			Stakeholder Group			
			Senior Managers	Senior Administrator	Senior Academic	Total
BENCHMARKING - NO ACCOUNT OF DIVERSITY	STRONGLY AGREE	Count	8	8	7	23
		% within BENCHMARKING - NO ACCOUNT OF DIVERSITY	34.8%	34.8%	30.4%	100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group	19.5%	23.5%	21.2%	21.3%
		% of Total	7.4%	7.4%	6.5%	21.3%
	AGREE	Count	19	13	17	49
		% within BENCHMARKING - NO ACCOUNT OF DIVERSITY	38.8%	26.5%	34.7%	100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group	46.3%	38.2%	51.5%	45.4%
		% of Total	17.6%	12.0%	15.7%	45.4%
	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	Count	5	5	5	15
		% within BENCHMARKING - NO ACCOUNT OF DIVERSITY	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%	100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group	12.2%	14.7%	15.2%	13.9%
		% of Total	4.6%	4.6%	4.6%	13.9%
	DISAGREE	Count	8	7	3	18
		% within BENCHMARKING - NO ACCOUNT OF DIVERSITY	44.4%	38.9%	16.7%	100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group	19.5%	20.6%	9.1%	16.7%
		% of Total	7.4%	6.5%	2.8%	16.7%
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	Count	1			1
		% within BENCHMARKING - NO ACCOUNT OF DIVERSITY	100.0%			100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group	2 4%			.9%
		% of Total	.9%			.9%

BENCHMARKING FACILITATES COMPARISON * Stakeholder Group Crosstabulation

			Stakeholder Group			
			Senior Managers	Senior Administrator	Senior Academic	Total
BENCHMARKING FACILITATES COMPARISON	STRONGLY AGREE	Count	3		1	4
		% within BENCHMARKING FACILITATES COMPARISON	75.0%		25.0%	100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group	7.3%		3.0%	3.7%
		% of Total	2.8%		.9%	3.7%
	AGREE	Count	15	17	12	44
		% within BENCHMARKING FACILITATES COMPARISON	34.1%	38.6%	27.3%	100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group	36.6%	50.0%	36.4%	40 7%
		% of Total	13.9%	15.7%	11.1%	40.7%
	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	Count	9	4	6	19
		% within BENCHMARKING FACILITATES COMPARISON	47.4%	21.1%	31.6%	100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group	22.0%	11.8%	18.2%	17.6%
		% of Total	8.3%	3.7%	5.6%	17.6%
	DISAGREE	Count	11	10	11	32
		% within BENCHMARKING FACILITATES COMPARISON	34.4%	31.3%	34.4%	100 0%
		% within Stakeholder Group	26.8%	29.4%	33.3%	29 6%
		% of Total	10.2%	9.3%	10 2%	29 6%
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	Count	3	2	1	6
		% within BENCHMARKING FACILITATES COMPARISON	50.0%	33 3%	16.7%	100 0%
		% within Stakeholder Group	7.3%	5.9%	3.0%	5 6%
		% of Total	2.8%	1.9%	.9%	5.6%

BENCHMARKING WILL REDUCE AUTONOMY * Stakeholder Group Crosstabulation

			Stakeholder Group			
			Senior Managers	Senior Administrator	Senior Academic	Total
BENCHMARKING WILL REDUCE AUTONOMY	STRONGLY AGREE	Count	5	4	6	15
		% within BENCHMARKING WILL REDUCE AUTONOMY	33.3%	26.7%	40.0%	100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group	12.2%	11.8%	18.2%	13.9%
		% of Total	4.6%	3.7%	5.6%	13.9%
	AGREE	Count	20	16	18	54
		% within BENCHMARKING WILL REDUCE AUTONOMY	37.0%	29.6%	33.3%	100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group	48.8%	47.1%	54.5%	50.0%
		% of Total	18.5%	14.8%	16.7%	50.0%
	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	Count	6	3	1	10
		% within BENCHMARKING WILL REDUCE AUTONOMY	60.0%	30.0%	10.0%	100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group	14.6%	8.8%	3.0%	9.3%
		% of Total	5.6%	2.8%	.9%	9.3%
	DISAGREE	Count	7	10	5	22
		% within BENCHMARKING WILL REDUCE AUTONOMY	31.8%	45.5%	22.7%	100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group	17.1%	29.4%	15.2%	20.4%
		% of Total	6.5%	9.3%	4.6%	20.4%
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	Count	3		2	5
		% within BENCHMARKING WILL REDUCE AUTONOMY	60.0%		40.0%	100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group	7.3%		6.1%	4.6%
		% of Total	2.8%		1.9%	4.6%
	9	Count		1	1	2
		% within BENCHMARKING WILL REDUCE AUTONOMY		50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group		2.9%	3.0%	1.9%
		% of Total		.9%	.9%	1.9%

			Stakeholder Group			
			Senior Managers	Senior Administrator	Senior Academic	Total
BENCHMARKING WILL HELP IMPROVE ACADEMIC STANDARDS	STRONGLY AGREE	Count	1			1
		% within BENCHMARKING WILL HELP IMPROVE ACADEMIC STANDARDS	100.0%			100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group	2.4%			.9%
		% of Total	.9%			.9%
	AGREE	Count	13	17	12	42
		% within BENCHMARKING WILL HELP IMPROVE ACADEMIC STANDARDS	31.0%	40.5%	28.6%	100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group	31.7%	50.0%	36.4%	38.9%
		% of Total	12.0%	15.7%	11.1%	38.9%
	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE	Count	14	7	7	28
		% within BENCHMARKING WILL HELP IMPROVE ACADEMIC STANDARDS	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%	100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group	34.1%	20.6%	21.2%	25.9%
		% of Total	13.0%	6.5%	6.5%	25.9%
	DISAGREE	Count	11	7	11	29
		% within BENCHMARKING WILL HELP IMPROVE ACADEMIC STANDARDS	37.9%	24.1%	37.9%	100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group	26.8%	20.6%	33.3%	26.9%
		% of Total	10.2%	6.5%	10.2%	26.9%
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	Count	2	2	2	6
		% within BENCHMARKING WILL HELP IMPROVE ACADEMIC STANDARDS	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%	100.0%
		% within Stakeholder Group	4.9%	5.9%	6.1%	5.6%
		% of Total	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%	5.6%