UNIVERSITY OF SUNDERLAND

A CRITICAL EVALUATION OF THE NEEDS AND ASPIRATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL MBA STUDENTS AND THEIR IMPACT ON POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT IN SUNDERLAND BUSINESS SCHOOL

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Declaration

No portion of the work referred to in this Professional Doctoral Report has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other University or other institute of learning. Except in so far, as stated in the acknowledgements to this report the text itself, the work contained herein is that of the
Author.

J. Dixon-Dawson

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A massive thank you to my wife Janet, who has been a constant source of encouragement, keeping me going when I thought otherwise and may well have given up.
To my daughter Jennifer and her partner Phillip who together with Janet are the inspiration behind most of what I do. Finally, to my first grandchild Isaac, born during the writing up phase of this work and who is and will continue to bring considerable joy into all our lives.

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Abstract and aims of the research

The abstract and aims of the research are to explore a key element of the changing nature of the global higher education environment. The purpose of this work is to critically analyse a key factor affecting the Sunderland Business School MBA programme and its provision as part of the postgraduate portfolio. The needs and aspirations of our student community are key to the development of any successful programme yet all too often we pay less attention to the views and opinions of our students whilst at the same time recognising their importance as one of our key stakeholders.

This research will examine and critically evaluate the needs and aspirations of MBA students who have studied on the Programme in Sunderland. It will also draw upon the experiences and views of MBA Directors associated with the European Federation of Management Development (EFMD). It is intended that this review will inform the future development of the Sunderland MBA programme to ensure its relevance as part of the Faculty offering and to ensure its currency in the wider HE market.

The aims of the project, which have been previously approved as part of the taught element of the Programme and subsequent Annual Monitoring Reviews, are:

- To critically analyse the changing nature of PG students and their needs for a successful programme experience and, in particular, to investigate the needs and aspirations of those students to inform programme development;
- To evaluate their future needs and expectations;
- To develop a strategic framework which reflects the impact of globalisation and captures the Vision, Mission and Value of the MBA Programme; and
- To evaluate the anticipated future needs of potential students as one stakeholder within a complex stakeholder map.

The aims of the project and the subsequent research and analysis are intended to meet the Learning Outcomes of the taught Professional Doctorate Programme as set out in the module PDC501. The approved Learning Outcomes will demonstrate the following:

Knowledge

- (K1) A deep understanding of the recent developments in their profession nationally and internationally;
- (K2) A deep understanding of current theoretical frameworks and approaches which have direct relevance to their own professional context;

Skills

- (S1) Make a significant contribution to practice within their chosen field
- (S2) Apply theory and research methods within the workplace and feel comfortable in integrating different approaches to address 'messy' multidisciplinary problems in a rigorous yet practical manner.
- (S3) Recognise budgetary, political, strategic, ethical and social issues when addressing issues within the workplace
- (S4) Reflect on their own work and on themselves and thus operate as a truly reflective independent practitioner.
- (S5) Present and defend an original and coherent body of work which demonstrates, reflects upon and evaluates the impact upon practice which they have personally made.

The research undertaken for the project and the findings from that research clearly demonstrate the need for a more integrated approach to programme development. The approach to programme development, based on my experience, has in the past been a rather insular and isolated experience based on the variable knowledge and experience of the programme team. This team, albeit of talented academic staff, is only one key stakeholder necessary for the development of a successful and market responsive programme of study. This has now been confirmed by the University with the publication of the i-Design Framework to be used for programme development which clearly demonstrates the need for a much broader approach to stakeholder involvement.

This study contributes to and confirms the relevance of the i-Design Framework as a part of the programme development process. Dissemination of this research and the value of the Framework within my community of practice will enhance programme development overall.

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Sunderland Business School (SBS) is part of the Faculty of Business, Law and Tourism (FBLT) and has a team of staff with extensive experience in the provision of postgraduate business programmes. As a member of the postgraduate teaching team and previously on a number of occasions Programme Studies Board Chair I have had an excellent opportunity to integrate professional doctorate study with the practical experience I have gained since my appointment in 1999 as a Principal Lecturer in Sunderland Business School.

The continued focus on international student recruitment means that postgraduate study must focus on the development of a suite of programmes which attract students with the potential to operate after graduation in an increasingly complex international business arena. The graduate knowledge and skills required for the 21st Century manager must be reflected in a stimulating and practical programme of study which fulfils the needs of both students and prospective employers. This view is reinforced in terms of management research. For example, "The past few years have proved to be the most challenging for business organisations both within the UK and globally. In particular, as the spending cuts begin to bite into many economies and private sector organisations seek to climb out of recession, managers at all levels, and in many countries, face the most challenging environments that they have experienced." Marie McHugh, British Academy of Management Vice-President, Annual Conference Keynote Speech (2011).

In the context of this continued business and organisational complexity and market turbulence, it is easy to suggest that the future requires leaders who are focussed and therefore it is essential to have educated and inspired people. I would argue that it is more the case that organisational life is not time limited and that it has always needed such people who are able to understand how an uncertain future may unfold. The current need is merely clearer when significant shifts in such areas as global energy supply and global security; climate change; macro-economic shifts in power, such as the Arab Spring and a fall in levels of trust afforded to previously well established and trusted institutions. The highly competitive environment of postgraduate provision today means that the ability for differentiation remains difficult. It is also apparent that international student education and the growth of students studying outside of their home nation is not a new phenomenon.

Nehme Azoury whilst presenting to the EFMD MBA Conference in 2016 commented how a historic Lebanese university opted for a modern impact programme for its Business School. In 1736, the idea of a young woman pursuing academic studies was inconceivable. That said, a Lebanese Christian community known as the Maronites adopted the policy of free and compulsory education for both men and women. Such dedication to education came from a commitment made in 1584 by the first Maronite College established to promote cultural exchange activities between East and West. It is suggested that some historical parallels can be drawn with the history of our own St. Peters Church and its proximity to the Sunderland St. Peters campus. At the same time the University of Kaslik (USEK) was established by the Maronite Order (OLM), its founders created the first school in Lebanon, with the prime concern of spreading education as a means to improving quality of life. History shows the creation of a learning community at St. Peters Church founded AD674 and the link to the Venerable Bede cements the relationship, at least historically, to the University of today and the legacy of St. Peters Church, our near neighbour to the Faculty.

From a more national perspective the strategic geographic location of the UK coupled with the global importance of its HE sector and the increasing dialogue and communication with various countries around the world cements the importance of our system of higher education and its relevance to international markets. In particular China and other parts of South East Asia means that UK Universities have looked to bridge the gap between South East Asia and Western countries. Whilst globalisation has accelerated and improved opposing cultures attempting to understand their mutual differences, the purpose being an attempt to avoid cultural clashes, it has also hastened the globalisation of education and University education in particular. The University is keen to play its part in this system confirmed by the opening statement of its Strategic Plan, “The Strategic Plan 2016 - 2021 sets out a clear statement of intent that builds on the University of Sunderland's strengths - and is ambitious and relevant for a 21st Century global University." (Strategic Plan 2016-2021 p.3).

In this global context the provision of MBA education attempts to promote leadership education. It is not only about a programme title, it is about achieving impact in results; influence in spreading passion and inspiration. It is concerned with the motivation of team members and stakeholders in the development of high quality postgraduates.

The University and in its part the Business School has strong regional roots that characterise it and its education mission is focused on those roots. The purpose of this mission is to ensure high-level education in the field of business administration. The increasingly global nature of our postgraduate management education does to a significant extent challenge this 'local' perspective. The provision of MBA programmes on-campus in Sunderland and our campuses in London and Hong Kong are significantly outweighed by the provision of the same programmes to our TNE partners. Within those countries the predominance of family-owned businesses, SMEs and international companies proliferating in China and South East Asia means the Business School is, or at the very least should be, a key provider of skilled and qualified management education.

The importance of these postgraduate programmes lies in the business sectors they cater for and increasingly their ability for resilience during harsh economic times. Our increasing experience in working with our TNE partners means that SBS has tangentially established collaborative links with national and international partners to strategically administer these partnerships, which revolve around the recruitment of students, participation of visiting professionals in the classroom and dual working to ensure the delivery of quality programmes. It is crucial that policies are in place to explore further strategic alliances in the future to maintain a competitive advantage.

SBS is part of an institution which has been built on a traditional past. That said, it cannot continue without change. Facing challenges is normal for any business however dealing with and responding to challenges is what should motivate the School. My research to date suggests that the main objectives of the School should centre around the following:

- **Create**: programmes, events and documents based on research and real-life experiences that interest businesses, academics and students
- **Involve**: key stakeholders from the business world in events and research whereby their expertise can be used for the benefit of the school
- **Manage**: relationships with the stakeholders involved in school's environment.
- **Disseminate:** findings to all those who may be interested to continue a cycle of impact

The added value of this is, or should be, ultimately recognised when our students graduate and enter the corporate world. In my opinion the School and University is exposed and evaluated through the quality of our students. It is by their success that our success is measured at least in some part. It is recognised that quality assurance measurements and league tables play their part, it is also clear that 'word of mouth' recommendations from students and parents also play their part in the pursuit of student applications.

The consequence of this global challenge means that business researchers need to conduct research that will assist organisations to innovate; improve products and services and enhance employer organisational improvement. The essential aim of this programme of study has been to critically analyse the changing nature of postgraduate students, their needs in terms of ensuring a successful experience and an evaluation of their future needs as managers from the perspective of prospective employers. By interviewing postgraduate students and MBA Directors associated with the European Federation for Management Development (EFMD), I have been able to gather data on their experiences and expectations which in turn will provide data on the student perspective. By reviewing data on part time students gathered from the annual monitoring reports from off-campus centres alongside reports from External Examiners the needs and expectations of international students becomes clearer. Obviously it is not feasible within the scope of this study to analyse the needs and aspirations of all students and employers therefore the study examines the expectations of Masters of Business Administration (MBA) students from South East Asia.

The external engagement activities I am involved with at a Faculty/Business School level and my own network of contacts provides the opportunity for accessing the opinions of managers and employers in order to illicit their expectations and requirements on future graduates and the likely skills they will require. Analysis of the primary and secondary data from students and employers will inform the development of future postgraduate programmes and the MBA in particular.

If Sunderland Business School is to continue as a provider in an increasingly competitive market place and attract a wide international audience then it is essential that we have a clear understanding of the needs, aspirations and skills of those students. The value proposition of the University requires the School to be explicit about its offering and this research goes some way to clarifying the proposition at postgraduate level. It would also provide Sunderland Business School (SBS) with a model of postgraduate study that would encourage students to a mind-set of, 'Sustainable Business Scholarship' and hence the notion of a sustainable manager.

1.2 The Lecturers Challenge of Complexity

As programme developers and deliverers of content we take many decisions as a matter of course. Yet often we are not aware of the consequences of those decisions on the students and subsequent employers we and they interact with. For example, the introduction of the many measures of accountability, e.g. the NSS, TEF and PTES have provided the drivers for policy change. Equally the pursuit of nationally assured and professionally accredited schemes of professional training and development as provided by Professional Bodies such as the Chartered Management Institute (CMI); the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) and the Chartered Institute for Personnel Development (CIPD) have provided measures that enable prospective students to compare the views and standards of recently graduated students. The Higher Education Academy (HEA) has produced its own set of standards for the use of HEIs in the design of programmes for professional training and development to ensure that the standards of professionalism among programme developers and content deliverers is consistent as well as ensuring minimum standards of professionalism. These standards provide common guidance across all UK HEIs for the staff engaged in supporting students learning and represents a summary of what is currently expected of University Lecturers and any others who may support the student journey from an academic perspective.

Yet, University Lecturers are more than mere content developers and deliverers. That development and delivery comes from experience and expertise either commercial or via academic research and scholarship. The term research is perhaps more easily defined.

The Research Assessment Exercise which began in the UK in the 1990s is now the Research Excellence Framework (REF). In the UK, REF pursues a policy for research assessment aimed at securing HEIs ability to continue to produce world class research across the entire academic operation of UK higher education. It is important to note that this policy aim excludes the routine activities of the development of teaching materials that do not include original research but it includes scholarship. Paradoxically, the UK Higher Education Academy (HEA) Professional Framework requires that lecturers integrate and incorporate the processes and outcomes of research and scholarship which is relevant to their pedagogic and professional roles. Whilst a definition of research may be clearer the definition of scholarship is less clear. Scholarship is a vaguer concept. We are likely to accept that, 'a scholar' is a person with an in depth knowledge of a subject however they may not research or indeed publish but be an interpreter of the work of others in the same field. In 2006, the Research Assessment Exercise as it was referred to at that time regarded scholarship as being more concerned as the creation, development and maintenance of an intellectual academic infrastructure of subjects and disciplines. (RAE Framework 2006). HEFCE went on to comment, The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) regarded research as being concerned with the original investigation to gain knowledge and understanding. It sorts to include work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce and industry, as well as to the range of public and voluntary sectors. It regarded scholarship as including pedagogic research alongside the invention and generation of ideas.

These differing perspectives and definitions demonstrate the complexity for practitioners when developing programmes that are both innovative in terms of practical/applied relevance whilst at the same time being academically underpinned with the required theoretical knowledge. The constantly changing and fast paced evolution of 21st Century business leaves academics with a dilemma. On the one hand they must innovate and challenge new ways of thinking when delivering content and on the other give credence to the established and researched theoretical constructs which underpin contemporary knowledge. If this provides academics with a level of complexity, then how much more complex is that for students studying our programmes and/or employers understanding the skills and expertise of potential graduate recruits.

There can be no doubt that international education now competes in a global marketplace. The successes gained in the HEIs of some western countries, measured by their advantages in science, technology and humanities, illustrates that international University education has played an important role as an industry in the growth of national revenues. A consequence of this development in the West has resulted in an extensive concern and response by the East, such as the 'Tiger economies' during the course of the last two decades. I will consider the statistical data later in this project but it is, in my opinion, clear that there is still a focus for overseas learners to visit mainland Europe and the UK for their education. At the same time after many years of UK domestic argument over the nature of higher education, it has been broadly realised by Government and the HE establishment that whilst the market for international students is extremely important to the UK University economy it can not only be maintained through marketing means. The quality of UK provision is equally important as its ability to market its products effectively. Alongside this debate in the UK, China and its neighbours have sought to enlarge their own marketing skills and capacity for foreign students to study in China alongside its desire to encourage high performing domestic students to study at home. By attending to improvements in their marketing techniques alongside quality improvements to home HEIs, China et al is attempting to improve their sustainable competitive advantage in the worldwide higher education marketplace.

The share of the global market in higher education for international students studying in China has not been competitive to that of western countries. For example, in 2001, the number of international students studying in China was little more than 60,000. By 2015 however this had risen to a record breaking 397,635 confirming its position as the third most popular destination for oversea students. ("China's Rapid Rise as an academic destination" www.Student.com accessed September 20th, 2017.) Despite this growth the statistics show that in 2018, 86% of students applying for study intended to study internationally compared to 44% who preferred to study domestically. (GMAC 2018). Of that percentage 84% expressed a preference to study in Western Europe. In 2017/18 this amounted to 320,950 international students studying postgraduate taught programmes in the UK from non-EU countries. This figure forms part of the total number of international students studying in the UK of 430,833 (Universities UK 2018). This represented a small increase of 0.5% on the previous year although the UK remains as the second most popular destination for international students beaten only by the United States. The UK has consistently been in this position throughout the current decade although it is fair to point out that the rate of growth, for postgraduate taught programmes and MBAs in particular has slowed. In this area of activity and after dozens of years of argument domestically over the nature of higher education, it is broadly realised, from government and the academic environment of higher education, in its role as an industry, that international recruitment can be developed through marketing means. It should also be noted that, "…international students don't just study for UK degrees in the UK. Over 700,000 students now study for UK higher education qualifications outside of the UK. Transnational Education (TNE) is an increasingly significant and successful characteristic of UK universities' international activity and this trend looks set to continue." (UniversitiesUK 2018). This is a significant element of business activity for the Sunderland Business School with 23,697 students studying in their home country with accredited University partners. (FBLT 2017/18). With regard to China in particular the issues to be confronted in the next ten years, seem to be more likely associated with how to enlarge its marketing skills and capacity for foreign students to study in China alongside its desire to encourage high performing domestic students to study at home. This will require them to make improvements in marketing and how to substantially increase its enrollment. In essence, China alongside other Eastern and South East Asian nations need to improve their sustainable competitive advantage in the worldwide higher education market.

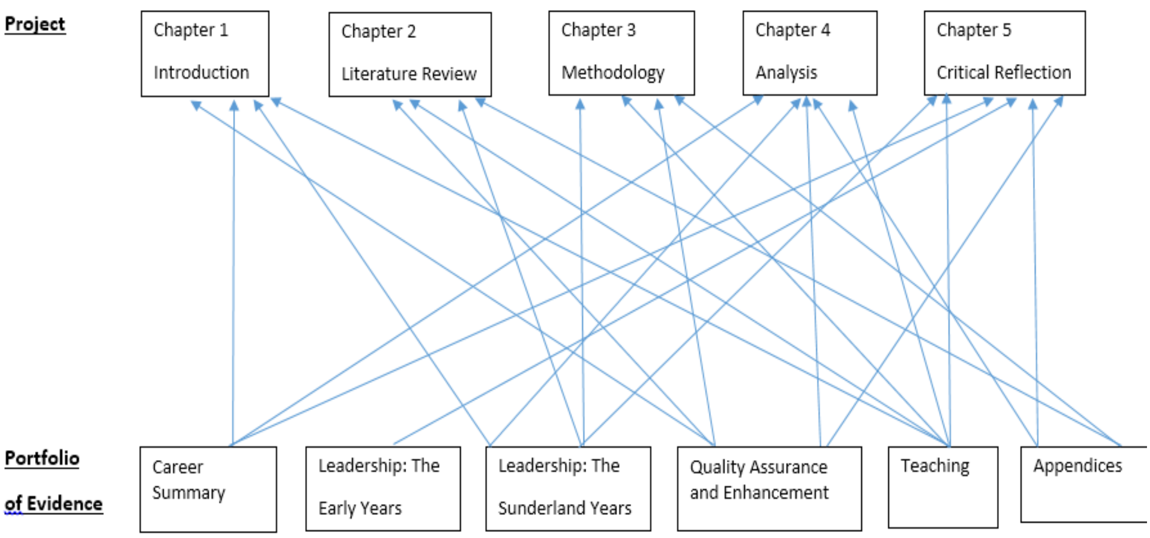
The available data shows that the share of the global market in higher education for international students studying in China has not been competitive to that of western countries. For example, in 2001, the total number of international students studying in China was little more than 60,000. (British Council 2001). It is against this changing backdrop of student recruitment and programme development that this project will investigate the needs and aspirations of international students studying for a MBA.

1.3 Reflection

This strategic overview of the context of the global market for higher education not only sets the scene for the remainder of this project it also has enabled me to think about the sense of place in which the University and hence the Business School finds itself. It has also enabled me to think about my place within both the global and local academic community. My reflection on this context means that I am able to consider the extent to which I can exert any positive influence and how that influence may be interpreted in the wider context beyond my own community of practice.

As the project is made up of two elements, the project report and the portfolio of evidence, Diagram 1 shows the links between the two elements in order to clearly identify the impact the various aspects of my personal development has had both on my career and this programme of study overall.

Diagram 1 Project and Portfolio linkages



The following chapter will review relevant and contemporary literature in the areas of stakeholder and agency theory and consider the connectivity between these elements to provide an insight into current thinking on the project.

Chapter 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Chapter 1 has set out the scope and context for this project.

As has been outlined in the aims to the research, this project will analyse three themes, the student experience; the stakeholder perspective in terms of principal and agent; and, the impact of these two elements on subsequent programme development. These can be shown graphically in Diagram 1.1

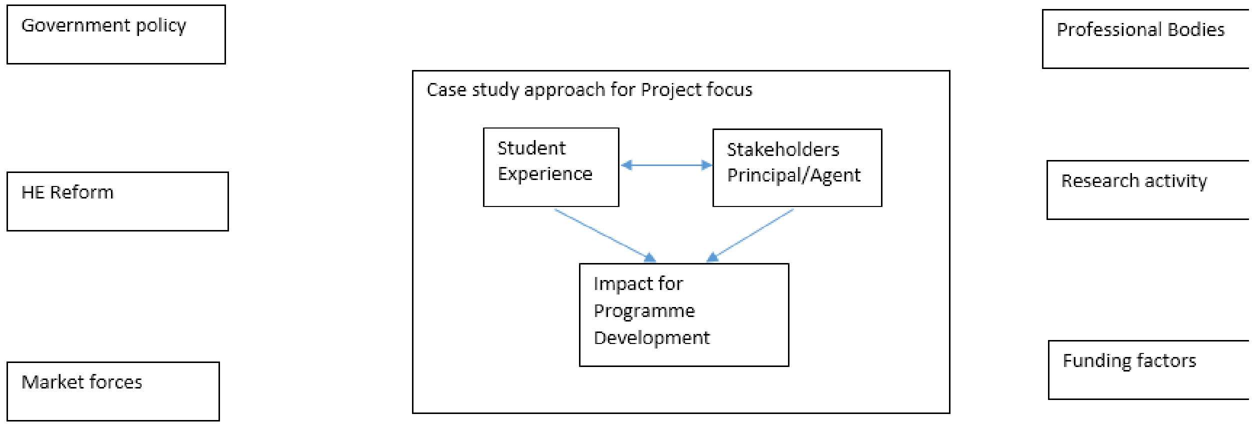
It is accepted that it would have been possible to examine other potential areas however in my opinion and experience these three chosen elements provide a coherent structure for the report and fit the chosen methodology incorporating a case study approach.

The chapter will detail the analysis and understanding of contemporary literature in the areas of stakeholder and agency theory and its importance to my specific area of professional practice (K2). The chapter presents the theoretical framework for this body of knowledge. The case study using the SBS MBA programme provides a context for reviewing the literature and applying it to the better understanding of the MBA programme and the students (i.e. one form of stakeholder) it recruits.

As has been outlined in the aims to the research, this project will analyse three themes, the student experience; the stakeholder perspective, in terms of the principal and agent; and, the impact of these views on subsequent programme development. This can be shown graphically in Diagram 1.1 below.

It is accepted that it would have been possible to examine other potential areas however in my opinion and experience these three chosen elements provide a coherent structure for the report and fit the chosen methodology incorporating a case study approach. The themes shown out with the chosen parameters may exert influence over the themes but within the remit of the research it is not feasible to cover all the issues arising from what would be a more complex and far reaching element of research extending well beyond the boundaries of this project. It is also true to say that those external elements add to the complexity of the stakeholder picture however to give this project both focus and authenticity it is necessary to retain the analysis to the three chosen themes.

Diagram 1a Identification of chosen themes



In order to contextualise the relevance of the literature it is first necessary to consider the impact of the changing nature of the global market for higher education and its impact on the UK sector.

2.2 An overview of the Global Market for higher education.

The Universities UK data referred to previously in Chapter 1 demonstrates the continuing popularity of international students wishing to study in the UK. “Worldwide, the number of students who attend college in a foreign country has doubled since 1990. The United States is still the world’s largest provider of education for foreign students, followed by the United Kingdom, Australia, France, Germany, and Canada.” (GMAC 2018).

An analysis of GMAC survey data shows that, “in academic year 2000/01, a record total of 547,867 international students studied in the United States, making higher education one of this country's leading exports and bringing over $11 billion to the U.S. economy.” (GMAC Survey 2002). It was the largest increase in twenty years. This continues an upswing in international enrolment that began in 1997, after a four-year period of minimal growth. GMAC survey data shows that by 2002, “China is the leading place of origin for international students (59,939), followed by India (54,664), Japan (46,497), Korea (45,685), Taiwan (28,566), Canada (25,279), Indonesia (11,625), Thailand (11,187), Turkey (10,983) and Mexico (10,670)."

In subsequent years this upward trend has continued. "Students from Asia comprise over one-half of all international enrolments, followed by students from Europe (up 3%), Latin and South America (up 2.5%), the Middle East (up 6%), Africa (up 13%), and North America (up 7%). Japan fell nearly 1% although the country remained the third-largest sender despite the large growth of students sent by Korea (up nearly 11%). The number of students from Korea has decreased markedly due to the Asian economic downturn but has now surpassed its previous high after two years of growth. Japan had the largest number of students in the United States for four years (1995-98), but the number of students has shown small increases or even slight decreases over the past eight years, and Japan was surpassed by China last year and India this year." (GMAC 2018).

A reduction in enrolments from several parts of Asia affected by economic downturns, including Japan (down 1%), Taiwan (down 2%), and Malaysia, which dropped off the list of the top ten senders last year and continues to fall (down 14%). (GMAC 2018) There have also been increases (in addition to India and China) are students from Korea, Canada, and Turkey.

Study abroad by American students has also increased rapidly during the last five years (up 61%). It should be noted that the total numbers who study abroad represents a very small percentage of the total U.S. student population. The 11% increase in U.S. students abroad in academic year 1999-2000, reaching a record total of 143,590, follows three previous years of double-digit growth - a 14% increase in 1998/99 preceded by escalations of 15% (97/98) and 11% (96/97). GMAC data for 2001 showed that during the previous five years the number of U.S. students who studied abroad for academic credit has increased by 61%. It is also worth pointing out that spending by international students makes a significant contribution to the local economy of the host institution. GMAC data relating to the United States shows that over two-thirds (67%) of all international students receive the majority of their funds from family and personal sources. Over three-quarters receive most of their funding from sources outside of the United States. The most popular fields of study for international students in the U.S. are business and management (19%), engineering (15%), and mathematics and computer sciences (12% and increasing rapidly, with an 18% rise since the previous year. (GMAC data 2018) In order to present the context in which UK HEIs participate on the world stage the following section gives a brief overview of some national states which are of a similar standing to the UK.

The University Faculties involved with TNE provision of which the Business School is one are anxious to participate in South East Asia. The Business School collaborates with Universities in Singapore, Vietnam and Malaysia as well as having its own campus in Hong Kong. Of course other UK Universities also participate in these locations but it is interesting to consider the impact of other competitors as well. For example, Australian HEIs are active participants in this market. The majority of overseas students studying in an Australian University have grown from South East Asia reaching 82.6% in 2017. (GMAC2017)

Singapore remains as a leading provider of international students followed by Hong Kong, Malaysia, Indonesia and China. Australia ranked 8th source country in 1999, grew substantially (68.7%) in 2000, to be now ranked fifth. Thailand and South Korea also recorded substantial growth (21.9% and 19.2% respectively) in this period. Indonesia was the only market in the top ten that has declined, down 6.8%. (GMAC 2018)

In addition to the impact of the increases in Australian provision it is also important to recognise the growth of higher education provision in China during its period of overall economic growth. For example, in 2001, more than 50,000 foreign students came to study in China bringing the total number of foreign students in the country to 350,000. (Chinagateway.com accessed 19/6/2019).

“Tianjin, in northern China, attracted nearly 6,000 foreign students in 2001, a rise of 50 percent from the previous year. The number of foreign students studying in universities and colleges in Shanghai, East China, exceeded 6,300 in the same year, five times the figure recorded in the 1980s.” (Chinagateway.com). China currently has more than 360 universities which accept foreign students. This growth in provision by Chinese Universities will be considered later and in the context of stakeholder theory.

2.3 Stakeholder Theory

In its broadest form stakeholder theory recognises the sometimes disparate but nevertheless complex relationships which exist between the different constituents (i.e. stakeholders) and the impact of constituents on the success or otherwise of an organisation. The challenge for the organisation and hence its potential for success is the ability of the organisation and its members to bring together these disparate and sometimes competing perspectives for the betterment of both the organisation and the stakeholders involved. For example, Stacy (2013:84) argues that the introduction of stakeholder theory in the 1980s represented a major shift in how relationships within a business might co-exist and benefit one another. Prior to this recognition of complex interrelationships, the general thesis was that businesses focused purely on satisfying the needs of stockholders or the company's private owners. Freeman (1984:32) challenged this view arguing that the numbers of parties affected by the organisation were more numerous than stockholders and owners.

In the context of higher education and postgraduate students in particular, recent trends indicate that increasing numbers of Business Masters Students are considering programmes other than the MBA qualification. Education Consultants Carrington Crisp (2017) in association with the EFMD completed a study in 2017 of over 1000 prospective students from more than 100 countries. Their data showed that 67% of those surveyed agreed that they were prepared to consider a Master's Degree rather than a MBA in the short to medium term. This demonstrated quite an increase from their previous study in 2016 when slightly less than half (48%) were considering a Masters rather than an MBA. It is worth noting that 31% of the sample surveyed were still planning to study for a MBA in a few years' time. In terms of the geographical location of the students surveyed, the Carrington Crisp data shows that the most significant national groupings represented in the study were, Chinese students who were most likely to be considering a Masters (74%) with Canadian students being less likely (57%). The results for the USA and UK were 66% and 64% respectively.

This data shows the relevant power of the student as a primary stakeholder. The increasing interest in a Master's degree is, to a large part, due to its perceived importance amongst employers. The Carrington Crisp study showed that just under half (47%) of the respondents believed that a Master's degree would be just as valuable to an employer as a MBA. This represented a rise from 36% in 2016. In addition, there were marked differences between countries. 67% of students from Pakistan believed having a Masters would be just as valuable compared to only 14% of respondents in Canada, 39% in China and 44%in the UK. This data will be considered further later in this report but its consideration at this point shows that as to be expected the student perception of changing market trends is of significant importance. Andrew Crisp, author of the 2017 report commented, "We are seeing a pivotal shift in the market. There are more Masters programme being offered by Business Schools and students are turning to them in increasing numbers. Employers are seeking pre-experience Masters students as they have additional learning compared to undergraduates can be cheaper to recruit than MBAs." (Carrington Crisp 2017:03).

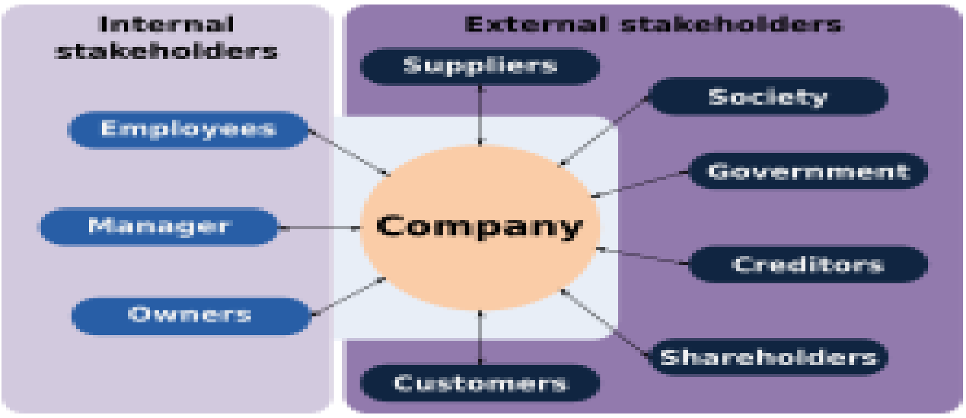
To return more precisely to stakeholder theory, this introduction of some of the issues highlights an interesting dichotomy in at least some of the prevailing literature. Increasingly UK Universities are required to place an emphasis on profitability as one of their fundamental purposes. Herein lies the first of the dichotomies, the pursuit of profitability and the role of Universities as educators' means that they cannot be blind to the needs of one of their primary stakeholders – students. Friedman (1970) argued that issues such as responsibility for employment, the improvement of local communities, the environment, consumer welfare and social developments are not, or should not be an organisational matter. These are issues for either individuals or governments. This however creates an issue for Universities and in the case of Sunderland conflicts with the vision espoused. Namely, "To be bold and inspirational in providing education, research and creative practice, which offers transformative experiences to students, staff, communities and business partners in the UK and across the world." (University Strategic Plan 2016-2021:85). This vision is then translated as part of the Faculty Strategic Plan as detailed in Appendix 12.

Supporters of the stakeholder's value perspective argue that supporting the joint interests of all stakeholders is not only more just but also more effective for organisations themselves. (Jones, 1995: Solomon, 1992)

At this point it is necessary to examine stakeholder theory in more detail and consider some of the challenges which it presents for the University and the Business School in particular. As already mentioned the traditional early 1980s view of the firm began to be more forcibly challenged with the view that organisation performance and success was not only impacted on by shareholders but by a wider range of participants namely stakeholders. (Freeman, 1984; Freeman and Reed 2010 and 2014). This wider sense of involvement meant a greater understanding of the respective roles of the participants and also resulted in a better understanding of how the organisation might respond to the comments and actions of this greater range of participants. As the theory evolved into distinctions between primary and secondary stakeholders and as the range expanded so did the academic debate about the respective power of these participants. This evolution of the theory brought together both a resource based view, (the shareholder view), with a wider market based view of the organisation. The result was the addition of a socio-political dimension to the theory where participants had varying degrees of influence and/or power. This new dimension brought a new set of requirements to the conduct and function of the organisation. No longer was shareholder value and profit-maximisation the sole drivers it became increasingly necessary to consider and respond to the views of other internal and external stakeholders. In its simplest form the internal/external split is represented in Diagram 2.

This view became expanded and enhanced as the debate continued and Diagram 3 illustrates the next form of expansion. With regard to the University and its stakeholders Diagram 4 illustrates the range and complexity of its stakeholders in its business environment. Diagram 2 shows the simplicity of the relationships and suggests the way in which relationships might function with the organisation. For example, the business can exert control over its internal stakeholders in several ways. Depending upon the structure and culture of the organisation influence can more easily be exerted over internal stakeholders. Depending on the scale and scope of the external environment similar variant degrees of influence can be exerted. Admittedly, there is differentiation between say customers and suppliers when compared to Government and wider society. Furthermore, it is arguably more appropriate to place this model within the private sector of the economy for obvious reasons. Moving on to Diagram 3, this model can be applied to the public sector and recognise that to a significant extent the University exists in the public sector but is increasingly becoming something of a hybrid across both public and private sectors.

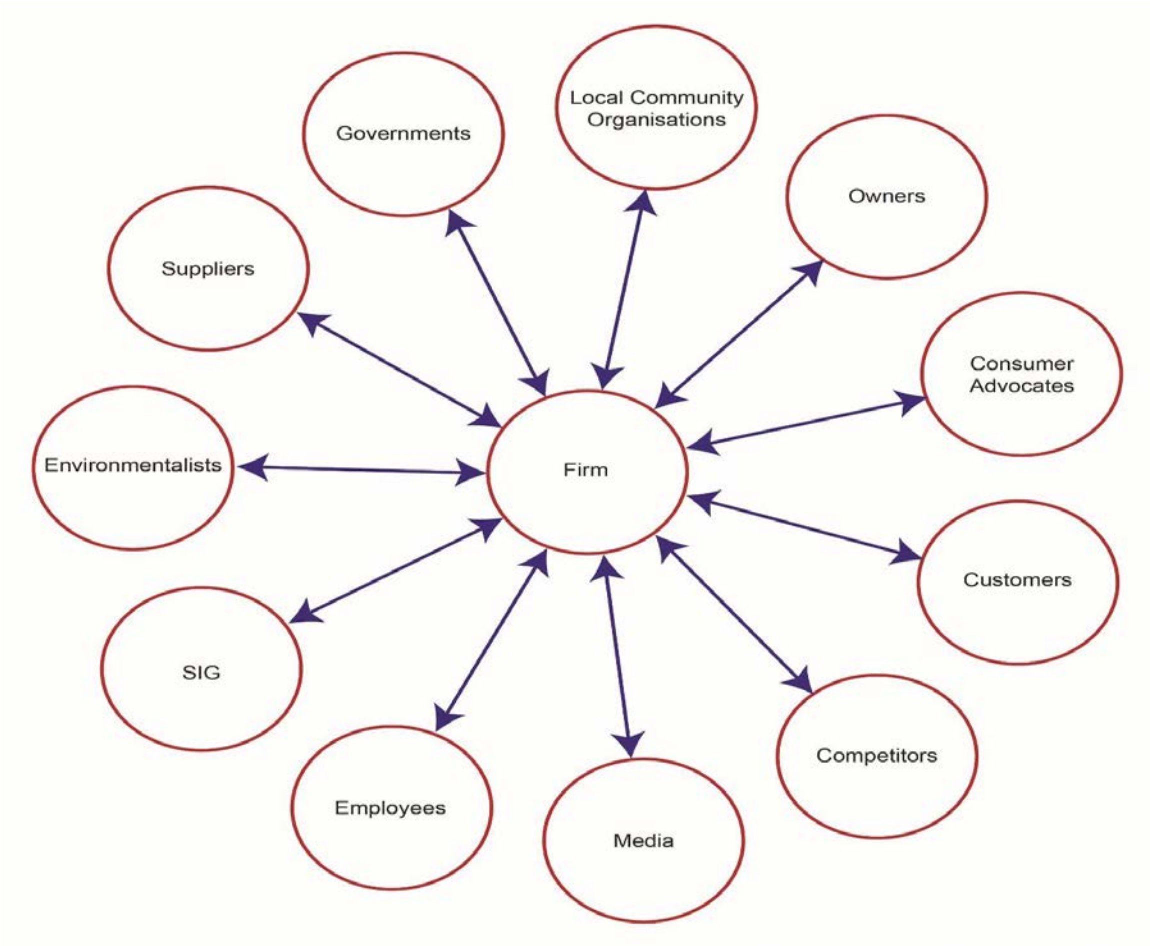
Diagram 2. A basic stakeholder map.



Source: Donaldson, Thomas; Preston, Lee E. (1995). "The Stakeholder Theory of the Corporation: Concepts, Evidence, and Implications". Academy of Management Review. 20 (1): 65–91.

Whilst accepting that this is a stakeholder map in very general terms, it does demonstrate the extent of the relationship between internal and external stakeholders. If applied to a company in the traditional sense, then the company would be established and function for the benefit of its shareholders in order to maximise profits. Shareholders in this sense are seen as a principal stakeholder when compared to Government, for example. It is accepted that a company should always act within the law however this acceptance can also be stretched in a number of ways. For a University the picture is seen differently. Whilst the University will have a similar stakeholder map, the proportionate influence of those stakeholders can be very different. For example, there are no shareholders to affect the University, the external map is significantly different. Diagram 3 illustrates the complexity of the picture for the business.

Diagram 3. A more complex perspective for the business



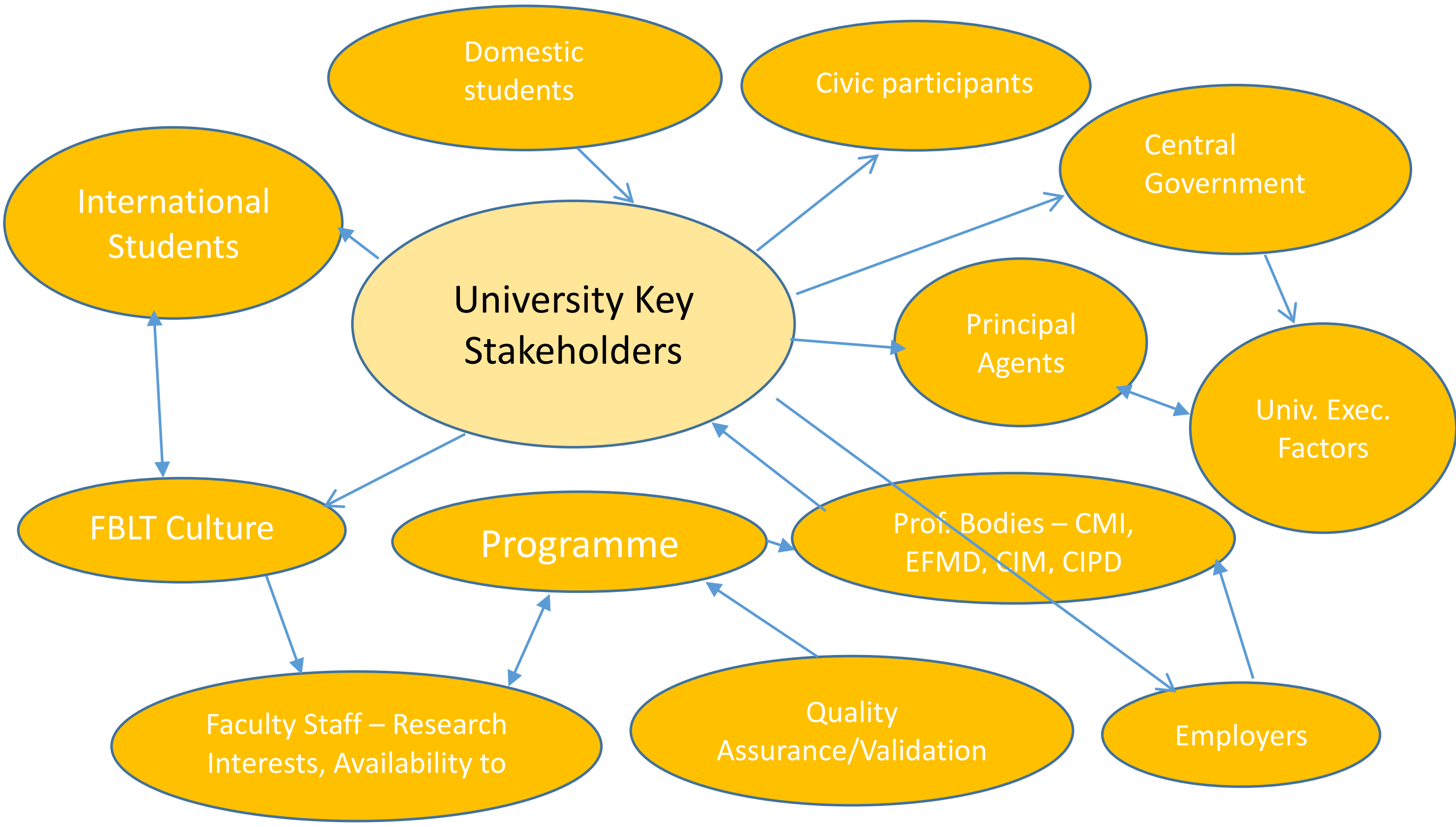
Source: Freeman, R.E. (2010) Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach, Cambridge University Press.

This stakeholder map represents a more complex picture and whilst the number of participants has increased in contemporary society the growth of participants within each segment has also increased. For example, when considering the influence of the media, traditional media outlets are no longer the norm. The exponential growth of social media and its influence has transformed how we access, review and pay attention to information and data. Governments could previously be identified clearly by recognising the Government with a clear numerical majority in Parliament. In recent years this clarity can no longer be depended on and the current complexity of the Brexit negotiations confirms the complexity of the Government vis-à-vis business and society relationships.

Many of the same issues can be applied to the stakeholder map of the University and the way in which varying degrees of complexity impacts directly on the performance of the organisation. For example, the shifting sands of Government policy and the apparent attitude of a Government that might not hesitate from allowing the ‘poorer’ and less well performing Institutions to collapse and go to the wall. Appendix 9, ‘The University time-bomb’ is the summary of a Radio 4 programme aired in March 2019 provides a discussion on some of the issues affecting University funding. If this somewhat pessimistic view is perhaps overstating the case, the introduction of key metrics such as the National Student Survey and the Teaching Excellence Framework renamed in October 2017 to the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) does, in my opinion, go some way to reinforcing this view. Coupled with the insistence of students or perhaps more appropriately termed customers demanding more for their fees. These examples of policy shifts demonstrate how Universities can no longer operate in isolation or only in self-interest. The Government itself officially recognises the fact that many providers and third parties are actively in contact with students about these metrics, to the extent that they instructed the Higher Education Funding Council in England (HEFCE) to provide updated guidance on the TEF and its importance as a data source.

The relative importance of suppliers is equally influential. The influx of international students to UK Universities and the desire of those Universities to recruit significant numbers of such students have meant that marketing and recruitment patterns have changed in recent years. The importance and use of overseas agents for recruitment; the relationships between Universities and Further Education Colleges as feeder organisations and the need for strong links with regional and national Employers means that Universities are increasingly dependent on these partners for recruitment to programmes of study. It is for this reason and its importance that I shall come on to consideration of agency theory as a further way of understanding current activities.

Diagram 4 – A University Stakeholder Map



Having initially considered the respective merits of stakeholders and their influence it is also important to consider other elements which may impact on stakeholder analysis and in particular the influences exerted by stakeholders influencing the University of Sunderland and by default Sunderland Business School. Wu and Wokutch (2015) for example identify a distinction between Western and Eastern cultures and the impact cultural traits may impact on how organisations function and in the context of this project the influences on the choices students make and the impact on their learning.

There is a crucial issue to consider at this early stage of the project in that it is apparent that there are two almost opposing perspectives to consider here in terms of differing value systems. In essence it is the 'tension' between Western and Eastern philosophies of management and of management education. In very general terms, Western philosophy tends to centre on profit maximisation and performance management systems striving to achieve maximum output. In the early part of the last century Fordism would be an example of such systemic production. By contrast, Eastern philosophy was more concerned with a value based system where the honour of the person and allegiance to the organisation was considered more important than the form or method of production. At a political level this was to a large extent debated in the context of open (Western) and closed (Eastern) societies. Given the complexity of the relationship between business and hence the leadership and management of businesses, the power distance between these value systems became more entrenched as the century progressed.

In the latter half of the last century two key factors came to the fore and began to change both perceptions of those philosophies and the styles of management underpinned by those philosophies. First, Freeman (1984) refers to the introduction of stakeholder management, designed to be a systematic approach for an organisation to interact with the variety of constituents it needed to succeed in an ethical but at the same time, effective manner. Profit maximisation was still seen as the key driver but it had the advantage of giving credence to a changing set of public values. For example, ethics and values became increasingly important alongside a more transparent system of demonstrating those values. The model of stakeholder management gives a theoretical perspective to evaluating business success but it also helps educators and hence students of management to understand its importance in modern complex interactions between an organisation and its constituents. Whilst managers may not always get these complex interactions right it does provide a method of interaction and some method for the assessment of effectiveness of those interactions. The second key factor of influence is globalisation and its impact on the changing nature of stakeholder management as well as the need to change the way in which organisations operated.

Within this time frame of the latter part of the century many Western organisations began to move some of their operations to the emerging economies of China and India. In the UK and Europe this saw a movement from Western Europe to former East European countries especially in manufacturing production. The driver for this shift was essentially the desire to move into new markets and expand their reach. It was also the opportunity to take advantage of variations in labour costs and the price of raw materials. It is also important to note that this was not only a West to East movement but also an East to West shift. For example, in the UK the introduction of Japanese car manufacturing plants is a good example.

Whilst these initial shifts were profit driven what soon became apparent was the subtle and often less subtle changes to the relationships among stakeholders and the impact these changes had on both production and the more difficult to measure impact on organisational culture. This change manifest itself in changing work practices, conditions of employment and the more nebulous issue of the relationship between management, the workforce and other stakeholders. As these changes have become more embedded in global business so the nature of education has shifted to critically analyse and evaluate these changes and reform methods of teaching and research to ensure that management students are sufficiently equipped with the knowledge and skills they require to function in this complex and fast changing business world.

These initial comments centre on the impact of changing views in the functioning of businesses however it is also important to consider shifts in societal values between West and East. For example, in very broad terms I would argue that Western values are based on self-performance, output and a Protestant work ethic, especially in European nations. Certainly in America this self-reliance and output, in terms of financial success is regarded as crucial. It can also be argued that Eastern values may be somewhat different. For example, in Eastern societies, especially China, the impact of Confucian values mixed with Buddhism and Daoism provide a strong base for an ethical value system. (Wu and Wokutch, 2015) The essence of this approach is that a Confucian style is to provide more moral guidance for business in their interactions with stakeholders. Wu and Wokutch rightly point out that Confucian values have been the prominent system in China for thousands of years and its influence extends across all sections of society. Writers such as Miles and Goo (2013) argue a case for the necessity of setting Confucianism at the centre of corporate governance.

I referred earlier to the work of Freeman (1984) which contrasted sharply with the more traditional shareholder view espoused by Freidman (1970). This shift to a more ethical approach to business and hence business management meant that educators and students had to deal with not only a new set of ideas based on the complexity of value based systems but also the time needed to assimilate such systems into business life. There is no doubt that contemporary thinking and education has moved on to incorporate this greater variety of views. In terms of stakeholder theory that traditional view is still pertinent to this project however in more recent years the shift towards value based leadership styles has meant that there is a much more diverse set of factors to consider. Businesses increasingly identify the need for graduates to be able to, 'think on their feet', to have a toolkit of transferable skills that allow them to interact with other professionals/stakeholders with possibly very differing values and views of organisational life. Stakeholder theory does support understanding of this complexity because of its pragmatic and instrumental value to the student. It recognises and appreciates the interests of a very diverse group of stakeholders, their respective spheres of influence and the impact that that may have on performance. For example, the organisation that treats its staff merely as elements of resource geared to performance will inevitably result in a de-motivated and disengaged workforce which will surely at some point affect productivity. It is for this reason that modules relating to the study of authentic leadership; human resource management and change management have become a crucial part of both undergraduate and postgraduate study. In the UK higher education system in recent years, employability skills have taken on a much higher degree of importance rather than the past focus on careers services and employability fairs. These employability skills modules are now often central elements to the programmes of study at all levels. Indeed, the undergraduate business programmes at Sunderland have such skills modules at all levels. Appendix 4 detailing the comments from interviewee AC2 relating to employability confirms this shift.

In terms of reflection, Western models of stakeholder theory have provided an anchor for educators and students of management to help them understand and apply the factors affecting a fast changing and complex global business environment. Power/distance relationships can be reviewed in the context of primary and secondary stakeholders and consideration can be given to the impact of this complexity on business performance in order to at least attempt to ensure profitability in that traditional Friedmanite view.

It is now necessary to consider whether Confucianism, in the Eastern sense can assist use in the understanding of business relationships and hence our understanding of international students from these countries in support of their education. It may also have the benefit of assisting our understanding of how those students learn and understand/interpret the learning we are attempting to provide.

As with many religious doctrines Confucian tradition has experienced similar fates to many other doctrines over time. The range has shifted between being enshrined in everyday life to being demonised, for example, during the 'Great Cultural Revolution' in China. Despite this range it is still an integral value system in China as well as countries such as Singapore, Vietnam, South Korea, Taiwan and Japan. Given that these are examples of some of the key locations of many of our international students especially for postgraduate programmes such as the Business School MBA, it is crucial that we understand how this tradition impacts on how students learn and what their needs and expectations might be in terms of that learning.

Miles and Goo (2013) build on the work of Mooney (2007) and Osnos (2007) in pointing out that Confucianism is having something of a revival in the above mentioned countries and is now a major traditional value based system. In this context business should demonstrate humanity and a degree of benevolence towards its employees and actively demonstrate concern for their welfare. In a Western context this might be likened to meeting higher level needs as ascribed by Maslow (1954). In terms of UK higher education, it is the need to recognise the needs of academic staff and students alike. This in turn raises some interesting perspectives in the sense of student experience versus student education, a topic I shall return to in the Analysis Chapter. At this stage however it is worth pointing out that the pressure on Universities and Business Schools in particular to meet recruitment targets and generate income may well be the exact opposite to an attitude of humanity and benevolence.

In concluding this review of stakeholder theory, it is important to point out some discrepancies in its thinking in relation to higher education. I began this review by identifying Eastern and Western philosophies, two views which globalisation has, over time, integrated to some extent in both business practice and management education. With regard to UK higher education and Sunderland Business School in particular it is important to point to some caveats of this integration. Confucian theory is to all intents and purposes a hierarchical system which may lend itself to the unequal treatment of people and even organisations. For example, UK Universities operate in a highly competitive market environment. Post 1992 Universities are, in my opinion, especially at the behest of the market place when compared to the more affluent Russell Group HEIs. The University of Sunderland and the Business School are in this position. Herein rests one of the issues for the Business School in terms of its strategic direction and programme development. How does the University/Business School differentiate itself from its immediate competitors whilst at the same time providing programmes of study which attract students in sufficient numbers to remain profitable and make those programmes both stimulating to international students from a variety of backgrounds and resource efficient?

In order to evaluate the literature further it is important to put an alternative theoretical perspective for consideration. Whilst stakeholder theory might explain the interrelationships between organisations and its range of primary and secondary stakeholders it is also relevant to consider the respective power relationships between those groups. It is also pertinent to consider the role of Universities and the provision of education as the agents of Students, Government and even the State. A review of agency theory will seek to comment further on these perspectives.

2.4 Agency theory.

Agency theory sets out a key framework for the consideration of economic structure and management organisation. The challenge is to adequately explain the problem of how one party (i.e. the principal), employs another, (i.e. the agent) to create value for the organisation. In this context the difficulty is understanding the relevant interests of both parties given that the interests of both parties will at some point diverge. This position is further complicated in that the principal may have imperfect information about the contribution actually made by the agent. Frequent research papers have attempted to address this issue. For example, Dalton, Hitt, Certo, & Dalton, (2007); Ghoshal, (2005); Hill & Jones, (1992). In relation to the recruitment of University students from various international locations the use of Agents is essential to achieving target numbers. The important role undertaken by agents is evidenced by the comments made during the interview with interviewee AC1 as detailed in Appendix 3 of the portfolio of evidence. This strategy is however not without its difficulties. The principal, in this case the University, will invariably seek to reduce its costs to achieve maximum resource gain. By the same token the agent will seek to maximise its revenue by acting on behalf of a number of principals. How then does the University ensure that the contract it has with the agent is, in reality, been fully honoured? Various conditions may be included in the contract relating to target numbers but this still leaves the issue of maximum gain for the University. Appendix 3 sets out the comments of interviewee AC1 covering the use of agents for the recruitment of international students.

Eisenhardt (1989) identified three assumptions which, in his opinion, underpin agency theory. First, that all actors function in their self-interest, second, all actors operate in the context of bounded rationality and third, that agents are more risk averse than principals. Given the highly competitive nature of recruiting international students into UK University programmes this final assumption is equally relevant today. My own experience of visiting many of our TNE partners confirms that agents regularly operate on behalf of more than one HEI within the same country. How then can that HEI be assured that the agent is acting in their best interests? This notion of agents working for more than one HEI confirmed by interviewee AC1 in their answer to question 3 as shown in Appendix 3. It is also self-evident that given the public nature of modern HEIs and the publication of significant amounts of data within League Tables and the plethora of survey results that agents may well be providing skewed information to potential recruits in a bid to maximise their revenue streams.

In addition to this external view of agency theory, I would argue that there is also an internal dimension to be considered. University structures tend to remain hierarchal in both form and nature. To this end it could be argued that Faculties are the agents of the University Executive, there to achieve targets set and approved by the Executive. By the same token Faculties may well be in competition with each other for limited resources from the Executive and may not always act in the best interests of the University as a whole or a particular Faculty. For example, when Faculty staff attend recruitment events representing the University as a whole. There is also the issue of bias which may be introduced in the competition between both Faculties and perhaps even staff. This bias may be the result of allegiance to a particular Faculty or subject discipline or possibility personal ambition and career progression. This aspect is particularly difficult to measure.

The principal cannot know the exact amount of value created by its agents as a result of the uncertainty created by the agent's level of effort within a particular national (in country) context. Despite this uncertainty, the University will expect results in terms of the value created via the number of students recruited. Universities, like all other forms of organisation will clearly undertake extensive forms of due diligence to ensure the value of agents however guarantees of success may be more difficult to measure. An analogy would be the appointment of professional footballers to the different leagues in the UK game. It may be assumed that premiership players are more likely to score more often playing for a ‘top’ club and receiving commensurate wages in keeping with their perceived status. However, if that top player does not score as prolifically as expected his salary does not usually decrease accordingly unless of course the result is relegation to a lower league. I would argue that there are similarities with recruitment to UK HEIs where agents will endeavour to work for those HEIs higher in the league tables and with a strong brand reputation rather than those in the ‘lower’ league irrespective of the possibly better learning experience students may receive in that league. This issue of effort is central to evaluating the performance of the agent. The principal will naturally expect the agent to demonstrate high levels of effort because the principal’s value creation depends on that effort. In addition, principals expect agents to assume a higher level of risk to achieve value whereas agents may well have a lower level of risk in mind to protect their reputation and brand in the mind of students recruited and the follow on business those recruited students might bring when in discussion with their contemporaries. To combat the potential for loss in these circumstances the principal will make use of suitable monitoring mechanisms to measure the performance of the agent. Universities will draw data on applications received and converted to actual student numbers, the more subjective analysis of relationship information obtained from the interactions between particular agents and University staff either when visiting in-country or attending recruitment fairs. Of course it is important to note that the success of this monitoring activity is based on the efficacy of the process and the responsible staff for that monitoring. It is at this point where the issue of internal bias may need to be borne in mind. I would argue it is overly simplistic to argue that high levels of professionalism will always win the day. Whilst this view would be ideal, the pressure on those staff associated with recruitment and the achievement of targets may impact negatively on those involved. This rather negative perspective should be considered in a possibly fairer light when thinking about the bounded self-interest of individuals referred to earlier. It cannot be assumed that all individuals when perceiving unfairness will reciprocate in a similar manner. People may often be willing to incur economic or social costs in order to ensure a norm of fairness remains intact. Indeed, this view can be aligned with the views of Confucian thinking also referred to earlier when thinking about the organisation as a person with its own set of values to be adhered to. In University terms this perception of fairness may be considered in bounded rationality as procedural fairness. If the participants view of the decision making process is considered to be fair, perhaps in terms of the extent to which their opinions are considered and if the process is consistently applied or executed then fairness may well be deemed to exist. There is however an issue with the interpretation of what is fair? Fairness, like beauty, is in the eyes of the beholder. It is the perception of what is fair rather than a known ideal which affects the outcome. If the principal or agent perceives their respective contributions to be either more or less fair, then changes in the relationship between them will be undoubtedly affected. In this context the difficulty for Universities and therefore Faculties is the measurement of this perceived fairness and the extent of the value creation? Most UK HEIs employ the agency model when recruiting international students. Some HEIs will have staffed offices in particular overseas locations where recruitment is deemed strongest although even here the use of agency staff may also be involved. In these locations is it then an issue of managerial discretion which becomes the measure of performance success. It should be borne in mind at this point that research exists which suggests that managerial discretion may have a negative impact on the firm's performance due to the narrow self-interested opportunism which may exist on the part of those individuals. (Phillips, Berman, Elms & Johnson-Cramer (2010) and Shen and Cho (2005). This is similar to the self-interest which I have referred to above in terms of the Executive. This is not to say that such relationships are fractious, I am merely suggesting that the potential may exist. It is the potential that makes the environment complex. The interaction of factors such as effort, ability and fairness is a complex one and can vary on a regular basis depending on a range of issues. The respective importance of finance, strategic goal setting, the local 'political' environment and the relationships between key actors will all play a part. In the macro-environment, factors such as national economic performance and Government policy or boundaries around concepts such as fairness are present in order to ensure that natural justice may prevail. Clearly there are issues around organisational culture and levels of motivation which will impact on these relationships however that is a much more complex issue which cannot adequately be dealt with in the context of this project although it will be referred to in broader terms later in the analysis.

For the purposes of this project I would defer to Milton Friedman who wrote, "the relevant question to ask about the 'assumptions' of a theory is not whether they are descriptively 'realistic' for they never are, but whether they are sufficiently good approximations for the purpose in hand. And this question can be answered only by seeing whether the theory works, which means whether it yields sufficiently accurate predictions." (1966:15).

My decision to incorporate stakeholder theory and agency theory into this project is based on the co-existence of these two perspectives. Changing central government attitudes to education and higher education in particular has meant that ideas related to fairness and transparency has had significant impact on the way Universities operate. In societal terms fairness as a moral perspective in society has received increased attention in the literature relating to notions of corporate social responsibility and stakeholder literature. (Aguilera, Rupp, Williams & Ganapathi, 2007; Phillips, 2003). Theoretically it is interesting to note the pace of change within the higher education sector and the ability of this pace to be adequately researched and commented upon. Hill and Jones (1992) referred to the need to better integrate agency theory with these other literatures. It is also worth noting that this shift in thinking and the closer integration of these theories prompted to Dalton et al. to comment, "In addition, we readily concede that one might properly regard agency theory and its mitigations as a subset of broader literatures (e.g., corporate social responsibility, shareholder value maximization/stakeholder theory, stewardship). We also accept the responsibility for our perhaps overly targeted focus on that subset. On that point, however, both the dominance of agency theory as a theoretical perspective over the last approximately 70 years and the extensive research grounded in its tenets has guided us. Even so, there are common attributes of agency theory and its mitigations and the broader lens of corporate social responsibility that are notable. With each, the empirical evidence is unconvincing, the debates concerning the adequacy of empirical protocols continue, and the search for moderators/mediators is unabated." (2007: 35).

2.5 Integration and Innovation – A way forward?

As with most academic endeavour, a variety of complimentary and competing views will exist. It may well be that this in some ways reflects the complexity of activity in society generally and organisations in particular. The marketisation of programmes of study and the increasingly competitive nature of Universities has meant that it is essential that programmes can be differentiated from those of their competitors. The School has attempted to provide some differentiation by the introduction of routes to the MBA. Appendix 10 is the MBA Programme Handbook for 2018/19 which provides details of the available specialist routes. At a University level a strategic decision was taken to increase the credit value of individual modules for its postgraduate programmes although in my opinion this was not taken to improve the quality of the offering but more associated with resource gain.

The review of the literature relating to the changing nature of UK higher education as outlined in Chapter 2 and my experience of the programme lead me to believe that a new form of programme development is required where primary stakeholders and principal agents are integrated into the development process. At present initial development of the programme is in the remit of a Module/Programme Studies Board and essentially reflects the thinking of the members of those Boards at a point in time. If the Board considers the idea worthy of further consideration, providing it fits with the Faculty Plan then some further development work may be undertaken. This is essentially the gathering of data via the central services marketing team and perhaps some 'soundings' will be taken with a limited number of international agents. As part of the University programme approval process before a proposal is submitted to the University Academic Development Committee (ADC) for consideration, the proposal must contain come initial evidence of contacts with appropriate agents to establish the potential of the market for recruiting students. Such soundings are shallow and may be little more than the notion of a programme title and possible module titles without substance to underpin those titles. In my many years of programme development in the Business School what does not currently take place is any formal attempt to bring together key (primary) stakeholders and agents to flesh out a viable marketable programme which responds to not only market demands but University strategy and Faculty staff expertise. At this stage the student (as stakeholder) is certainly not involved. There may be some broad anecdotal evidence from Staff Student Liaison meetings but it is highly unlikely that this will be contextualised in a form which demonstrates meaningful consultation or development. Examples of Staff Student Liaison Minutes are incorporated as Appendices 5 and 6.

Given that the approved aims of this research are to improve the student experience, meeting their needs and expectations and create a strategic framework for programme development, I contend that way programmes are developed needs a change of direction. At the moment the various actors in this development process act in isolation of each other. There may be some data input but there is no integrated discussion at an early stage. In essence, the key decisions e.g. programme and module titles, programme aims and potential market positioning are taken separately and without co-ordinated discussions between those actors. Indeed, it is usually the case that a third party facilitates the exchange of information in the early stages. In the case of the University that exchange is usually undertaken by the International Office feeding backwards and forwards between (some agents) and the Faculty. There is no integration of the discussions until a programme proposal has been formed and approved by University level Academic Development Committee. Consideration at this level is essentially concerned with the viability of 'potential' numbers rather than academic accuracy and a response to market requirements brought together in a co-ordinated manner. At this level there is no student involvement at all in their role as either student or customer.

In 2013 Garth Saloner was Dean of Stanford Graduate School of Business in California and decided to take the rather unusual step of establishing a new Institute to attempt to alleviate poverty in developing economies. (Saloner 2013). The primary aim was to equip graduates with the necessary skills to alleviate 21st Century problems associated with education, sustainability, and healthcare, clean food and water. Saloner argued that such issues were not just technical challenges but that they were also business and leadership challenges. Why is this example relevant in the context of this project?

In essence, Saloner introduced a new way of thinking, turning around an existing defined process and therefore an engrained organisational culture into one which changed existing norms and challenged traditional thinking. This is no easy task all Universities and Business Schools face similar challenges. To all intent and purpose we are caught up in the same cycles of teaching, marking and the search for the next cohort of students. Externally, we face similar pressures, league table position, competitor activity and a return on investment. To amend this cyclical activity requires a more innovative approach to our activities. At Faculty level our key strength is curriculum reform. Faculty staff has a huge range of professional expertise and experience. What they do not have is time to bring that expertise and experience together with change agents. Programme Studies Board discussion and Programme Annual Monitoring Reports frequently refer to the lack of student engagement in the experience they receive whilst studying. Ideas for change are ad-hoc, usually at a module level or as part of a quinquennial review which is arguably too late given the pace of change in the market place. In my previous reports as part of this programme of study, I have argued that our ability to respond to market demands is slow due to our quality assurance and approval processes. So improvements have been made and whilst we can respond quicker it is still usually twelve to eighteen months to introduce a new programme.

As a Faculty (and arguably as a University) the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 and my own experience suggests that we need to improve in three areas of activity.

First, we must have the ability to identify the issue (problem) more quickly. Second, the identification of a solution is a creative issue which requires time and discussion and this is something that I would identify as a weakness in our programme development. Third, when the solution is found we need the ability to implement it which can only be achieved in collaboration with others. It is this element which is fundamental to the essence of an MBA which is concerned with establishing leadership skills which recognise the importance of self-awareness and cross-cultural communication within the organisation and across the market in which we operate. My concern with our current position is that we teach these ideas but we tend not to practice them due to the constraints of time and enthusiasm for change.

We need a new programme development process for those early stages of development to enable to better understand the needs and requirements of the market and our prospective students. To this end I propose a new stakeholder map at least at Faculty level to improve our development process and market awareness.

Alternatively, it may be that the research shapes that activity. What is clear from both the research and my own observations is that the complexity of the relationships can influence performance which in turn often changes the dynamic of the relationship. Again, I will return to this later in the Analysis Chapter.

By examining agency theory in this way and considering the respective roles of principal and agent, the impact of organisational performance can be evaluated. However, it is important to remember that analysis will be affected by the attitude of the researcher, i.e. myself. In effect it is necessary for me to reflect on my own perspective of the research I have undertaken and also my view of the organisation, i.e. the University. It is important that I recognise my own views and potential for bias and consider whether my glass, is in effect, half full or half empty. A pessimistic view of the organisation and its actors and relationships will produce a very different result than approach with a more optimistic view. Both sides can be presented in an equally realistic manner but the conclusion may be significantly different. In truth, I believe that an optimistic, glass half full, value system will always produce a better outcome for both the organisation and your sense of place within it than the alternative. A similar optimistic approach has been followed in the following chapter covering the research methodology.

2.6 Reflection

Throughout the development of this chapter I have recognised the challenge of complexity. Not only in terms of the preparation for and writing of the chapter but also the practical complexities of the operating environment in which the University, Faculty and staff perform. Historically, I believe that there was a, 'rose coloured' view that students attended University to satisfy a desire for knowledge and the 'joy of learning'. Today reflecting back over my career I am not sure that this is still the case. Obviously my sincere hope is that students still come to University to satisfy their curiosity and acquire new knowledge whilst learning new skills. That said, I think it is also the case, which is often explicit as well as implicit within the literature, that students are attending University for something more. They are attending because they need a competitive edge over other job seekers upon graduation. A view which is supported by the comments made by interviewee AC2 in terms of the employability of our students and the views he has gathered from employers. (Appendix 4). Career spans are longer than they have ever been and it is no longer the case that once you have a job it will be for life. It is more likely that you only have a job for as long as you can add value to the organisation.

The literature on stakeholder theory shows the relative importance of a variety of stakeholders and the part they play in organisational life. A significant proportion of that literature reflects a western philosophy and view of organisational life and performance. This is to be expected as it is written in the west by those authors of western existence. Contrast this view with the experiences of Confucian stakeholder theory cited in this chapter and the complexity of co-existence and organisational relationships becomes more apparent. What is clear that in practice organisations can overcome the challenges they face in global business. Joint ventures, global forms of company ownership and complex supply chains affirm that modern business can and does survive in this complex cross cultural world. This review of the literature to some extent, in my opinion, shows that the literature is in fact still catching up to the practical reality of modern business performance. It is against this background that the University and the Faculty needs to function.

This chapter has reviewed relevant and contemporary literature in relation to this project. The area for investigation required analysis of the literature in relation to stakeholder and agency theory. In order to move the project forward and test the relevance and robustness of the project, the next chapter will develop an appropriate methodology to enable that analysis to take place.

Chapter 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 2 set out a review of the literature informing the topic of this research. By examining the literature and its relevance or otherwise, it is possible to begin to draw together the relationships between aspects of the relevant literature and the substantive intentions of the research. This chapter will examine the various relevant methodologies available to conduct the research to enable decisions to be made on the preferred methodology.

The research intention for this project is to provide an improved and integrated strategic framework for postgraduate programme development. This chapter will examine some of the main methodologies used in the academic arena to support research outputs whatever that output may be. At this early stage of reflection, I encounter my first issue. In my experience most researchers have a preferred methodology which they believe best reflects their research interest, intention and proposed output. At this stage I am not in a position to espouse that view with honesty. By considering a range of alternatives, I am in effect searching for the methodology that provides the best fit to the project and the methodology that provides the most coherent critical analysis and evaluation of the issues impacting on my project.

Whilst a range of alternatives have been considered in this chapter, it is important to clearly set out the thinking behind the particular methods chosen. The case study approach provides best fit for the project as the focus of the work is the University and the Faculty. This project is not a comparative study of a number of HEIs, it is an analysis of a single player in a complex market place. Using the case study approach it is necessary to consider a data sample of appropriate size to reflect the scale of the project. It is also important the data sample reflects the key themes forming the basis of the research namely students and agents as primary stakeholders and the impact of these in relation to successful programme development.

The focus group of chosen students were current MBA students recently registered having completed one term of study. This meant they had had recent experience of the recruitment process and their interaction with agents. They had also had some of the Sunderland experience to enable them to form a view on understanding their expectations to date.

The opportunity to incorporate the opinions of two external MBA students meant that they provided some degree of external confirmation of the thinking of the focus group messages and comments. Similarly, the interviews with the two MBA Directors provided impartial evidence in support of my thinking.

Interviews with the agents was more difficult to achieve, the reasons for which are outlined in more detail later in the chapter. The interview with the International Office representative (AC1) provided an experienced and relevant alternative. Similarly, the interview with AC" form an employability perspective provided useful information on employer thinking which could be considered in the context of reviewing students' needs and expectations.

During the course of developing the data sample I was aware of the implications of the power dynamics between my role and at least some of the interviewees. For example, I was acutely aware of my position as a senior member of Faculty staff and MBA module leader when interviewing the focus group of MBA students. The focus group method was chosen deliberately to make the students feel relaxed as a group and therefore more likely to speak freely. I also informed them at the outset that I would not be teaching them the following term or marking any of their work. This enabled me to ensure, as far as possible, that I was not exerting any undue influence over the group. These concerns were not as significant in relation to the other interviewees as I was not in such a prominent position.

The power dynamic for the focus group was also significant due to the philosophical differences between western and eastern cultures. In eastern culture there is a strong sense of the preservation of face when interacting with others. The importance of social status in eastern culture means that students are more likely to speak less freely when speaking to a person who they perceive to be in a more powerful position. The maintenance of these social relationships is important and in a classroom situation it is sometimes the case that students from south east Asia are more diffident during discussions and debate for fear of being wrong and therefore losing face in the presence of tutors and other class members. This diffidence stems from the often hierarchal teaching structures of Asian HEIs where tutors are deemed to be significantly more authoritarian and less approachable than western tutors. In my experience of the Business School and other HEIs with which I am familiar teaching staff are usually more approachable and international students sometimes find this difficult to deal with unlike local or western students who demonstrate more approachable and confident characteristics when interacting with staff.

To move the discussion forward in this chapter and reflecting on the literature review it is essential to understand the relevance of two primary stakeholders, i.e. recruitment agents and international students. It is also concerned with the improvement of programme development in the Faculty and hence hopefully improves the Faculty in the wider context of the University. Therefore, the key research question to be analysed is,

'How to develop a strategic and operational framework for MBA programme development and its validation'

The following research objectives which support the overall aims of the project set out in the Introduction to the project need to be achieved:

RO1 to determine the needs and aspirations of our students

RO2 to propose a viable development framework and its implementation, flexible enough to be applied across the programme portfolio

RO3 to reflect upon the respective strengths and areas for development of the project proposals.

The above question is answered by the systematic consideration of the previously stated aims of the project and by considering the above research objectives. From a practical perspective, it is how the primary stakeholders might, alongside others referred to above, influence programme development?

The purpose is then to outline and critically evaluate the fundamental assumptions of the variety of research methodologies. It is to distinguish between the various approaches and their respective merits and weaknesses; to consider some of the issues associated with the approach relevant to my area of research and discuss how reliability and validity of the research might be established and maintained.

The underpinning research methodology for this study is one of ‘practitioner based research’. The intention is to understand the needs and expectations of MBA students studying at Sunderland Business School and how that understanding might inform programme development for future cohorts of similar students. The purpose is to understand and improve the interrelated activities of recruitment, programme development and student experience whilst at the same time understanding the practice of myself and the wider community of practice, i.e. those involved with the development and delivery of MBA programmes. This wider community of practice requires a theoretical and practical understanding of stakeholder analysis to demonstrate, in this work, the relationship between all stakeholders and their impact on postgraduate education and MBA study in particular.

3.2 The macro environment and the impact of research

“It should be borne in mind that there is nothing more difficult to arrange, more doubtful of success and more dangerous to carry through than initiating changes in the State’s Constitution. The innovator makes enemies of all those who prospered under the old order and only lukewarm support is forthcoming from those who would prosper under the new.” Niccolò Machiavelli, ‘The Prince’

I first read this text as an undergraduate student studying politics. Given my previous work experience before beginning my studies I was immediately aware of its relevance and importance to modern organisations. Its importance then and now is shown by the fact that the work was written in 1513 but the text was not subsequently published until five years after his death in 1532. I would suggest that the rationale for delayed publication may have been as a result of the power of its thinking and the impact it may have had on the Florentine Court he was associated with at the time. I would assert that his supporters would be, at the very least, wary of his critics. Alternatively, his critics would be wary of increasing the ranks of his supporters and creating a martyr following his death.

This example arguably shows and comments on the history of society generally as well as that of contemporary business and organisational life. Education does of course play a key part in the complex relationships which exist and the numerous attempts by people to organise their daily lives and working relationships. The behaviour of organisations and their constituent parts are in a number of ways underpinned by research in an attempt to provide explanations to sets of circumstances and possible solutions to particular problems.

This chapter will examine some of the fundamental assumptions of some examples of the many research methodologies available. In addition, I will examine some of their key features as well as their limitations and merits as part of a research process. Any research process should attempt to explain the interaction of a number of variables affecting the issue being examined. In the context of this project, the chapter will consider how different methodologies affect matters relating to my community of practice and specifically research into how Sunderland Business School acquires a better understanding of the needs and aspirations of international postgraduate students seeking a UK qualification.

3.3 Community of Practice in context:

Regularly we often find it difficult to fulfil routine tasks when working to establish some order within our organisational, professional and social lives. Mumford (1986) argued that in attempting to provide order within an organisational framework employees have to be effective in achieving the overarching purpose of the organisation they operate in. This means that 'effective' managers are both necessary and appropriate in order to achieve the strategic direction of the organisation. Employees, in their capacity as decision makers, are not merely a tool of the organisation's purpose; it is in the interests of both the employee and the organisation to develop an employee's effectiveness in order to meet their personal goals.

In today's complex world the struggle suggested by Machiavelli is no less urgent. In this sense the constituent parts of the research process, are equally complex and urgent. Part of the role of academics therefore must be concerned with developing the necessary skills in our students to enable them to effectively participate in this complex environment. The issue then becomes how to measure that effectiveness. I will also return to the role of the academic in this complex world in the Analysis Chapter.

The urgency I refer to is two-fold; first on the part of the individual manager, the employee or with regard to this project, the academic. Goffman (1971) argued that we all have our own collection of experiences, morals, values and codes of conduct and it is these elements that shape our professional and personal lives. He went on to argue that frequently these lives overlap, integrate or separate.

Secondly, this sense of urgency stems from the urgency within and pushed by the organisation itself. Writers such as Stacey (2011); Morden (2017); DeWit and Meyer (2014) all comment on the impact modern communication systems, improved education and access to the many forms of information now available. This activity clearly increases the pressure on organisations to maintain their competitive advantage. In turn this means that we are caught up in an accelerator of change and performance management where the emphasis is on speed of response. Alvesson and Willmott suggested this when commenting, "…the management of routines is something that we all contribute to…it is 'second nature' (1996:9). In addition, they argued that the functional nature of modern society means that responsibility for the management of these tasks has increasingly, "moved to the preserve of experts, who are trained to shape, organise and regulate so many aspects of our lives." It is appropriate therefore to consider how these issues of complexity and requisite variety impact on my community of practice. Importantly how can research help me to understand this complex web of activity?

Combining the thinking of Machiavelli and Goffman with the thinking of those writers mentioned above it is clear that in our informed, complex and fast changing environment research is crucial to understanding the changes which have and are taking place. The key to our understanding is in the development of a research process which collects, interprets and analyses appropriate data and information to enable new change processes and policies to be developed.

3.4 Community of Practice in (my) reality:

Following a career in national and local government I joined the academic staff of Sunderland Business School (SBS) in 1995. Having been at the University of Durham (Politics Department) immediately before this the differences between the two Institutions were apparent. Issues of size; scale of operation; traditions and culture were noticeably different. It is not that one was particularly better than the other, it was simply different. The idea of a 'traditional' academic at

Durham was someone considered to be a subject expert within a narrow area of expertise. A person who was research active and providing a small cohort of students with a degree of specialist knowledge. This was quite different from the much larger seminar classes seen today in the Business School and modules with large numbers of students studying at home and from overseas. That said, these two very different Universities provide an education that is designed to enhance the skills, knowledge and expertise of their students effectively at the same level.

This example identifies a key difference and also a difficulty in undertaking comparable research. Research is often regarded as a mechanical process where the most important factor is the strict following of the rules which will result in everything being satisfactory. The problem is the rules seem to differ depending on who made the rules in the first place. The range of approaches, for example, realists, phenomenologists, positivists, ethno methodologists, feminists and critical realists and others all have definite and often distinctive opinions on what research is and how it should be undertaken. This complexity and variety is confusing and the confusion might be made worse by the frequent affirmation of some supporters of a particular methodology and denouncing the views of opponents and their assertions in support of a preferred method. Whilst this may make for interesting 'political/academic' debate it is less helpful to research students attempting to navigate a way through this complex topic.

Academic staff are members of interconnected communities usually centred on a subject specialism and/or HEIs of similar standing and reputation. Despite the pressures facing higher education, top ranked HEIs have remained dominant due to their long established histories; their traditional high regard for academic standards and the value of their brand as perceived by prospective students; Alumni and the wider business world. Post 1992 HEIs posing as ‘new Universities’ are considered to be vibrant and exciting, providing opportunities for the education of a much wider cross section of the population. (Nixon, 1996). In terms of funding, levels of investment and the potential for success of both forms of HEI, research is central to their success and performance.

Since the establishment of the Sunderland Business School it has met increasing competition from the many other providers of management education, development and training. Closing the gaps between research; education and the maintenance and dissemination of best practice is central to both the current debate in higher education and the future of the Business School.

The quality of research, the success of partnerships and external engagement all interact to impact on the future. Research plays a key part in maintaining our competitive advantage. The intensity of the competition does however require academic colleagues to respond faster and spot the opportunity earlier or alternatively react to the new threat more quickly. The analysis and response to these elements will, at best, provide a time constrained marginal advantage. That advantage might be based on the talent, flair and knowledge of particular individuals or groups but it is crucial that the colleagues, whoever they are, constantly update their knowledge and skills as well as having the insight and awareness of the latest ideas and concepts of management thinking. It is the purpose of Business Schools to bridge the gaps between knowledge, learning and research and their application to students of business management and the wider world of business engagement and employee development.

Recent decades have seen a significant increase in critical management research. Critical approaches to 'making sense' of management have covered a range of debates including Marxism; Weberian analyses; psychoanalysis; humanism, cultural theory and discourse analysis. Writers such as Anthony (1986); Willmott (1994) and Grey and French (1996), were early attempts to comment on the shift in analysis as a mechanism for understanding the complexity of organisations and the part that individuals play within those organisations. The writers themselves entered into what became a 'paradigmatic debate' the result of which has been to shift the dialogue requiring researchers and authors to look beyond immediate disciplines. This shift led by McGivern and Thompson (2000) to comment that the 'borrowing' of ideas and methods of working from areas of our community that were previously outside the normal scope for research provided new impetus to the retention of competitive advantage for those that were prepared to take advantage of the opportunity.

3.5 Which approach provides best fit?

The complexity and variation referred to above is a sensible starting point when attempting to understand the relevance of differing research processes? Walliman (2001) suggests that many of the uses of the term, 'research' in everyday use is not research in the 'true' sense of the term. To Walliman, research is not only concerned with collecting facts or information with no clear purpose; reassembling and reordering the facts or information without interpretation in an attempt to get your product or idea noticed and respected. If this is the case, then what might the term 'research' be?

In the academic sense research involves the collection of information (data). This is more than reading books and relevant articles; interviewing people and asking questions. Collecting data is part of the research process however if it is not gathered in a systematic way and with a clear purpose it may not be seen as research within my community of practice. In a similar manner data collected and recorded without interpretation may not be regarded as research. Walliman argues that research requires key characteristics: data must be collected and interpreted systematically and there must be a clear and specified purpose - to find things out and explain the circumstances around those findings.

A successful research project requires clear parameters and the identification of potential limitations and restrictions on data collection and analysis. It is more than identifying an issue; it is concerned with providing focus and then stating that as a hypothesis or research objective. The objective is supported by defining variables and setting out ways to measure them; choosing a research design and organising an appropriate sample. On completion of these activities the researcher can then move towards data collection and consideration of issues relating to ethics and integrity to ensure not only the authenticity of the research but also the treatment of participants and suppliers of data. This leads to the analysis of the data and attempts to explain the underlying issues represented by the data. Eventually the analysis and interpretation of findings results in drawing conclusions which should be robust, defensible and capable of intellectual interrogation,

A credible starting point is the consideration of a research philosophy - an epistemological consideration. Bryman and Bell (2003) state that Epistemology is concerned with the question of, "what is (or should be) regarded as acceptable knowledge in a discipline." In essence it is the researcher's philosophical mind-set explaining the nature of the research, its foundation; scope and validity using an appropriate methodology. Saunders et al., (2016) suggests three approaches dominate research theory and literature - positivism, realism and interpretivism. These are ways of examining the world to provide a context within which research terms can be clearly understood.

Positivism is generally used in the natural sciences and associated with a 'detached' and impartial approach to the collection and analysis of data. Positivists prefer precise quantitative data and use experiments, surveys and statistics to ensure that they are neither affected nor affect the subject of the research. In this sense scientific statements are the preferred method of presentation.

Interpretivism is viewed as a direct contrast to positivism's natural science approach. It sees the world from a social science and cultural point of view, a world that reflects the distinctiveness of humans against the natural order (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

In contrast, Realism suggests that reality exists independently of human thoughts and beliefs to the extent that large-scale social forces affect people without them necessarily being aware of them. (Saunders et al., 2016).

The use of any one of these approaches can provide a degree of relevance and insight to research in the Business School. It is my intention to critically examine the needs and aspirations of international postgraduate students studying for a MBA in the Business School. The strategies of the University and the School attach considerable importance to the student experience. A key part of programme development before it reaches any validation event is the collection of information relating to the market viability of the programme; alternative and competitive programmes; quality benchmark statements and, if easily collected, employer opinions and possibly the views of students if they can be easily obtained. Whilst all this data is relevant and has a place in the development process the ordering of that process/data is not always clear and consistent. For example, is it the market viability of the programme that determines its development or the needs of employers for a particular product? Is it the views of students and the opinions of employers that are more important than the views of academics some of whom may not have been engaged with employers for some period of time? What is the marketing mix between international and UK/EU students that would ensure the financial viability of the programme?

My research was developed around the requirements of international students studying a postgraduate programme provided by Sunderland. In this research the primary programme for consideration was the MBA although it is possible to apply the analysis to other postgraduate programmes in the Business portfolio. It is my opinion that one of the missing elements of existing data is the needs and aspirations of students before they have completed their programme of study. What do they hope to achieve after their studies and how this may influence their choice of programme and University? Much of the narrative concerning postgraduate business education focuses on developing the global manager and how HEIs equip future business leaders with the necessary skills and competences to perform in fast moving and complex global markets. (EFMD, 2010, 2011), (CMI 2011). There is less published information on how students see their development as a prospective manager and what they look for in a programme of study that will help to build and develop those skills and competences.

The following section will consider some of the relevant factors in a research methodology and attempt to analyse those factors.

3.6 The Research Approach

Writers such as Bryman and Bell (2015) and Saunders (2016) argue that the purpose of a research project will define the research approach adopted. If the project is to design and test a hypothesis through empirical study then a deductive approach, they would argue, is the most valid. If alternatively, it is intended that the collection of data will be to develop a theory as a result of data analysis, then an inductive approach is preferred.

The purpose of my research is to analyse the approach taken by the Business School in regard to programme development. By considering the needs and aspirations of international students it is possible to speculate on the strategic perspectives for the School in respect of programme development. This has been achieved by interviews with a range of stakeholders and the comparison of the data collected.

This approach has relevance as it in part mirrors the approach adopted by regarded authors in the field management education who have studied management effectiveness over a number of years. In this context, consideration must be given to the question, what is meant by effective? Drucker (1974) argued that efficiency is doing things right, effectiveness is doing the right things." This distinction is important in relation to the management development process itself. The process should be effective and not only efficient, but the distinction also suggests that management development activities should be concentrated on effectiveness and not only efficiency. This core view of Drucker was developed further by other authors throughout the 1980s and 90s which changed the views of subsequent management thinkers who had previously subscribed to the traditional views of more classical management writers earlier in the last century. Writers such as Mintzberg (1973), Stewart (1982) and Kotter (1982) built on the essential propositions outlined by Drucker. Later writers have gone on to achieve this assertion based on detailed observation, questioning and analysis of actual events and activities rather than theoretical propositions about what 'all' managers do. Mumford (1994) points out that, “the central theme for all these writers is that although there are some important similarities in what managers do, the requirements to meet the different needs of different organisations is at least as significant.”

Given the complexity of the modern business world and the highly competitive nature of higher education I would argue that the same logic is applied to the development needs of our students. In our role as academics we might think we know what our student’s needs are but unless we have that baseline knowledge, given the rapidly changing nature of our student population, can we argue with some degree of reasoned certainty that we are right? For this project my intention has been to follow an inductive approach, to collect data and develop a theory as a result of data analysis. (Bryman and Bell, 2015; Saunders 2016). My initial thinking in this area of research began over ten years ago when researching the attitudes and perceptions of existing postgraduate students in the Business School. The purpose then was to determine why they decided on a Sunderland Business School programme and what they expected to find once they had arrived on campus. At that time, what was surprising was the extent to which they had based their decision on factors such as the title of the programme; its cost and the cost of living within the wider Sunderland area. It was more of a surprise, although perhaps in hindsight understandable, that they knew relatively little about course philosophy, content and how that content might equip them for the future after their graduation. (Cathcart, Dixon-Dawson and Hall 2005 and 2006). Given that highly competitive programmes feature across the HE sector, HEIs have to find ways to differentiate themselves to students. This distinctiveness needs to be based upon informed research which seeks to understand the needs of students and employers as part of the programme development cycle.

To acquire this knowledge interviews and focus groups with students helped to provide their views. Analysis of the external environment via secondary sources and evidence gathered from my corporate education activities with employers helped to provide further information on their views particularly relating to the knowledge and skills they require in 'talented' or 'high potential' employees. It is important to bear in mind that an extensive proportion of Business School postgraduate students do not study on-campus but at a number of off-campus collaborative partner colleges at various locations around the world. In 2014/15 there were approximately 250 postgraduate students on campus but almost 1600 with Partner College's off-campus. (Appendices 8 and 14). It is important to remember that this research is constrained by the requirements of the project brief as part of my programme of study. This area of transnational education and access to this sector of our population would make an interesting area for further research. Appendix 14 provides some TNE data by module for information. I have been able to draw upon some anecdotal evidence from this group although its limitations have to been borne in mind. To access this broad range of locations and students in more detail would be interesting and relevant to the activities of the Business School however it should be conducted in its own right rather than an adjunct to this area of enquiry.

In terms of data collection for this work, there is a clear distinction between quantitative and qualitative data, with the former focusing on statistical 'hard' data and the latter more focused on the 'soft' data of words and descriptors. Saunders (2016:52) commented, "that far from each approach being separate, not only is it perfectly possible to combine the two approaches within the same piece of research, but in our experience, it is often advantageous to do so."

A mixed-method approach has been the cause of controversy and debate among researchers with conflicting views. Those against the use of mixed methods adopt the position that both strategies are grounded in incompatible epistemological principles and constitute, "irreconcilable views about how social reality should be studied." (Bryman and Bell, 2015). Those that support a mixed-method approach stress two advantages. First, the ability to contextualise or get a 'feel' for some of the key issues before embarking further on a prescribed route of research. Second, the approach provides an ability to triangulate the data so that further analysis underpins other data collection methods. By adopting this approach researchers can cancel out the limitations of a singular approach and cross check assumptions (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

The mixed method approach has proved useful to my research. The core issue of this work, i.e. needs and aspirations are better understood by qualitative means but the context of the complex global environment of higher education requires attention to hard quantitative data. It is accepted that ‘hard’ data, i.e. market and competitor information is required to support the analysis. The combination of both methods but with an emphasis on a qualitative approach means that data and therefore analysis can be triangulated to develop my thinking and seek confirmation or otherwise of key themes which emerge.

3.7 The Case Study Approach

The review of various methodological approaches so far has followed a traditional review of pros and cons. In considering these approaches, one element is missing from the analysis. The focus for this work is the University and the Faculty. It is not a comparative study between several HEIs. It is an analysis of the strategies and operations of a single player in a highly complex and interrelated market environment. Having considered the options, the case study approach is well suited to the context of this project and the analysis of the data and information gathered using a mixed methods and qualitative methodology.

Graphically, my approach can be depicted as a point on the research spectrum ranging from qualitative to quantitative approaches.

Diagram 4.1 – A research methods spectrum

Qualitative Approaches **Quantitative Approaches**

The case study approach does, in my opinion, provide a manageable and adaptive approach to the study of this project. Although the University and the Faculty operates in the global world I have referred to, its continued existence and success is dependent upon its internal structure, function and operation. By applying some of the principles of the case study approach to this study then it is possible to better understand the internal workings of the organisation and then apply the lessons learnt from this study to those workings. The case study methodology also provides a sound fit when linked to the mixed methods approach using mainly qualitative techniques. Whilst some quantitative data is provided this data supports the qualitative methods of interviews with students including the use of a focus group comprised of students. Interviews with MBA Programme Directors and by obtaining the views of employers via University staff directly charged with seeking out the views of that group. This approach coupled with my own reflections and experience does provide a robust methodology for a project of this scope and size.

Harrison et al (2017) refers to the evolution of case study research during the last four decades. It is argued that this development has transformed the way subjective disciplines can now be analysed and interpreted. In the introduction to the article Harrison argues that,

“Case study research has grown in reputation as an effective methodology to investigate and understand complex issues in real world settings” (pp 1). The article goes on to state, “…case study research has evolved to be a pragmatic, flexible research approach…” That said it is also recognised that such flexibility can also create challenges in terms of definition, application and validity, especially to the more purist of researchers.

Historically, the case study approach had its roots in studies relating to anthropology and history alongside psychology and sociology. As it expanded, the 1960s and 70s saw the emergence of grounded theory especially from the Chicago School of Sociology which sought to merge qualitative field study methods with quantitative methods of data analysis. Johansson (2003) argues that this resulted in an inductive methodology using systematic procedures to analyse data. Unlike the Chicago School studies which often involved lengthy studies requiring numerous field based observations of groups, this project given the size and scope required to fit into the module requirements means that such large scale observations are not possible. The general principles of the style of data collection and its subsequent analysis can apply. This shift towards grounded theory provides a useful point of reflection to my work. Yin (2014) referred to his background in the social sciences and sought to apply experimental logic to naturalistic inquiry. He incorporated into this inquiry qualitative methods in an attempt to produce a structured process for undertaking case study research where the formal propositions of a study or theory could in fact guide the research process and as a result can be analysed as part of the outcome of the research. This demonstrates his more realist approach to qualitative case study research. This means that whilst the research undertaken remains qualitative and inductive, it is also deterministic with an emphasis on cause and effect. It tests theories and at the same time attempts to understand truth as understood by the researcher. This is particularly interesting to this research and my community of practice as the work is practical and directly applicable to a real time, real world topic, i.e. the provision of a viable and relevant programme of study in a fast changing educational environment. That said, my community of practice whilst operating in a very similar environment also needing to consider similar variables, those variables may be of differing degrees of importance based on their particular operating environment. The approach outlined by Yin attempts to bring methodological sense to this complexity. This degree of complexity is admirably demonstrated by Harrison (2017) when she writes, "…case study research has grown in sophistication and is viewed as a valid form of inquiry to explore a broad scope of complex issues, particularly when human behaviour and social interactions are central to understanding topics of interest." (pp.5.). I would argue that this is precisely what is happening in the operating environment of this project whether it is in the context of this particular project or the wider community of practice. Harrison's view is supported by reference to the Merriam (2009) definition of case study research where she states it is, "an intensive analysis of an individual unit (as a person or community) stressing developmental factors in relation to environment" (pp.103).

This need for realist context setting is also supported by Yin (2014). He asserts that case study research is distinct from experimental studies because the case study is investigated in context and examined in its 'real world setting' (pp.16). He goes on to stress the need for process and practicality as core attributes of the study and as such this assists the maintaining of intellectual honesty, the managing of inevitable bias and the acknowledgment of any limitations. Some of these limitations are outlined in the following section.

3.8 The Research Instrument

Having considered a range of alternative methodologies, the case study approach provides a best fit solution to the uncertainty I referred to at the beginning of the chapter when to all intents and purposes I was searching for an appropriate solution. This solution is appropriate for the reasons I have outlined above. In recognising the potential subjectivity of the case study approach and its qualitative nature there is the need to develop some parameters in order to provide some robustness to the approach. The collection of data from relevant stakeholders for example requires choices to be made. For example, the choice of particular interviewees raises issues around relevance and reliability. There was also a need to establish some relevance to the data collection in terms of its subsequent analysis. This relevance also needed to relate directly to the project and to the research aims and objectives which I have outlined at the beginning of this chapter. I decided therefore that the most suitable way forward was to establish three themes for the research and the collection of relevant information. The decision to use thematic analysis was based on my own professional experience and self-reflection which is supported by the literature I have already referred to in this chapter and also developed from the literature review. In addition, the data collected from the interviews also supported the use of themes both to aid analysis and better reflect the ethos of the study.

The chosen themes were:

- Student experience
- The stakeholder's perspective in terms of principal and agent, and
- The impact of these views on subsequent programme development.

These themes would assist the analysis of the information and data collected and also enable a more detailed analysis and explanation supporting the research question for the project overall. The themes are inter-related but they are also developmental in that student experience and other stakeholder perspectives inexorably impact on programme development.

In terms of evaluating student experience, the 15 students which made up the Focus Group were existing MBA students who had been studying the programme for approximately one and half terms. The justification for this choice was based on the fact that in this group there was a mix of nationalities, they had been part of the programme for long enough to develop some opinions and yet they were still fresh enough from arriving in Sunderland to recall with clarity the recruitment and early stages of their study and the choices they had made. It was also anticipated that as a group they had had some time to bond and therefore they were more likely to talk freely about their experiences in an open group. The questions were a mix of open ended and semi-structured to facilitate a more open discussion. This was a deliberate decision on my part as I did not wish to limit the opportunity for the students to participate and express their views. Whilst having a preconceived notion of the questions to be asked it was also necessary to allow sufficient flexibility to assist both the flow of information and the direction of the conversation. The list of questions can be seen in Appendix 1 which also contains the comments from that group discussion. The questions used for this group were developed by me to enable the students to freely talk about their own experience and how they perceived the course. I considered this important as they supported the ideas identified in the literature about the variation between different cultures and value systems which impact on the way in which some students may hesitate to speak openly about their own views in case of causing offence. (Cathcart, Dixon-Dawson and Hall 2005 and 2006).

In order to provide some balance to this group of students as primary stakeholders, it was necessary to seek the views of students on an individual basis. I also wanted to seek some alternative views of the wider student world to assess whether there was any similarity between the views of Sunderland students and others following similar programmes of study. This was a difficult element to achieve on the basis of available time, resources and access to 'independent' students. I was able and to some extent fortunate to seek the views of two international students from two different Universities studying for a MBA. They were attending an EFMD MBA Conference at which I was present and they were willing to participate when approached. It was especially fruitful for the research as their Programme Directors were also present at the Conference and they were prepared to share their experiences which added a richer seam of information to the data overall. For these participants, the semi structured interview was used to provide a free flow of information and prevent any preconceived notions of what might be intended outcomes. The questions and their responses can be reviewed in Appendix 2. The justification for this group of interviewees was based on their availability but more importantly their independence, degree of distance from and knowledge of our programme. A similar justification for selection applies to the two Programme Directors that I was able to speak with. Both were very experienced as both senior academics and programme leaders. The questions for the student interviews were intended to provide complimentary views to those of the focus group students which at the same time attempting to illicit their own views on their needs and aspirations. I considered this important because it was necessary to obtain views which were 'once removed' from those of Sunderland students in order to provide not only a degree of independence but also a degree of validity to the process overall. In a similar manner the views of the Programme Directors provided an alternative dimension being from completely different market and operating environments. Whilst the questions were intended to seek their understanding on the needs and perceptions of students generally it was also intended to illicit information on their own students. I considered this important as it provided a degree of objectivity and at the same time went some way to providing an alternative independent view to my own, which would also improve the validity of this research.

With regard to my second theme namely the stakeholder perspective, access to agents as stakeholders was to prove more challenging. Agents were reluctant to contribute in a meaningful way and I believe this was due to their belief that comments would be attributable or least identifiable. In this area I believe the reservations of the agents stemmed from issues of power and the relationship that they sought to establish with the University and the staff they came into contact with. This issue of power and its impact on relationships is also borne out in the literature. Eisenhardt (1989), Shen & Choo (2005). Despite my assurances to the contrary in relation to anonymity and confidentiality the agents approached were reluctant to come forward. Clearly access to this data was essential to the project and therefore I decided that information gathered from a representative of the University International Office (Appendix 3 Comments of AC1) would provide a reasonable substitute. It is worth pointing out that in terms of future research and dissemination within my community of practice this issue of power and agency theory is in my opinion worthy of further investigation. As the information relating to agents was now coming from the University and may therefore be slightly biased or at least showing a different slant on understanding I wanted to provide some balance to this information and to illicit an employer dimension. I used a similar approach by talking to the Faculty lead for employability to give an external perspective (Appendix 4 Comments from AC2). I had my own opinions on the employer perspective as a result of my own corporate activities stemming from my substantive role in the Faculty however I wanted to counter balance this. This interviewee was out with of the postgraduate programme team and was therefore able to provide a degree of objectivity. I considered interviewing employers directly but on reflection I decided that this may not produce reliable information in respect of the particular students I was focussing on. Previously, the postgraduate portfolio has not made use of placement opportunities for students studying at this level. As a result, any employers interviewed would only be making assumptions based on their experience of any full time and presumably experienced employees they came into contact with. I believed that this would not assist in obtaining reliable data for this project and may even distort the employer perspective. My chosen interviewee had the benefit of understanding both the employer and student perspectives.

Interestingly during the development of this project I have developed placement opportunities for MBA students and I will be starting a new MBA Placement module in March 2019. I shall return to this later although it is worth noting here that this activity directly underpins my third theme namely, the impact on programme development.

Whilst the collection of primary data is a benchmark for research generally it is also the case that the use of secondary data and information provides underpinning and support for that primary perspective. Secondary data sources are also recognised as a valid element of the case study methodology. In this research I have combined both sources in an attempt to provide both objectivity and reliability to the research process. There will always be more that can be done to improve the reliability and robustness of the methodological process but as I stated in the Introduction to this work the project was designed to investigate a particular aspect of my work and to initiate an area of research which was capable of further investigation.

3.9 Ethical Considerations for the methodology

Any research undertaken in an academic context must consider the ethical issues associated with that research. It should also be noted at the outset that the approach I have adopted and the ethical issues arising from my research are entirely consistent with the University's requirements. Approval of the research from an ethical perspective was obtained before commencement of the work.

In the case of this particular research, I would argue that it is also important to consider the norms and values of the researcher; those likely to benefit from the research and the wider audience within my community of practice who make use of the research. It is not feasible to consider all of the possible variables especially in terms of the beneficiaries and the wider audience but it is feasible to consider how we treat the participants in the research and whether there are any activities which I should or should not participate in during my interactions with those participants.

With regard to this particular research, an additional consideration relates to the influences of professional associations and how they might influence the norms and values of myself or interviewees which in turn may influence the answers they give. For example, the Chartered Management Institute (CMI); the Association of Business Schools (ABS); the British Academy of

Management and the Higher Education Academy all espouse ethical guidance to their activities and the conduct of research. As part of my own dissemination plans I need to be aware of their codes of practice so as not to adversely impact on my research or its value to the wider audience.

My personal value systems have been extensively reflected upon in the previous assessments submitted as part of this programme of study and in relation to other areas of my own professional development. For example, I undertook a programme of study leading to a M.A. in Coaching for Organisational Excellence which enable me to reflect in significant depth on my own value systems and how I may influence the values of those around me and whom I come into contact with. I believe there is no need to reiterate that discussion here other than to state that I take a Universalist stance in that the ethical precept should be broken.

Coupled with this reflection and crucial when using a case study approach is consideration of issues relating to confidentiality and anonymity. In such an approach it is important that persons, organisations or places are not identifiable. I am conducting my research in my place of employment involving staff and students. Research has also been undertaken with staff and students in external organisations, for example some of our collaborative partners. Some of these partners are in contractual relationships with the University and the Faculty therefore it is important that I do not impact or infringe the relationships which already exist. In the conduct of my research I have always made clear to participants the purpose and intention of the research in terms of its collection and analysis and also in relation to its dissemination. At no time have participants been encouraged beyond their comfort zone and this is especially true of students so that they do not feel concerned about their involvement in research about a programme of study they are directly involved with. The same is true for academic staff and others who support the work of the University and the Faculty. Finally, it is necessary to comply with the requirements of Data Protection legislation in the UK although there have been no difficulties in this research.

3.10 Sources and Limitations

Primary and secondary sources provide the data and information necessary for understanding research within a subject area. My research has made use of both forms. Secondary data has been used from previous research I have undertaken, (i.e. Cathcart, Dixon-Dawson et al 2005 and 2006). Data has also been gathered from PSBs and SSLC meetings as well as Programme

Validation Panels. These sources are in addition to the primary data collected for the project. This research has also drawn on information from the range of publications within the University and Faculty. Also included from the available literature are the various articles and conference papers available in relation to programme development, learning and teaching strategies as well as publications in relation to management development and the views of employers contained in professional journals. Finally, as a Senior Fellow of the HEA and CMI and EFMD member I have access to their extensive libraries.

One purpose of research is to add new knowledge as well as to contribute to existing knowledge. Qualitative interviews support understanding in a number of ways. For example, the strategic position of the University has been developed by examining a range of available documents and seeking the views and opinions of experienced individuals in addition to my own knowledge and experience. This provides engagement with those responsible for the direction and ownership of the strategic agenda. This view requires consideration of two questions. First, who has control over strategic initiatives, i.e. the vision, mission and values at University and Faculty level? Second, who has the functional/operational ownership of programme development? As an employee of the University access to personnel and documents has not been problematic. My role requires extensive involvement in postgraduate education. Being this close however requires me to be aware of the introduction of my own bias to the research. In an attempt to ameliorate this, I followed the suggestion of Bryman and Bell (2015) and used semi-structured interviews to provide structure whilst permitting the exploration of issues, beyond and out of sequence of the prompts.

Linked with the idea of bias are the issues of validity and reliability. Several writers have referred to these concepts in the context of qualitative research. The notion of the validity of the research relates to whether you are observing, identifying or measuring what you say. This in turn is linked to the issue of the application of the research and whether it can be administered within a wider generalisation (Bryman and Bell, 2015). It can be difficult to determine whether a generalisation, i.e. replication beyond the research conducted, is true as this research is specific to the University therefore its transference will be limited to similar or like Universities. Despite this possible limitation I suggest that the research still provides new knowledge and contributes to existing knowledge within my community or practice.

Regarding reliability, this may be contentious because of its focus on perception and opinion although I would argue that integrity is maintained because of the roles of those involved. The interconnected nature of involving students, academics alongside evidence from external stakeholders provides a combination of relevance and role specialism in the context of this project. Furthermore, any change that would be initiated as a result of the research would be sponsored and implemented by some of those interviewed. I would therefore argue that the reliability of the data is considered high. Again, the potential for bias needs to be considered as the professional defensiveness of some of those interviewed may be considered self-protecting. Again, further research including separate interviews across a broader set of perceptions would assist the identification of a 'corporate response'. In this research the use of semi-structured interviews has provided some degree of control by way of guiding the interview in line with the area of research rather than the possible agenda of the interviewee. This to some extent provided a consistent approach and scope to questioning.

In addition to the above factors there are others to consider. For example, formulating a suitable sample as outlined above. Saunders et al. (2003:310) refer to the work of Jobber and O'Reilly (1996) in the identification of several techniques for improving the selection of interviewees as well as the accuracy of interviews. Given that I am an active participant in the organisation the assurance of anonymity and confidentiality is important. Similarly, the issue of interview design and its preparation to ensure maximum participation. The validity and reliability referred to above depends upon the effective design of the questions. At the same time, it is important to restrict the introduction of bias stemming from the use of open and closed questions with the possible consequence of bias from the interviewee. These issues have been considered in relation to this project and the methodology is considered robust and appropriate to the research given the requirements of the module which underpins this project. The focus group made up of MBA students covered a range of nationalities and cultures. They were of the right constituency in terms of their time on the programme and competent to set out an informed opinion. The students who were interviewed individually were also MBA students and completely independent of the Sunderland programme. The MBA Programme Directors were also independent of Sunderland and were very experienced academics with considerable knowledge of the MBA and its recognised programme philosophy. The University interviewees may be considered less independent which to an extent is true however they were also very experienced in their role and more than capable of setting out and informed and objective view.

3.11 Reflection

The value of this project as part of the Professional Doctorate programme is two-fold. First it has provided information on the various research processes available. Second it has ensured that I concern myself with the factors surrounding the methodology which I decided upon. Clarity of thought has appeared as the research has expanded and taken shape resulting in an opportunity to think about and articulate some of the issues perhaps considered less relevant to the project in its infancy. Finally, it has provided an opportunity to link the methodology to the key messages from the literature as well as consider how both chapters can influence the analysis developed in the next chapter.

Chapter 4
The shape of things to come?

4.1. Introduction

Chapters 2 and 3 have provided the building blocks for the report. An examination of the literature coupled with the analysis of research methodologies has enabled choices to be made to facilitate the research as well as inform the analysis of the data. This chapter will interpret the relevance of the literature in the context of the data collected and identify the way forward for the School.

My experience of working in a Business School for over twenty years together with the research undertaken for this project leads me to believe that we are again at a crossroads regarding the type of postgraduate education we provide. This is especially true for those post-92 Universities who operate in a highly competitive environment when attempting to attract students whether it be from the home/EU market or the international market. There is no doubt that Business Schools are, and always have been, under pressure to provide differentiation in their programme offering. At open days, applicant days, drop in events, the questions are all too similar, 'why is your school different from all the others?' why should I study for a MBA? What unique advantage will I get from studying with you?

Increasing student fees, the competition for qualifications coupled with the drive for success in finding the right employment means that students are becoming even more discerning in their choice of education provider. It is also true that in the world of work the opportunities for post-entry training and development is often more difficult to obtain support for to develop young aspiring leaders and managers. The availability of a wide variety of programmes, full time; part time; distance learning and the more recent introduction of Degree Apprenticeships means that the choices available to potential students has increased significantly. The result and hence the challenge for Business Schools is where to position themselves and with what portfolio in that fast changing marketplace.

Any text on strategic management will extoll the virtue of competitive advantage. Whilst such positioning is beneficial in the short term, attractive market opportunities soon become crowded with others seeking to achieve the same advantages. Inevitably this leads to reduced levels of differentiation for all. The expansion of the new market opportunities for Degree Apprenticeships is a recent example. Despite the complexity of monitoring student participation in the 20% 'off the job' training, the twelve weekly cycle of tripartite meetings with University tutors and employer representatives and the uncertainty of future funding levels, the growth of degree apprenticeships continues. (Education and Skills Funding Agency 2019). From my own experience I am aware that some Business Schools are reflecting upon their original decision to participate and whether they should in fact continue. The challenge for such thinking is of course, 'if we pull out, someone else will fill the gap and we will lose numbers!' In order to attempt to prevail during these challenging times Business Schools need to determine their overall strategic direction and what it actually is that shapes that direction in terms of key factors such as the staff base; the research strategy; the programme portfolio; market factors and to a significant extent the drive and enthusiasm of senior management at both Faculty and University level. This chapter will attempt to navigate through some of these issues and reflect upon the achievements and strategies from others and then suggest some options may same the future of provision.

4.2 We need to understand where we have come from!

Awareness of the issues outlined above stems from an amalgamation of data; information; professional and personal experience. To some extent this results in a degree of 'messiness' that requires attention before the analysis can take shape. The methodology chapter examined a range of options for the collection of data and information allowing for an organised project which could be presented in a way which would conform at least in part to recognised methodologies which would ease presentation and inform the reader. The interpretative approach I have referred to then requires further support and clarification in this chapter to ensure that there is some consistency to the research process in the presentation and analysis of the data and information collected during that robust and viable collection process. Various options are available, probably the most favoured of which would be NVIVO as a method of discovering themes for analysis. Whilst I accept the value of this approach I decided, as the research progressed, that the use of this process would not be suitable for this project. My reasons for this are twofold.

First, the focus of my project is to some extent quite narrow as it relates to MBA study using the Sunderland MBA as a model and the Business School provision as a case study. This means that the extent of the data collection is not far reaching but the data collected is directly related to the project and its aims and objectives. It is also intended that once the analysis was complete the issues identified could be applied not only to the Sunderland programme but that the results would have some resonance with a wider audience within my community of practice. It is also important to point out that enabling the Sunderland postgraduate programme team and wider postgraduate faculty colleagues to have relevant information available to them would help the overall improvement of those programmes by better understanding the issues affecting them directly. In one sense, I would argue that I have acted as a Consultant in the context of gathering information, analysing it and proposing possible areas for improvement. This is a process which staff currently do not have the time or support to achieve.

Second, a process such as NVIVO is intended to identify themes which are developed from the data collected and look for confirmation and collaboration of those themes from supporting data. Whilst I have no issue with this process and I accept that NVIVO can provide countable data as well as themes I believe that my narrative was more focussed from the beginning. I had identified the themes I was interested in from the outset. I firmly believe that unless the School and its various actors lift their horizon in relation to the impact of the student experience coupled with the role of various key stakeholders then a negative impact on programme development will result. NVIVO therefore would not assist me at this stage or for this project. It is for these reasons that I consider thematic analysis to be appropriate and support me in my analysis of the information I have gathered. Thematic analysis allows me to clearly state the themes I am interested in and it permits me the freedom to analyse and evaluate the material I have gathered. I accept that I may not be able to deal with all aspects of relevance to the study but I am able to clearly state what I have examined in a positive way rather than from a negative point of view of, 'I could have considered…but didn't.'

To better understand this section and the remainder of the chapter, I propose to analyse the data and information collected in the context of the three themes I have already referred to namely,

- The student experience;

- The stakeholder perspective in terms of principal and agent; and,
- The impact of these views on subsequent programme development.

By approaching the analysis in this order I believe it will be developmental in terms of both the project outcomes and my own reflection. The first two elements are inter-related and inexorably lead to the third.

4.2.1 The student experience

4.2.1(a) the student as learner

The ambition of the University as set out in the section of its Strategic Plan titled 'Knowledge Creators', states that it will be, *"…An institution that is acknowledged globally as an exemplar in the creation of knowledge, skills and learning that is work relevant in the 21st century."* This statement requires the Business School like any organisation to regularly review and determine its future strategy. The issue of problem identification and then innovative solution is something that is regularly taught in Business Schools. It is one of the enduring problems of organisational life and market success. The fundamental provision of postgraduate education is essentially the same. It would be almost unthinkable to consider teaching a MBA without the curriculum of the core subjects of finance, operations, strategy, marketing and so on. These subjects have been and still provide the staple support for most programmes. However, in addition to subject knowledge students must also develop the essential skills to help them to solve the problems which 21st century businesses face. First they must be able to work out what the problem is. For Business School teaching this has often been achieved using case studies. A more detailed discussion of the value of the case study approach was outlined in Chapter 3, section 3.7. Whilst this method provides the opportunity for analysis and debate in a 'safe' classroom environment it may not necessarily equip students with the more pressured environment of the workplace where problem solving to a critical deadline is crucial. The involvement of study visits, company visits and guest speakers can contextualise a more dynamic environment the challenge is to recreate this in the classroom. MBA students have attested to the value of study visits as providing a bridge to their studies. (Appendix 5 and 6 SSLC Minutes May 2017 6d and May 2018 6.1). Next they must be able to design a solution, a process which is essentially creative. Directly linked to finding the solution, students must acquire the ability to implement the finally agreed solution in a manner which will achieve the desired outcomes and allow the business to move on both strategically and operationally. This will require team working, project management and leadership skills. Such skills are achieved and developed through self-awareness, character building and increasingly cross-cultural awareness and communication. These skills need to be developed alongside the fundamental taught elements to enable successful students to graduate and enter the world of work prepared for what might lie ahead. Comments from the Sunderland focus group students and the EFMD MBA students as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 confirm the need for the development of more transferable skills.

At this early juncture the first of many key issues arise. From my personal perspective as an undergraduate in the 80s I went to University to receive a higher education. To study for the award of a Bachelor's Degree and then a Master's Degree that would hopefully lead to secure and permanent employment. The students I have interviewed for this project however seem to be looking for something different or at least in addition to the award of a University Degree. In essence they want an 'experience' given by the University they attend. (MBA Focus Group notes). At the same time Universities are extremely concerned if not fearful of their performance in the plethora of surveys that students take part in. (See Appendix 7 – anonymised email March 2019). 'Good' scores are often not enough, 'great scores' are the modern benchmark. Performance in the NSS, PTES and other surveys are to a significant extent the key to successful recruitment. Consequently, Universities have invested considerable sums of money in modern student learning hubs, learning and teaching centres and so on. At the same time, they have invested in more and more 'customer' services. Feedback, feed forward and feed everything is the order of the day. I am not denying the need for quality developmental feedback for students to ensure that their learning is enhanced. Nor am I disputing the professionalism and commitment of those staff working to support students in whatever area of University life they are concerned with. (See Appendix 8 PSB Minutes 7/7/17 16.94). What I am suggesting is that the University student experience should perhaps be equally concerned with experimentation and exploration. In essence students should be doing it by, to and for themselves. The potential danger is that if the entire experience is designed from the top down and solely concerned with performance management indicators then this must surely restrict the potential for the very exploration and experimentation that we initially expect from the students we recruit. This desire, almost dedication to the student experience on the part of Universities is an example of how universities degrees are becoming a commodity. (See Appendix 9 – synopsis from the Radio

4 Programme, ‘The University Time bomb’ March 2019). By investing in more and better services to please students we may not be to provide an enhanced opportunity for learning. What we may be doing is to enhance our competitiveness in an increasingly competitive market place in the expectation of attracting more and better qualified students which will in turn, on graduation, boost the standing of the University in the very league tables that they often publicly campaign against.

It is clear that there are a range of forces being exerted at this early stage in the student’s life. Clearly the skills required for this complex activity coupled with the significant amount of learning required places pressure on students to perform. (Carrington Crisp 2017). It is not only to perform, it is also to improve and not least survive in the early weeks of a programme of study. For many students starting a postgraduate programme requires a step change from undergraduate to postgraduate study. This in itself can be a daunting challenge. Aligned with this the students are often studying possibly thousands of miles from home, in a language which is not their native tongue and in an unfamiliar city where they know no one. These social challenges are significant and students, like all people, require time to adapt to their surroundings and to new ways of learning and teaching. The focus group notes in Appendix 1 confirm the trepidation of some students about language and its links to learning.

At this stage a further issue becomes apparent. In addition to the ‘student experience’ we can add a further much used mantra to our lexicon, ‘the student journey’. In essence this requires the monitoring, mapping and essentially managing every contact the student has with their university from the first request for a prospectus and attendance at an open day to their graduation and the maintenance of their links via the Alumni Association. (University of Sunderland Strategic Plan 2016-2021). Again I support the notion and the need for this monitoring and accept its importance in the competitive marketplace I have already referred to however it is important also to be aware of the danger that the ‘experience’ might outweigh the ‘education’. In my view it is essential that the experience should support the learning. Universities do this through their various learning support mechanisms and module and course feedback. By the same token it is necessary to be aware that tricky assignments and examinations should not be rejected in an attempt to ensure positive responses in questionnaires. More precisely, journal subscriptions should not be dispensed with in order to pay for Starbucks in the learning hub. I am not being entirely cynical in this stating this perspective; I am merely identifying the need for balance between the provisions of a quality higher education programme supported by an experience which will provide added value to the provision of that programme which will in turn enhance the prospects of the student to succeed.

Sunderland postgraduate business programmes are of twelve months duration delivered across three terms. (See Appendix 10, MBA Programme Handbook 2018/19). Recently approval has been given to extend this provision for the MBA programme to fifteen or eighteen months with the offer of a placement element. (See Appendix 11, PGBM163 Module Descriptor). Whatever the time frame there is pressure on the student to perform and on the School to provide a programme which is resource efficient and cost effective as well as engaging and creative. Feedback from the focus group of students however showed a clear preference for the twelve-month version of the programme as students are anxious to return home and/or enter the job market. There is a paradox here as the same focus group when asked how the programme might be improved referred to the addition of a placement element and the need to equip the students with real life experience and skills acquisition. (Appendix 1, Focus Group notes). This leaves the School in a dilemma as to the type of programme to provide with the result of a paradox between responsiveness and programme synergy. The complexity deepens when the agents and academic staff are incorporated into the analysis and subsequent deliberations. The views of academic staff are refined and developed often over a number of years with the benefit of subject knowledge and experience relevant to their area of teaching and research. (Appendix 2, MBA Director Interviews EFMD MBA Conference). They may to a greater or lesser degree have contemporary experience of organisational life and the world of work. It is fair to say that the Sunderland MBA Programme Team have a variety of experiences. Some have a significant amount of work experience but it is built often on a previous career in employment before they became academics. Others have retained their contemporary experience by involvement in the delivery of programmes of corporate education or participating in consultancy projects on behalf of corporate clients. Others have little or no ‘real world’ work experience and are career academics that approach their teaching from a theoretical and/or conceptual point of view. In some respect that range of perspectives is of benefit as it provides the students with a range of points of view and a variety of opinions on which they can reflect and deduce what best fits their view of the issue under consideration. This requisite variety sits well within the area of business management and leadership. Unlike the natural sciences, the physical laws of the universe do not apply in the social sciences an area where business resides. Leadership and management techniques can have a direct impact on social relations as well as business output. Often there is no right or wrong answer; it is an issue of degree and/or informed choice. Historically, writers such as Weber or manufacturers such as Ford purported that the application of scientific principles would result in efficient management techniques and methods of production. Whilst some might argue such thinking is still relevant today and it may be in terms of industries such as construction, engineering and manufacturing it is much less relevant to the services sector, to the marketing and media sectors and to the creative industries all of which have expanded significantly in recent decades. Consider for example how social media and communication technologies have transferred the way we work. An aspect which neither Weber nor Henry Ford could have reasonably thought possible. It is not simply knowledge and techniques which have expanded exponentially; it is the speed and acceptance of that expansion which has been surprising. The current generation of young students and young managers/leaders have grown and developed in this fast paced and evolving world of change. Their needs, expectations and aspirations have changed dramatically. Occasionally this may be due to market forces in education but it is also likely that it is due to the forces exerted by employers and other students and/or managers likely to employ these students. This pace of change has intensified at the same time as Business Schools and Universities in general have had to come to terms with the impact of globalisation and significantly increased competition. (See Chapter 2, section 2.2 for more detail). For Business Schools, globalisation is not only evaluating the impact of the massive expansion of cross-border trade it is also about understanding the impact of cultural change within those expanding economies. (See Cathcart et al (2006). This and subsequent generations of students will increasingly work across geographical boundaries and at the same time be immersed in cross cultural change. UK Universities recruit from an increasingly broad range of countries and cultures. Many programmes diligently teach cross-cultural management however how often and to what extent do we draw upon the experiences of our students in expanding our knowledge of their culture? (See Cathcart et al (2005). There may be the occasional group presentation on cultural norms and values but do we delve any deeper into the value systems of some cultures and really analyse the extent to which those values impact on authentic leadership? Guest speaker programmes may provide a partial solution in terms of the transference of contemporary knowledge from practicing business leaders but if this is simply a lecture or guest presentation then to what extent are the views of students sought and how might those views influence the learning of their peers and improve the overall learning of the group.

What does this review mean for the student as a learner? As mentioned the students of today have been immersed in the availability and complexity of information from an early stage in their education. It may be that to some extent there is some information overload for students making it difficult for them to assimilate and refine their thinking on the key factors they are interested in. Alternatively, the availability of that plethora of information means that students as learners are required to make choices on what data and information they consider to be important. Skills such as critical thinking, debate and analysis can be honed in this environment, skills which employers increasingly consider to be important. (Appendix 4, Interview AC2). Information is not the only source of learning for students. As academics we understand the value of peer learning. I have already referred to the impact of globalisation in both business and academia and it is important that this impact is debated and transferred across and between students from a number of different cultural backgrounds. This transference will not only equip them for the global world of work it will hopefully also equip them for the range of global social interactions they are likely to encounter during their lifetime. The challenge for the educator is to ensure the authenticity of this transfer of knowledge and its relevance to both the student and their subsequent employers. Real time learning incorporating the use of new technology such as social media and live streaming can assist with this learning and the key is the importance of the subject content to bring real benefit to the student experience. This type of activity places a greater emphasis on the readiness of teaching staff to respond to the changing business world in real time. It also requires investment on the part of the University/Faculty to ensure the learning environment is equipped with the right equipment and resources to ensure that the technology is available. (Appendix 12, Faculty Plan 2018/19). The use of 'live' teaching materials means that University quality processes and the scrutiny undertaken by module and programme boards of study requires a degree of flexibility which, on the basis of past experience, they may not be used to. The advantage of this adaptive and more flexible approach to student learning does however demonstrate a more 'real' experience akin to the world of work and demonstrates to the student the authenticity of content. To achieve this approach there is no doubt that a change of mind-set is required on the part of University decision makers, teaching staff and the student themselves. The benefit however is a more authentic programme of study, up skilled and contemporary teaching staff and a programme of study which not only adds value but also provides competitive advantage when attracting students in the first place.

4.2.1(b) the student as Facilitator

Professor Paul Danos, Dean of Tuck Business School, Dartmouth College, New Hampshire, USA wrote in 2013 that, in his opinion, business schools had three effective tools, "…the students themselves; a Faculty of active researchers and great teachers; and a centre that offers an array of global experiences such as visitors, exchanges and projects." Danos (2013:05). Building on the notion of the student as learner, there is no doubt that the students programme experience is essential. (Appendix 1, Focus Group Notes). The experiences of students themselves having worked in various parts of the world bring a personal richness to the learning process which can enrich the experiences of both classmates and teaching staff. If this was followed to its logical conclusion, then it would make sense to recruit students who could bring added value to the classroom. Unfortunately, the pressure to recruit mitigates against these criteria in the selection process. As educators we understand the need to be aware of the diversity of our classes and we need to ensure that we draw upon that diversity in our teaching methods. Teamwork, study groups and the way students work in class all contribute to the sharing of experiences and expertise. However, a broader issue is also relevant, for example, residential and social arrangements for students can assist in developing this shared experience. Unfortunately, this can be difficult to achieve as students all too often revert to their native tongue and group social gatherings once the class has finished. (Appendix 13, Programme Studies Board Annual Monitoring Reports). Efforts should be made at different levels to support students in sharing their experience. In my experience Schools may have a personality or two among staff who, at least, in part make a significant impact on the student experience during their time on campus. I believe this should be celebrated in the sense that students absorb and sometimes reflect the dominant culture of the organisation. If Faculty staff are friendly, open and sharing whilst promoting healthy competition and ethical behaviours of a high standard then these qualities improve the experience of staff and students alike and hopefully students pick up on these characteristics and reflect them back to their fellow students as well as carrying them through their working life. Such experience is difficult to achieve in a programme of short duration. To establish such behaviours early enough in a twelve-month programme is hard to establish and requires time and effort on the part of module teams delivering content in a ten week block each semester. It may well be that we are teaching too much content and it is worth considering whether, 'less is more!' In 2006, my colleagues and I demonstrated that international students were keen to learn as much as possible about local/national culture and business practices yet access to these elements is often limited. (Cathcart, Dixon-Dawson and Hall 2006). If this drive for local/national culture remains important then as an educator, we should be striving not only to educate but to inform students on the local/national variations which exist among nationalities and cultures. The transfer of this type of knowledge will be facilitated in the classroom by Faculty staff. The various approaches followed by teaching staff to encourage the participation of their students will take many forms and is often determined by their own cultural background or cross-cultural experience. Whilst this variety is crucial I do not believe that it is the case of, 'one size fits all.' If this is the case, then there needs to be sufficient flexibility in the Programme Learning and Teaching Strategies to cater for diversity. It is well known that teaching staff must be sensitive to the experiences of students from different countries and their experiences of class participation. From my personal experience many students from South-East Asia are diffident to the perceived authority of Faculty staff and are hesitant in expressing their opinions for fear of being considered wrong in their views. Other nationalities are completely opposite and have been educated in systems that actively encourage discussion and even disagreement in the classroom. In some countries such behaviours would be considered unacceptable. In our programmes we have to find ways of encouraging the more reticent students to participate and feel comfortable in sharing their experience and also question their and our assumptions about learning styles. For such approaches to be successful special attention needs to be paid to the Faculty/Programme 'rules'. There must be a common understanding and acceptance of the Faculty's norms relating to joint and team working; intellectual property and the need for social interaction in a safe cross cultural environment.

If we accept that the student as facilitator brings an added richness to the programme experience, then surely it makes sense to harness that richness for the benefit of all those participating in the programme being studied. By creating a learning environment where the student is learner and facilitator then this is, in my opinion, more credible to the experience they are likely to have when entering the world of work. On graduation the student will hopefully soon become the employee, if this co-created experience of continuous learning and sharing of knowledge is fresh and embedded in their thinking then surely this will enrich their experience as well as the knowledge of their employer.

4.2.1 (c) the Student as Graduate

Contemporary literature and management practice suggests that during this century we are witnessing an increasingly rapid transition into a knowledge era where employees are much more involved in organising their work. (Carrington Crisp 2017). This leads to organisations which are essentially a mix of industrial, i.e. management practice, knowledge and knowledge based, i.e. employee led, knowledge. This latter form of knowledge is developed and enhanced through the development of talented employees who have honed their skills and knowledge from the successful completion of programmes of study provided by those Universities who recognise the importance of the developments taking place around them. In essence we are all searching for talent, talented students and subsequently talented employees. Since the beginning of this century there has been a gradual shift from an administrative and task focused personnel function towards a more strategic perspective (Lawler, 2005:165). This shift emphasises developing competitive advantage through, cultural, structural and personnel techniques which leads to the development of competent and committed employees. The increasing use of this form in contemporary organisations requires graduates who have been educated in these broader, softer issues whilst at the same time developing their critical skills in a knowledge-based world. This requires Universities for the provision of high quality education and successful programme completion and Employers, for the quality employment and competitive advantage. In this sense both organisations are attempting to identify students who are 'talented'.

I would argue that talent at both a strategic and personal level is held in the mind of an individual as a personal conceptualisation. It is a 'gut feel' and essentially subjective approach where reality often lacks definition and clarity around what talent is. For educators of postgraduate students, talent may be identified by reference to the 'quality or standard' of a Bachelor's Degree. It may also include age and work experience and perhaps the additional wider experiences identified in a CV. For employer's talent may be seen in similar terms, the standard of the postgraduate Degree or the 'standing' of the University awarding it. I contend that for both groups talent may reinforce the subjectivity of a narrow set of perceptions and the need of having to 'fit' with the cultural identification of 'talent' within the organisation. If this is so, then those considered to be, 'mavericks' will be disadvantaged by existing selection processes. Mavericks by their very nature will not fit cultural norms and the subjectivity of selection often takes primacy over empirical evidence. Their contribution and effectiveness however may be equally significant. What does this mean for students?

For students and their education, it means that the choice of University, in terms of its standing, becomes important for future successful employment. Whilst programme and module choice and the content of those modules may be relevant this subjectivity of standing may be more important. This in turn puts pressure on students to attend a 'good' University as perceived by league tables and survey results. This may go against the maverick who is more interested in the programme of study and the overall experience they receive.

Whichever perspective the student as graduate is considered to be, student or employee, what is required is the active engagement of the person as they learn best when actively engaged in the learning process. The student as graduate needs to build on this learning process and ensure that the skills and competences they acquire are transferred into their world of work. All programmes of study involve a variety of interactive learning at an individual, group and class level. It is also important to develop activities that not only focus on knowledge and understanding but also develop higher order skills reinforcing the attributes of analysis, evaluation and synthesis. It is the development of these skills that will equip future leaders. In 2013, the Novartis Corporation and the EFMD hosted a conference to examine leadership and talent development. At that time, it was reported that there were already 'talent gaps' existing between graduation and the ability to work in the business world. It was established that the gap was between 10% and 25% (EFMD 2013). The example cited at the conference was that of India where in 2012, 600,000 engineers graduated but only 125,000 were qualified to work in companies that needed employees. It would appear that similar gaps appear in other parts of the world. For example, in Taiwan, there is a view that the policies of higher education and its links to manpower training are failing to meet the needs of a rapidly changing society and the expectations of employers (Peng 2018). The consequence of this disconnect is a gap between university education and subsequent employment. Most postgraduate business and management programmes talk regularly of the need for transformational leadership; problem based learning and self-efficacy and the importance of the development of student employability skills in higher education. The real issue is what does this mean in practice and how will the development of those skills satisfy the needs of employers?

I would argue that employer's views are continually being refined to accommodate the rapidly changing and turbulent environment in which they operate. The anecdotal conversations with managers and the views obtained during the research for this project, (Interview AC2), suggest that it is elements such as maturity; the softer skills of leadership; problem solving abilities; the desire for continuous learning and academic achievement which shape the views of employers. The graduates who display these skills prominently are more likely to secure a positive relationship with prospective employers. At the same time, I would suggest that employers consider the more generic skills of team working, time management and possibly even general mental ability as expected or even taken as a given. Issues such as subject specific knowledge; a willingness to work and the attitudes and behaviours required for these attributes are expected in abundance initially rather than something to be developed over time once employed. This need for graduates entering the world of work, 'to hit the ground running' is probably more evident now than at any point in the past. The employer perception of expected skills and attributes is presented graphically.

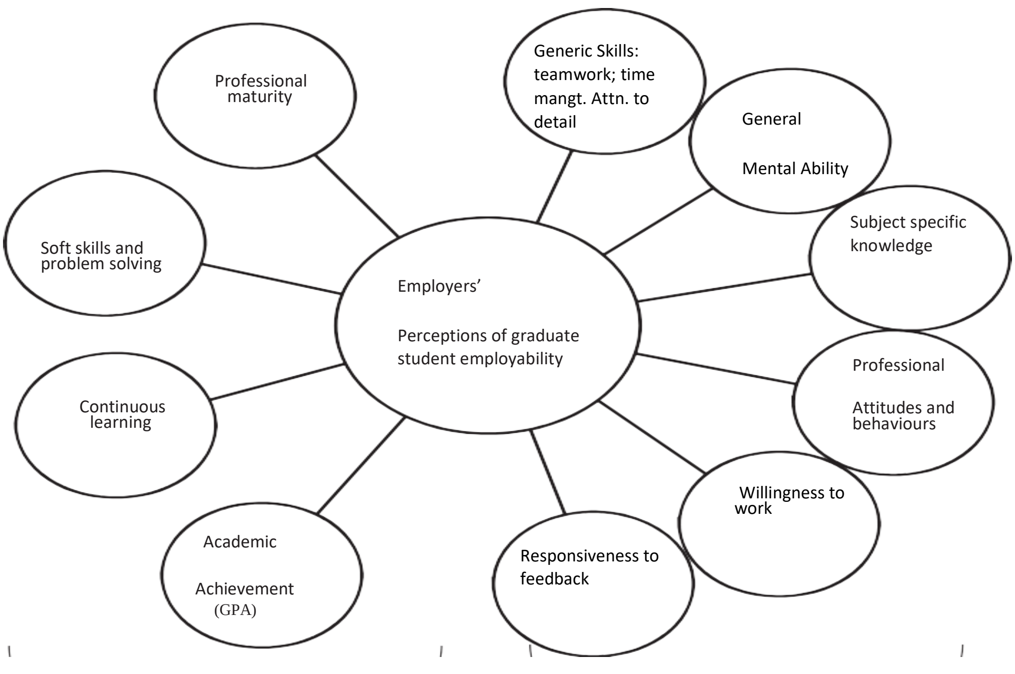


Diagram 5.0 Employer perceptions of graduate student employability developed from Chhinzer, N. and Russo, A.M. (2018) 'An exploration of employer perceptions of graduate student

employability.' Journal of Education and Training Vol.60 No1 2018 pp104-120. Emerald Publishing Ltd.

This view aligns with the University strategy which cites as one of its differentiators, 'Our programmes will be distinctive and relevant with work integrated learning and professional practice embedded within' (Strategic Plan 2016-2021). The challenge for programme developers is to integrate these competing attributes into a programme which informs; challenges and equips students for the future which lies ahead of them. What is clear is that by examining these respective roles the student plays it is possible to identify the areas of importance to them whilst participating in those roles. For themselves as learner they should be open and secure in the knowledge that their contribution will be listened to and accepted for what it is. This aligns with the University strategic statement on inclusiveness which states, 'We celebrate our diverse culture where everyone's contribution is welcomed and valued.' Strategic Plan 2016-2021:32). It is self-evident that our students come to us to learn but that learning must be given in a manner they understand and ensures that the learning is both relevant and embedded for their future use. In addition to these environmental factors the student as a facilitator not only absorbs new knowledge but also contributes knowledge to their peers and the wider learning community. This will enhance their confidence and skills base and at the same time enable them to learn from each other as they progress through their programme of study. The student journey does not end with graduation it merely enters a new phase. As graduate the student will hopefully understand the true value of their programme of study as well as recognising the value and need for continuous learning in the future and also appreciate the need to share that knowledge with others. This may be as an active alumnus but it might also be the dissemination of acquired knowledge in their role as employee. Whatever aspect they participate in it is for the added value of their own skills development as at the same time provides knowledge to those around them.

Whilst the focus in this section has been on the student, they cannot be seen in isolation from the other stakeholders involved in the provision of high quality education. Clearly key to this is the role played by teaching staff but it is also the contribution made by support staff and the culture of the Faculty per se. It is the amalgam of these elements which leads to the delivery of a quality programme of study and finally the graduation of a high calibre student capable of entering the world of work equipped with the knowledge and skills required for the business environment we are familiar with which is today significantly different from our recent past.

In my opinion in the decades since the 1970s Universities and in my case Business Schools have continually professionalised their approach to higher education. During the 90s with the advent of post-92 Universities this need to professionalise increased even further. In some cases, this continual pressure may, it could be argued, have led to 'poor quality' business education which could over time perhaps even threaten the overall health of an economy. As business has globalised this pressure for quality has increased still further. In the UK as well as in many other parts of the world this professionalisation has by one measure manifest itself in the number of Doctorates within a Faculty; the extent of 'good quality' research publications and the standing of a University based on several metrics allegedly created to assist potential students to make an informed decision on their choice of University. This plethora of rankings and their importance in the public arena has marked a major shift in terms of the way we judge Universities and the courses they provide. This world is significantly different and far more complex than the University education provided historically and often portrayed in the mind's eye of academics and earlier graduates and scholars. For Business Schools this raises an interesting issue for consideration. Are we involved in the business of education or in the education of business?

4.3 The business of a Business School

Given the pressure to professionalise and the accumulating effects of competition, Universities and hence Faculties have been forced further into the commercial world of business. Although legally remaining as charities or more precisely, 'not for profit organisations', legislation and the policies of successive Governments have led Universities still further into the commercial world. Figure 4.1 below illustrates a simple value chain organising the activities and offerings of a contemporary Business School. Not all schools will be able to be fully active across the whole spectrum of programmes but increasingly they are expected to function in the majority to a greater or lesser degree. I would argue that what is true is that all schools will be configured in this way to reflect the unique situation of each institution.

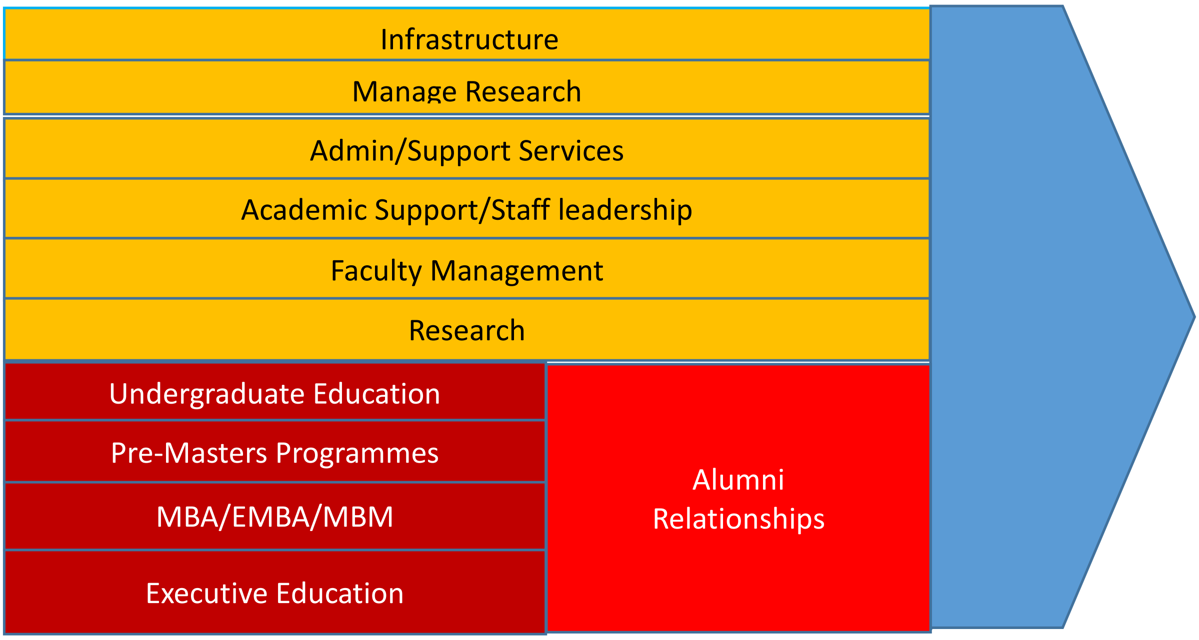


Diagram 5.1 The Business School Value Chain (adapted from Rethinking the Business Models of Business Schools 2018).

The choices made by University/Faculty Executives will determine strategic direction. This will be impacted upon by market conditions and the wider environment and policies affecting higher education. What is clear is that students are increasingly aware of their consumer power and Faculty staff are equally aware of the need for a rewarding experience to ensure, at least to some extent, a favourable survey response be it the National Student Survey (NSS) or the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES).

There is no doubt that in each level of the value chain there will be a variety of components, driving and restraining forces that affect output. The skills and attributes will vary and at the minimum level a school requires support services which will enable the school to have the best possible chance in a volatile market. For example, undergraduate education is essentially a business to consumer offering or perhaps more precisely a consumer to parent offering which is significantly influenced by UCAS. As the student progresses to postgraduate education then the business to consumer model remains true. For postgraduate and pre-masters' programmes there is no centralised service provider such as UCAS. Moving towards executive education, business-to-business marketing or more precisely relationship marketing is essential for success. It is self-evident that unless enough support and resource is available for these activities then success or significant market share cannot be guaranteed and income from these activity streams will vary considerably. Undergraduate education is in income terms predictable, i.e. tuition fee x cohort size/days taught. Of course this assumes that recruitment targets are achieved which is a major issue in itself. Executive education however where day rates are usually contractually fixed and not necessarily dependent on cohort size the income stream can vary significantly. This variation in income streams makes decision making difficult a process which is further complicated by the allocation of resources between activities. Given this variation and complexity what are the implications for postgraduate education in Sunderland Business School?

The value chain referred to in Figure 4.2 shows the process the Business School must go through for each cohort of students it wishes to recruit. Recruiting those students has become a major business factor. The University like many if not all others is reliant on the use of agents. In 2017/18 more than 80% of students recruited came from agents. The target had been to reduce this to 70% during the year but it has remained the same. Based on these figures agents are pivotal to the recruitment process and in the marketplace, China is crucial to that recruitment. (Appendix 3, Interview AC1). The University strategy is to use its own staff to recruit students thereby reducing its agency fees however this is proving difficult to achieve.

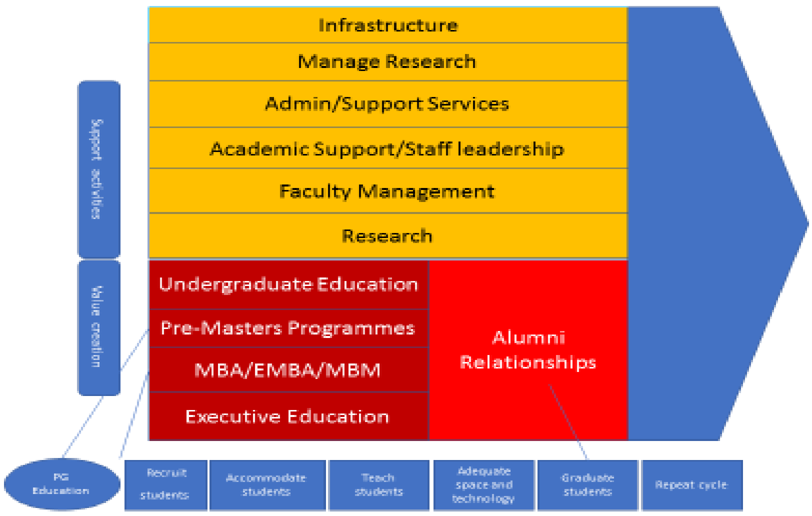


Diagram 5.2 The (Real) Business School Value Chain (adapted from Rethinking the Business Models of Business Schools 2018).

Agents are in effect independent contractors and many work for numerous Universities at the same time. Some agents may work for up to 70 Universities which clearly can disadvantage an institution depending on the commission payable in comparison to competitors. (Appendix 3, Interview AC1). Given this complexity the University has little alternative but to contract with agents, establish a close working relationship with them and achieve a variation in existing arrangements for performance management and the measurement of output. This is the strategy that the University has decided to follow and is currently establishing the required performance management systems to implement its plan. Any agent not participating in a review will not have its contract renewed. This shift in position directly relates to the literature in terms of the power relations existing between Principal and Agent. That said, it is interesting to speculate on the Confucian literature relating to the importance of relationships in the communication process and how the change in strategy may affect that relationship. This is an issue for the China and Vietnam market where agents often employ independent 'sub agents' who are not directly contracted with UK Universities and the difficultly in managing these relationships is especially difficult. In this context internationalisation is key to the success of the University and hence the Business School. For example, the University mission statement, "To be bold and inspirational in providing education, research and creative practice, which offers transformative experiences to students, staff, communities and business partners in the UK and across the world" reflects its international aspirations. (Strategic Plan 2016-2021).

As already recorded the Business School attracts students from many countries and although a significant proportion are from South East Asia, the local market as well as Europe and increasingly Africa provide a rich variety to our student community. That richness extends beyond the on-campus provision and the provision at the University of Sunderland Campuses in London and Hong Kong. The Business School has extensive provision in its undergraduate and postgraduate portfolio of Transnational Education. This reach extends from Trinidad to Singapore, Tashkent to Kenya as well as Vietnam, Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Oman and possibly Myanmar in the near future. The model of provision for this activity is the use of University partnerships with local HEIs of similar standing and wanting to link with a UK HEIs with awarding powers. Accredited Sunderland programmes are delivered in country via these partner universities and students are registered and recognised as part of the Sunderland student community. This activity acts as an income stream for students and also acts as a feeder for other programmes in the portfolio. For example, a student studying a UG Top-Up programme in country may consider studying in Sunderland for a PG programme.

This model is different from other UK HEIs who have established satellite establishments in different countries. The advantage of this model is that it permits Faculty staff to work in country and UK staff to travel overseas and gain an inter-cultural experience which can then be shared. This model also ensures an assured and equitable student experience and allows Universities to recruit from a wider catchment area. It is however expensive to maintain and unless the market penetration is viable it's unlikely to be profitable in the longer term unless the standing of the University in ranking terms is high.

Whilst this partnership model has been lucrative for the Business School having registered 33419 students in 2017/18, it is a model which is followed by other UK HEIs of similar standing as well as many others deemed to be of higher ranking! It is clearly a competitive environment in which to participate and requires continuous involvement with partners to ensure that relationships are maintained and effective.

An area where in my opinion the Business School performs less well is in the area of research. Participation in international networks is important for recognition as well as for rankings and accreditation. Adequately resourced researchers can foster international networks, publish jointly with other researchers across a range of HEIs and provide an environment of participation and output which in turn reflects the standing of the University and Faculty overall. All of this activity promotes the international agenda. Unfortunately, SBS is less active in this arena. There are researchers active in some arenas but significant measureable output as measured by REF for example is significantly less prominent. There is a faculty strategy in place to redress this imbalance however it is a slow burn and difficult to achieve quickly in a resource constrained operating environment where student numbers and successful recruitment and retention targets is key.

The information presented so far confirms the Business School as a key participant in the international arena. That involvement however needs to be more than high numbers of international students and a far reaching research agenda. For the business of a Business School to be successful it also requires an international mind-set or a spirit which embraces international identity and branding. This needs to be part of a culture of internationality. In terms of research active staff, it is unlikely that we would be able to attract internationally experienced research staff of sufficient calibre to improve our overall standing. If this is true, then the next objective is the recruitment of internationally experienced teaching staff that can infuse real international experience into the classroom or the company visit. SBS has had some success in this area by employing some staff with that area of experience and expertise. Whilst more can always be done it is a reasonable start and by better harnessing the ideas of the student as learner and facilitator then it is possible to make some improvements in this area. The better use of staff secondments to its campuses in London and Hong Kong as well as our TNE partner universities is, in my opinion, a much underutilised resource. International exchange and Erasmus programmes enable both students and staff to gain a more international experience.

As a business there is no doubt that SBS as part of the University has to be outward facing and international participation is key to the University strategy overall and an economic necessity for continuation as a business. At the same time however, the University and its Faculties also needs to recognise and remember its roots and strengths in order to adequately cater for its home market. So whilst in line with the actions of many global businesses it is important that the University and the Business School may think globally it also has to act locally.

4.4 The Stakeholder perspective.

The various forms of stakeholder theory referred to in the literature review provide justification and underpinning for the effective use of stakeholders as a mechanism for the dual role of thinking and acting (Stacey 2013; Freeman and Reed 2014; Wu and Wokutch 2015). The activity of any organisation at a basic level requires employees to think and act in accordance with the aims and objectives they have been set. As actors within the organisation they have their part to play in achieving success and they bring with them the skills and attributes they use to play that part (Goffman 1971). They also bring their own norms and values which will in some part affect and support or mitigate their performance. Employees therefore are clearly primary stakeholders in the success of the business although they are one of many. The relative importance of stakeholders will vary depending on the type of business they are involved with. For example, in terms of 'power and influence' venture capitalists may be more influential to a new business start-up seeking funding than say customers seeking a just-in-time delivery window. In this context the relative importance of stakeholders may well vary over time and change as the organisation develops and transforms. For the new start-up example this might mean that the power and influence of the customer may grow as the business relationship grows and that business becomes more important to the start up.

A local and practical example of this influence is the power that Nissan Wearside has over its supply chain partners and that influential impact on the North East of England economy. When Sunderland AFC enquired about the construction of a new football ground to the west of the city centre near the site of the Nissan plant it was suggested at the time that the company exerted considerable political pressure to resist the granting of planning permission on the grounds that the increased volume of traffic on match days would inhibit the efficiency of its own just-in-time supply chain. This was despite the close proximity of an arterial trunk road capable of coping with increased traffic flow more quickly than traditional city centre routes. Whilst factual evidence of this position cannot be used to confirm or deny this example there was, at the time, significant evidence at a political level to confirm its existence (Day et al 1999). It is interesting to observe that in the fullness of time when planning permission for the new ground was granted it was constructed over two miles away from the Nissan site with virtually no impact on traffic flows in the location of the Nissan site but significant impact on traffic flows in the city centre.

Stakeholders can and do provide crucial success for a business. They can also work against a business attempting to go about its legally defined and approved business. For example, consider the impact of protestors as stakeholders in the current debates related to fracking in the UK. The cessation of drilling involved concerns over seismic activity however the pressure exerted by protestors clearly influenced not only the companies involved but also the wider public audience as well as political decision makers. Those same stakeholders may not have been successful in stopping the original planning approval process but they clearly have influenced the production and logistical processes.

When considering the relevance of the literature; the data collected and my own experience and exposure in the life of the University and the wider public sector arena of the North East it is appropriate to consider the many factors which influence the stakeholders of the University and their direct or indirect influence on the success of the University and its Faculty. This project does not have the size and scope to deal with all of the issues which the University has with its stakeholders and I have limited the scope of the project to deal with the three themes of students, agents and postgraduate programme development. By limiting the analysis to these three elements it is possible to draw some conclusions as to the performance of the University and in particular the performance of the Sunderland Business School in relation to the development of postgraduate programmes and the currency those programmes might hold in the wider market environment. The theory as shown in the literature review confirms the complexity and volume of relevant literature on the subject. For this analysis chapter it is more beneficial to focus on a specific element of theory which relates as closely as possible to the topic consideration. To this end I have decided to focus on the notion of instrumental stakeholder theory. This specific element of theory is characterised by consideration of strong ethical relationships resulting in and from high levels of trust, co-operation and the sharing of information. By forming and enhancing these elements then it is argued that improved financial performance will result. (Hendry 2004). It is worth pointing out however that there are also a number of examples of contrasting research that according to both theory and published research many firms treat stakeholders selfishly and possibly even unethically. My choice of stance in this instance is based on my belief that leaders should strive to achieve high ethical standards themselves. This, in my opinion, should be especially true in the provision of education and more precisely in higher education. Ethical behaviour is taught across a number of programmes across the University not just within the Business School. If ethics, sustainability and corporate social responsibility are key components of the curriculum then surely it is appropriate for the University and its Faculties to, 'practice what they preach!' If Universities regard themselves as the providers of high quality education which is capable of equipping students with the best knowledge and skills available to make them valuable contributors in the future, then it is reasonable to expect that ethical behaviour and the traits associated with that behaviour is evident in the curriculum and practiced by the recipients of that curriculum. How we treat others must be core to the concept of ethical behaviour and the practical implications of the implementation of those behaviours will then impact on the behaviours with stakeholders.

This requirement for an ethical approach to the student experience clearly meets the learning outcomes K1, K2 and S3.

4.5 The University and its stakeholders

One objective of the University Strategic Plan is to be ‘Boundary Breakers’ and to this end the Plan seeks to ensure that our partners will feel proud to be part of the institution and be sufficiently empowered to make the maximum contribution to the vision of the University. From a University perspective there are a range of stakeholders that are seen as key to the achievement of its Strategy. For example the 2016-2021 Plan states, ‘The University is acutely aware that working in partnership with employers, schools and colleges is essential in ensuring graduates have the right knowledge and skills to make them work relevant’ The Plan goes on to state, ‘We will develop our new programmes with key employers and organisations which currently influence and help shape our provision – companies including the BBC, SKY, Hitachi, Nissan, Accenture, NHS Trusts, IBM, Yahoo, as well as with a wide range of SMEs.’ Robin Elias, Managing Editor of ITV News commented on the University Strategic Plan writing, “Employers need graduates who are work-ready, and through our support and particularly the University’s wide ranging work integrated programmes that’s exactly what employers are getting from Sunderland. This ambitious new plan will embed this work further.” (2016:35)

4.6 The impact on programme development

Programme development is impacted upon in a number of interconnected but at the same time different ways.

Strategically, the Faculty vision is,
“To be internationally recognised for the excellence of our academic and professional programmes, the success of our graduates, the quality of our applied research and the effectiveness of our external partnerships and the opportunities they offer our students and staff.” (Appendix 12, FBLT Faculty Plan 2018/19).
Part of the Faculty’s mission to achieve this vision is,
“To deliver a learner experience that is innovative and that also reflects pedagogic best practice. Recognising that learners are partners in, and co-creators of, the learning experience, we will engage critically with them through a research-informed, dynamic curriculum that is delivered

through a wide range of learning and teaching approaches including the use of technology. In the period of this Plan, this will include;

- The development of learning materials to support not only the development of new distance/independent learning programmes but which will also support the delivery of programmes to our TNE partners and facilitate personalised learning for on-campus students
- The development of embedded experiential learning opportunities designed to offer students practical experience in investigating, analysing, managing and resolving real-life business problems." (Appendix 12, FBLT Faculty Plan 2018/19).

A recent response of the Business School via the PG Programme Studies Board has been the introduction of a placement element to the final project module for the MBA which will include a placement. As of February 2019, sixteen students have accepted a place to commence this programme in March 2019 and it will be interesting to monitor the success of this variation as time progresses.

In 2018, University approval was given for the introduction of a MBA in Strategic Leadership which is also accredited by the Chartered Management Institute at Level 7. This is in effect a Level 7 Degree Apprenticeship which has fifteen students in a cohort which commenced in October 2018. This programme incorporates many of the requirements of the Faculty mission above in terms of its uniqueness, experiential learning and effectively executive education. Again it is too early to comment on its success but certainly the interest generated by some corporate clients wishing to draw down some of their contribution to the Apprenticeship levy stands in good stead for future cohorts.

From a staff point of view, discussion at Programme Studies Boards and references in Annual Monitoring reports have regularly referred to the lack of student engagement in the classroom. (Appendix 8, PG PSB Minutes July 2017, 16.94). The impact of this is a reduced overall student experience in that a key driver for the philosophy of study has been the opportunity for students to learn from one another. Yet issues around the lack of attendance at classes when assessment deadlines approach, the lack of preparedness/prior self-directed study when attending workshops leads to an element of frustration on the part of both tutors and those students who have prepared. Yet again, a paradox exists demonstrated by the comments from the focus group that refer to the fact that they want to learn from each other and experience the opportunity to debate issues in the workshop setting. Much is made of the need for an innovative and exciting curriculum which by insinuation infers that responsibility for good attendance is an interesting curriculum provided by Faculty staff and therefore attendance will improve. However, as I stated earlier in the chapter it is important that the student as learner also takes responsibility for their own actions and their own learning. Good quality teaching and an appropriate curriculum is crucial and self-evident but students have their part to play as well and Faculty staff is not the only stakeholder in this context, the student must play their part as well. Part of the solution to the issue of attendance and learning from each other could be associated with the constituency which makes up the class. For example, currently we have business students on business programmes. At postgraduate level students in a classroom are registered on the same programme studying the same modules. My question would be why couldn't those students come from a range of programmes and share an interest in leadership and management?

Surely students from a range of backgrounds and experiences would bring an added value by sharing their experience. Leaders are involved in a range of different spheres, science, sport, music, the arts or community support activists. These students would benefit from leadership development and bring a wider scope of experience which would benefit business students in their understanding of a wider range of 'business' environments. This would be one practical way of students learning from each other and at the same time possibly improve the overall experience. Given the current University strategy, this would actually meet one of our strategic objectives which refers to the core notion of leadership development being embedded across our programmes.

If experience is one of our essential criteria, then a further question to consider would be why should the experience end with graduation? Often at graduation speeches from the platform we tell our graduates that they are just beginning on the next phase of their life long journey. That they will be exposed to a whole new world with limitless opportunities for them to progress. On this basis would it not be both helpful and supportive in the early phases of that journey to provide additional support to the learning of those students. For example, new technology gives us real opportunities for detailed communications. The education of students could continue with supplementary webinars, free to graduates initially for a period of time and then subsidised thereafter. Webinars could provide updating on contemporary academic thinking, new models and ideas or simply discussion forums where experiences could be shared. This would continue the learning of our students and keep their links to the University providing attachment to the Faculty as Alumni. I refer to the added value of our Alumni next.

In the context of learning from each other, I believe that the postgraduate business programmes in the School could make more use of its alumni. From my experience of open days; applicant days and other recruitment events, students often prefer to listen to the experiences of other students. Parents may wish to speak to academic staff but often students want to listen to other students. To this end the School could make better use of its existing students by the improved activities of a Business Society and better use of its Alumni. The School has previously tried to encourage an active Business Society but it has faltered on previous occasions and has not attracted the interest of students. With regard to the School's Alumni, this is an area which is significantly underutilised. Whilst it is appreciated that many of our Alumni are internationally based there are opportunities for those students still living and working in the UK as well as the improved use of communications technology and social media to utilise our former students living and work overseas. Indeed, this may even make the experience better for on campus students if they actually see in real time the environments in which some of our students are working. Such a proposal is appropriate in the context of developing the relationship between the Business School and its students. This proposal meets the project learning outcomes S1 and S3.

Successfully complete Degree Experience job-hunting, successes and failures	Employment in a relevant sector Acquire ongoing work experience. Improve skills set and build self-confidence
Provide input to Faculty activities Mentor and inspire current students Return for further study or research	Become lifelong learner and an active alumnus Build strong links and loyalty to Faculty Become an ambassador for the University

Diagram 5.3 Associations between students and graduates. Adapted from Jing, Y, Patel, P. and Chalk P. (2011) "Facilitating the impact of graduates on student employability"

For the above proposals to stand any chance of success some fundamental changes are required to our existing structures as well as increased levels of support from both staff and Faculty management. Whilst the transformational change view expressed by Ackerman (1997) may be considered extreme in terms of the 'death' of our MBA, it may be that it is chaotic to a point and despite its product refresh and review it is in need of some form of re-emergence. Perhaps a more realistic view is that it is in need of some transitional change, transitioning from its 'old' state to a 'new' one. This may be more achievable given the current restrained resource environment we currently operate within.

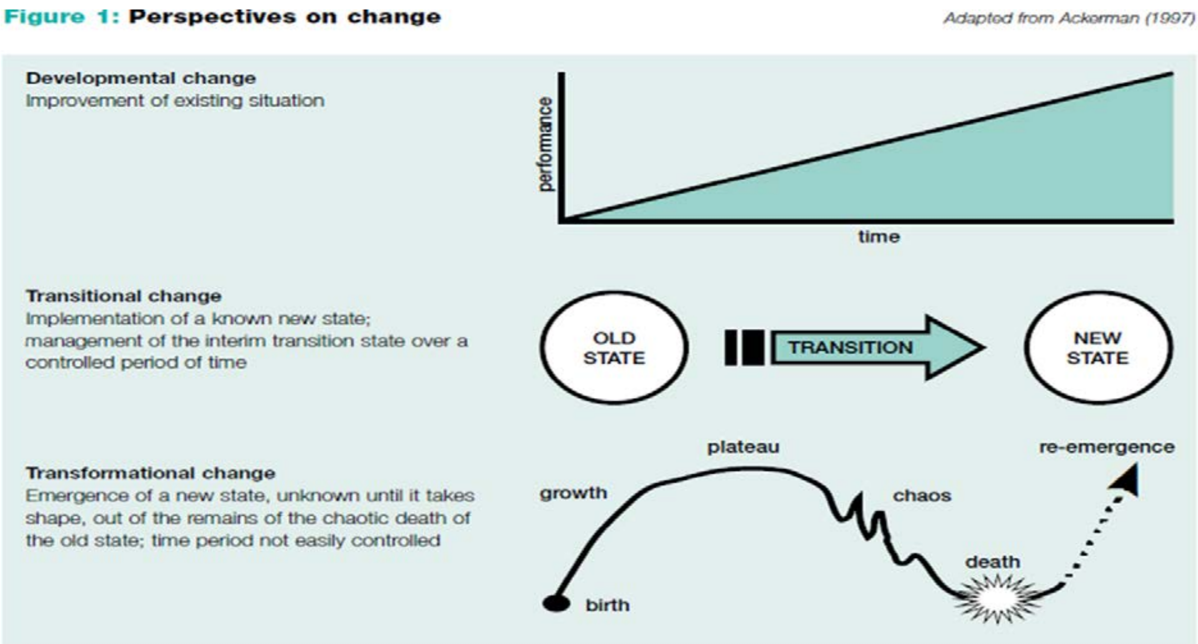


Diagram 5.4 Perspectives on Change taken from Ackerman (1997)

The resources which are available currently are essentially staff and their willingness to change. It is commitment to a new philosophy which is required to engage both staff and students. In the current financial climate, it is unlikely that significant new money will be available. However, by the more efficient use of the University work loading frameworks and the allocation of hours on staff workloads which reflect a changed emphasis then it may be possible for staff to become more engaged and eventually a new attitude to student engagement and programme development may re-emerge.

4.7 The way forward

This section sets out the factors contributing to the achievement of learning outcomes K1, K2, S1 and S4.

Whilst this project has been in development for two years in addition to the taught element of the programme, it is only in the last few days that the relevance of the research has been confirmed.

At the end of March 2019, the University announced a change to its Quality Handbook relating to programme development. This research affirms the stance announced by the University Centre for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (CELT) which has launched 'The Curriculum Design (i-design) Framework (Appendix 15). The six phase framework is set out in Diagram 4.5 below and demonstrates the validity of my thinking by promoting the need to move away from product based curriculum design mainly concerned with the focus on 'graduateness' and move towards programmes which align to Graduate Attributes, understands the need for stakeholder involvement and actively promote employability and inclusiveness as integral to the overall development, teaching and assessment of a programme. The intention of the framework is not to produce a suite of programmes which are all the same but to incorporate into the design of a suite of programmes which reflect a set of key principles and recognise the importance of stakeholders in the development process.

In practical terms the Framework will still have at its heart the programme development team which retains responsibility for the overall development and leadership of a programme on behalf of the Programme Studies Board. A key difference going forward is the clear demonstration by that team of a wider process of involvement of key stakeholders associated with not only the development of the programme but the perceived beneficiaries of the successful delivery of that programme. For example, the wider involvement of likely employers who will benefit from the employment of graduates from the programme who will developed the necessary skills to enhance the business they move into. I believe that it is also the case that the framework has sufficient flexibility built into it to enable a wider range of programmes, not just business, to benefit from this framework. The intention is not to simply replicate a sterile suite of programmes across the University but to establish a framework that actually accommodates the diversity of factors which affect the wide ranging suite of programmes.

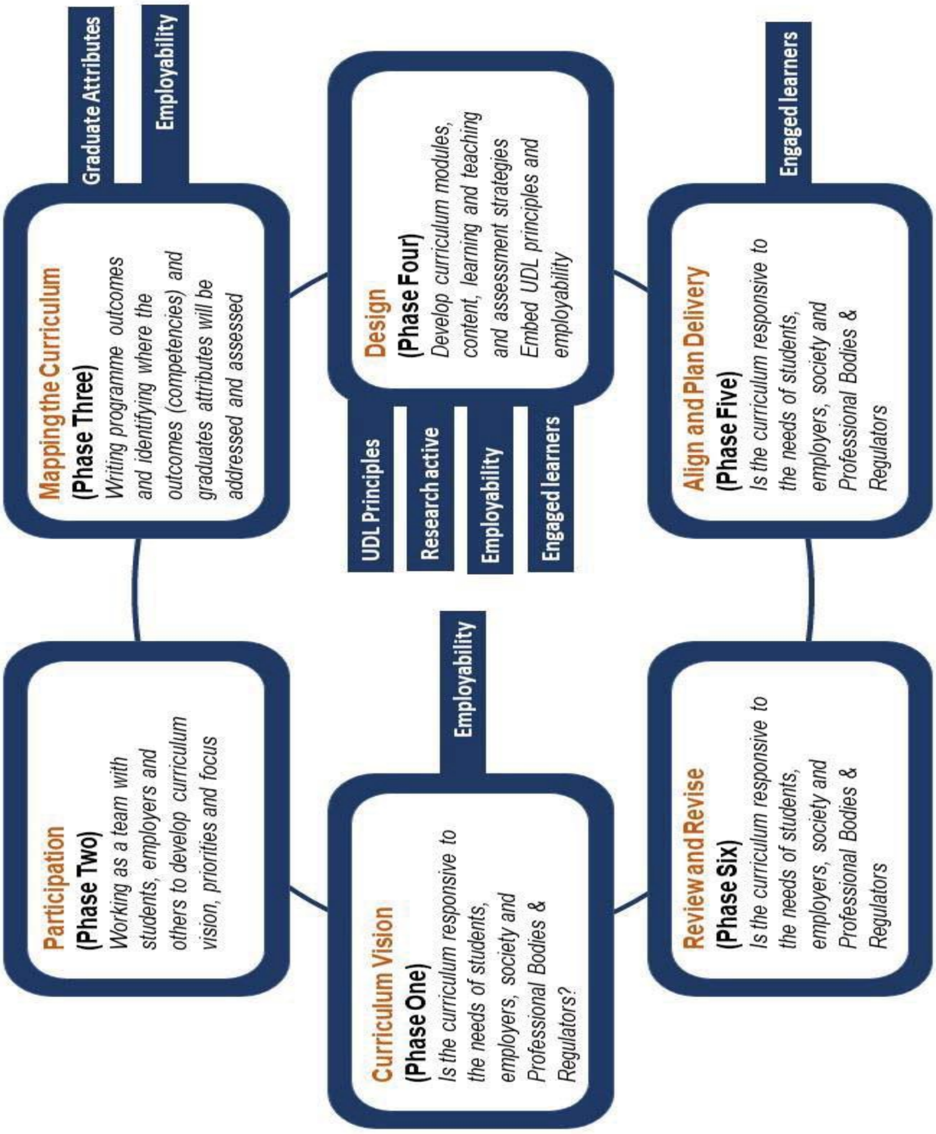


Diagram 5.5 Integrated Curriculum Design Framework. University of Sunderland March 2019

The six phases of the Framework clearly demonstrate the need for an integrated approach to programme development making best use of a number of key stakeholders. Phase One of the Framework, Curriculum Vision emphasises the Graduate Attributes element of programme design.

Attribute	**Link to University value**	**University of Sunderland graduates will…**
Professional	Inspired	display a professional attitude and the behaviours, skills and knowledge to make a positive contribution to society through work, research and community engagement.
Adaptable	Innovative	be adaptable to change, have resilience and are personally capable of problem solving and innovation.
Engaged	Collaborative	be united by a desire to give something back to society and to develop communities locally, regionally and globally.

Diagram 5.6 Graduate attributes as identified in the i-Design Framework (2019).

These Attributes link closely to the Employer perceptions of graduate employability set out in Diagram 4.1 above.

The University itself recognises the importance of this approach in Phase Two (Participation) where it states in the supporting literature, "The participation stage relates to the basic premise that programme teams should not develop curricula without actively involving students, employers, other key stakeholders and where relevant professional bodies." (Appendix 15, i-Design Framework 2019:03). This also links to the University Strategic Plan which I have referred to earlier in this chapter. Phase 3 requires the Programme team to map its intended curriculum and give consideration to how success in the programme will prepare the student for employment. The Business School already has a number of modules at both undergraduate and postgraduate level which are intended to prepare the student for the world of work following graduation.

Phases Four and Five relate to the more operational issues associated with the design and delivery of the programme. The consideration of critical thinking skills, experiential learning opportunities, support from the research active curriculum and opportunities for employability such as placements, study abroad or employee development modules examining interviews and CV development.

The cycle is completed via Phase Six of the Framework which is designed to ensure that programme teams take every opportunity to review and refine the programme they represent. This research has drawn on student feedback, on Staff Student Liaison Committees, the deliberations within Programme Studies Boards and the information gathered as part of the Programme Annual Monitoring Process. These are precisely the mechanisms identified within this new Framework to be used for the identification of areas for programme improvement and refinement. This process of monitoring and review not only ensures the quality assurance of the offering but also ensures that a programme remains at the forefront of contemporary provision in eyes of the very stakeholders it is intended to accommodate and seek the involvement of.

Whilst this framework provides a process to follow its success can only be assessed by the quality and success of its implementation. It is the practicalities associated with the framework that will determine its eventual relevance and importance to programme development.

4.8 The way forward for FBLT

As I indicated in the introduction to this project the Faculty again finds itself at a crossroads in terms of the development of its programme portfolio. In many ways the Faculty complies with the ethos of this design framework in terms of the review and refinement of its programmes. It also to varying degrees' attempts to communicate with its students and other stakeholders. The issue however is the extent of that communication and the degree of importance it attaches to that communication. Students are listened to at Staff Student Liaison Committees attended by a small number of student representatives who are meant to reflect the views of the programme students they represent within a particular cohort. However, this is a significant difference between being listened to and being heard! Currently when a new programme is being developed there is no opportunity to test the relevance of the proposed programme with existing students. Nor are the views of students incorporated into programme design and students are not involved in programme development. There is some market analysis undertaken by the central registry staff but that is generally the analysis of existing data and information which is already in the public domain rather than targeted data gathering and analysis. The Faculty currently does have a Faculty Advisory Panel made up of some employers with knowledge and or experience of the Faculty, essentially 'supporters' of the Faculty and some of its activities. In the last twelve months this Panel has met once and heard an outline of possible activities to be undertaken. The Panel has not seen or reviewed any meaningful proposals for programme improvement of development of new initiatives. The research for this project has shown that if the Faculty is to remain competitive then a wider community of involvement is required to provide more contemporary information and understanding of the competitive environment in which we operate. The i-design framework does now set out the requirement for this communication and it is up to the Faculty to operationalise the framework and find ways to implement it. Implementation of the framework needs to function at a number of levels. Strategically the Faculty Executive needs to explicitly support the framework and its objectives by the provision of adequate resources to staff. Staff need to support the framework not only in gesture but in actuality by actively seeking the involvement of principle stakeholders. The driver for this implementation are Programme Studies Boards as they are best placed to monitor the effectiveness of programme development and approval whilst having the knowledge and understanding of existing provision. The use of Studies Boards in this way will have impact but also requires cultural change. Currently PSBs are generic in their activities, covering the whole of undergraduate and postgraduate provision in two Boards of Study. They are essentially dealing with a checklist of general issues designed to ensure that programmes meet minimum standards. There is little opportunity for the critical reflection of provision and even less time for creative thinking and development. Programme Teams are occasionally invited to informal team meetings but this is at the behest of a Programme Leader and is difficult to achieve given the existing workloading framework of the University and the time available to module leaders. It is accepted that there will always be workload and resource constraints but by attempting to introduce a change in organisational culture coupled with an enthusiasm for a new way of thinking and perhaps a few hours for the review and refinement of programmes then perhaps from small beginnings the impetus for change might be achieved. This research affirms that the I-design framework, which has been developed out with and alongside this research, has merit. What is now required is the demonstration of leadership and resource support for its implementation. Perhaps the next Professional Doctorate in the Faculty could be the review of the success (or otherwise) of the new framework.

4.9 Key findings and summary of the project

The purpose of this project was to achieve the following and achieve learning outcome S5:

- To critically analyse the changing nature of postgraduate students and their needs for a successful programme experience and, in particular, to investigate the needs and aspirations of those students to inform programme development
- To evaluate their future needs and expectations
- To develop a strategic framework which reflects the impact of globalisation and captures the Vision, Mission and Value of the MBA Programme
- To evaluate the anticipated future needs of potential students as one stakeholder within a complex stakeholder map.

By drawing on the established literature relating to stakeholder theory and agency theory it has been possible to identify key elements of those theories which inform not only the project but also contribute to the better understanding of the University, the Business School and its staff and how those elements operate and interact. Using the Business School and the MBA as a case study has enabled me to identify the issues requiring attention, proposals for improvement and ways of addressing the areas for improvement. The project has also enabled me to draw upon my own considerable experience, reflect on my community of practice and identify ways of improving my own development alongside the contribution I can make to future developments in postgraduate provision in the Business School.

4.9 (a) the student perspective

It is to be expected that the needs and aspirations of students will vary year on year. Each cohort will attach differing degrees of importance to the achievement of their aims and objectives. It is the role, at least in part, of staff to support students in the navigation of these competing aims. For example, between those students that want to complete their programme of study as quickly as possible but also want the placement experience. Between those students that want to study in Sunderland as a mechanism for their better understanding of UK culture and those who arrive because it is financially beneficial and a gateway to European travel. What is clear is that international students recognise the cache that is attached to a UK Degree in the context of world markets and the opportunities for employment with a UK degree.

Going forward the students making up future cohorts need to benefit from the lessons learnt from existing cohorts and staff need to illicit those lessons in a meaningful way which is not only addressing the 'quality' requirement for recording information. It is important that the information we gather is used to improve our programme provision in a real and meaningful way and not simply to 'tick the box' as part of the annual monitoring process.

4.9 (b) the importance of the Principal/Agent relationship

The data gathered during interviews with staff and students has demonstrated the extremely competitive nature in which the University operates with regard to the recruitment of students. Despite the continued efforts of the University to reduce its reliance on overseas agents, these agents are still crucial in the achievement of recruitment targets. Whilst efforts are being made to perform manage these agents it is clear that in the current market environment they will retain the upper hand simply on the basis that they operate on behalf of numerous different Principals. In the short term it is difficult to see how the relationship with agents will fundamentally change given the resource constraints in which the University operates. It is unlikely that there is the capital and revenue investment required to enable in-country University offices to perform the recruitment activity needed. Whilst the activities of our London and Hong Kong campuses go some way to supporting the activities in Sunderland those centres themselves are required to produce a profit in their own right. There is some benefit to be obtained by programmes of study delivered jointly in terms of cross-study study but it is unlikely that this would produce the revenue streams required to replace agents. In the medium to longer term the use of less but more stable recruitment agents is the likely way forward but again this will require close relationship management as identified in the discussion of Confucian stakeholder theory and is not easily achieved at arm's length.

4.9 (c) the importance for programme development

To a significant extent it is this area of activity that is the main area of importance for both the Faculty and the University as well as potentially the most problematic. In the final analysis any business is only as good as its product offering and its place in the market. The success of a University is measured in a number of different ways as the league tables demonstrate or not as the case may be. However, from the point of the students and other key stakeholder's success is often determined by its portfolio of programmes, the enthusiasm of its staff and the added value given as part of the student experience ultimately leading to successful employment for the graduating student. It is in these areas that successful programme development can make a difference in terms of recruitment and the successful completion of study.

The research for this project and the experience gained from the wider study I have undertaken to complete this Professional Doctorate programme has led me to realise the importance of critical self-reflection at all levels from the heart of the organisation and its leadership to the individual Faculty member of staff. We all have our part to play if the University is to be successful. It is no one person that has responsibility for success or failure. In my opinion it is not the Vice-Chancellor or the Dean of Faculty or indeed the individual member of the academy. I believe students measure their experience in many ways. It is accepted that the programme of study is the main focus but it is also the experience they gain from the wider community in which they study. Faculty staff and the experience they give is undoubtedly important, the experience in the module workshop may well have a lasting impression but so will the attitude of that same member of staff when they are approached in the refectory with a question, in the prompt response to an email and in the attitude displayed when approached regarding a sensitive personal matter affecting the student. There is no doubt that a contemporary programme of study which meets its programme learning outcomes and delivered in a manner which students expect is vital but so is the more personal attitudes displayed across the piece by all members of the University community.

The i-design framework, affirmed by this research is a way forward for future programme development but I believe it will only ultimately succeed if it is embraced by all the academic community from the Dean of Faculty to the programme development and implementation team. It is only through mutual co-operation and teamwork that this framework can be enacted and produce a programme of study that's fits with the needs and aspirations of our students.

4.10 A final personal reflection.

This achieves learning outcome S4 having completed the taught element of the Professional Doctorate Programme I was to some extent content with the level of my ability as a reflective practitioner. During my leadership career both outside higher education and within it I had learnt that in order to understand others you had first to understand yourself. During my study for a M.A. in Social Policy at Durham I had learnt the skills necessary for undertaking research and the need for analysis and interpretation. During my study for a M.A. in Coaching for Organisational Excellence at Sunderland I realised the need for critical self-reflection both for my own development and the development of others. Now having completed this project I believe I have not only improved my own skills in terms of reflection but I also have a much clearer understanding of my community of practice and how I can contribute to that community resulting in an improved student experience. The learning has been both informative and enjoyable, the success of the implementation is yet to be determined.

In terms of the conclusion of the project, the very recent publication of the i-Design Framework initially caused me some concern regarding the relevance of my research given the timing of the publication and the close relationship to this project. On reflection the Framework, in my opinion, affirms the relevance and importance of this project to the future of postgraduate programme development in the Business School. The Framework is what it says, a process to be followed to comply with the requirements of the University strategy moving forward. The success of any process is determined by the quality and efficacy of its implementation. The Framework at this stage is in effect a desirable and preferred method of the process of programme development. It is not in itself a tried and test methodology. For the Framework to be a success it requires the involvement and commitment of the stakeholders identified and the drive and determination of programme teams to implement the Framework resulting in a programme of study which is contemporary, appropriate for the market it serves and reflects the needs and aspirations of its students. To achieve this the Framework needs to come to life and that will be achieved by the drive and enthusiasm of the academic staff involved in the range of activities necessary to develop a successful programme.

From my own personal perspective, I believe the Framework published by the University can be a valuable part of our quality assurance and programme development process. During my time with the Faculty there has been various attempts to develop programmes which encompass many of the elements identified here. The involvement of students and employers is something we have used many times. It is self-evident that the work of a Business School must reflect the needs of employers and provide the opportunity for successful students to add value to the organisations they go on to work for. Perhaps the success of the Framework and the validity of this project will be the subject of further research in the future. Whether that research is undertaken by me or someone else is yet to be determined.

From my personal point of view, the next steps in my research journey following on from this study will encompass opportunities at local, regional and national level. Locally, the University sponsors a successful and well attended Learning and Teaching Conference where this work linked with the i-Design Framework will have a wider impact on my local community of practice. At a regional level, the opportunity exists for the dissemination of my work at the Three Rivers Research Conference held on an annual basis with attendees from all regional Universities and Colleges. Finally, there is the opportunity for national/international dissemination through the EMFD MBA Directors Conference which is also held annually. This last element would be quite fitting for dissemination as it was at the MBA Directors Conference which I had the initial idea for this research and where some of the thoughts for other elements of the Professional Doctorate Programme took shape.

Chapter 5

Critical Self-Reflection

5.1 Career summary.

Learning Outcomes achieved

Knowledge

- (K1) A deep understanding of the recent developments in their profession nationally and internationally;

Skills

- (S1) Make a significant contribution to practice within their chosen field
- (S4) Reflect on their own work and on themselves and thus operate as a truly reflective independent practitioner.

Contribution

I am a practical work-based educationist and describe myself as an 'academic practitioner.' I have 40 years' management and 30 years teaching experience developed during two careers in public sector management and higher education. In HE I have held various roles as a Senior and Principal Lecturer. Over time I have been a Programme and Team Leader and Programme Studies Board Chair, where I was responsible for the management of staff, the operational management of a subject team and responsibility for a suite of programmes.

As Subject Team Leader I managed the administration and delivery of modules and programmes at Foundation, Undergraduate and Postgraduate level including a range of programmes specially designed and delivered for corporate clients. My time as Team Leader provided an excellent opportunity to practice my leadership skills developed from my first career in the public sector as well refining those skills based on the academic development I undertook when beginning my career in the Business School in 1995. Arriving in the Business School was very different from my previous HE experiences which was a Politics Lecturer at the University of Durham. This was in a small department with a significant degree of autonomy and in a very different subject discipline.

On arrival at Sunderland I was appointed as a Senior Lecturer in Leadership and Management in 1995 and in 1999 was promoted to Principal Lecturer and Team Leader for the leadership and management subject area. I retained this post until 2014 and during this time I was also responsible for the portfolio of Postgraduate Business Programmes as Chair of the Programme Studies Board. It is during this period that I gained detailed knowledge of the programme portfolio as well as experience of the more strategic issues affecting the University via involvement with several Faculty and University Committees. This strategic involvement continued following my appointment in 2014 as Principal Lecturer for Quality Assurance and Enhancement. This role enhanced my experience and involvement in the more strategic aspects of the factors affecting the student experience not only in terms of the impact on student learning at Faculty level but also by supporting initiatives and enhancement across other Faculties in the University. My involvement with other HE providers as an External Examiner and Validation Panel Member enhanced this activity and provided the opportunity to evaluate the activities of other HE providers and benchmark our own activity as the same time.

Whilst confident in my role as a practical work-based educationalist, it is important that this practitioner role is underpinned by research. The academic profession both at an individual and organisational level is measured, at least in part, by the research outputs provided by Faculty staff. Throughout this project I have referred to the increasingly tense competitive environment in which HEIs are forced to participate. The area of research is no different from other activities, be it the recruitment of students; the bidding for corporate activity or achieving success in the award of research funding.

Although I possess two master's degrees, I am aware that my academic standing is weakened by the absence of Doctoral level study. My research interests are in evidence-based work-based learning and research-informed learning and teaching where I focus on leadership development and coaching for organisational excellence. A specific example of impact is my current Professional Doctorate studies. This study enables me to draw upon my knowledge and practical experience of teaching home and international students. The impact of this experience enables me to support the supervision of international masters' students from different business areas.

My academic career has been supported by practical knowledge and experience throughout. As a former Executive Director of a national local government organisation and Non-Executive Director on an NHS Acute Hospital Trust, I believe this extensive previous employment experience coupled with my teaching and leadership experience in higher education enabled me to support students with their skills development by providing real life examples for discussion and solution. This not only supports my teaching it also enabled me to meet the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) for acceptance as a Senior Fellow of the HEA. This confirmed my teaching excellence within my community of practice.

In my project I identified three themes to for consideration namely, student experience, the University stakeholder framework and its impact on recruitment and finally the impact of these two themes on postgraduate programme development in the Business School. In a similar vein I propose to consider a further three themes for self-reflection which I believe also impact on the project and my sense of place in terms of the research and my impact on not only the research but also my impact on the overall outcome of the research, i.e. student experience and programme development. The themes I intend to reflect upon here are, Leadership; Quality Assurance and Enhancement and Teaching.

Each will be outlined in term to enable me to reflect on my development and my influence within the School.

5.2 Leadership

Learning outcomes achieved

Knowledge

- (K2) A deep understanding of current theoretical frameworks and approaches which have direct relevance to their own professional context.

Skills

- (S3) Recognise budgetary, political, strategic, ethical and social issues when addressing issues within the workplace.
- (S4) Reflect on their own work and on themselves and thus operate as a truly reflective independent practitioner.
- (S5) Present and defend an original and coherent body of work which demonstrates, reflects upon and evaluates the impact upon practice which they have personally made.

5.3 The Early Years

My leadership skills were developed in a traditional manner. I was more fortunate than many; I left School at sixteen years of age on a Friday and started work on the Monday as an Administrative Trainee working for my hometown local authority. I watched closely the ways of my two mentors both extremely experienced administrative managers in a Chief Executives Department and learnt on the job. In many ways some forty years later I followed a similar pattern to those now following a Degree Apprenticeship. My on the job training was extensive working across several departments and my formal education was study via College day-release programmes to achieve professional qualifications equivalent to undergraduate degree level but it was not a formal Degree. Between 1970 and 1974 I continued my role as an Administrative Trainee and in April 1974 my first leadership experience began. At 20 years of age I was heavily involved in the local government reorganisation of that year. My departmental head took ill and the Chief Executive instructed me to lead the team for six months during this turbulent time. My role was to integrate two disparate teams in one new team capable of performing well quickly for the new authority. I was not prepared. Looking back, my approach was quite simple although it didn’t seem so at the time. It was to treat people as you would wish to be treated. I realised many years later I had learnt this from my parents and in particular my father who had worked all in life in the Port industry and for 20 years managed at senior level with responsibility for leading teams of Dockers. No mean feat given industrial relations in the 60’s and 70’s.

After nine months in this interim role I was confirmed as head of department and at 21 years of age I had a job for life. By all reasonable measures at the time I was reasonably successful, I was promoted, I had a good salary and I was secure but I knew something was missing. I had successfully completed all the professional qualifications relevant to my role and I had studied evening classes for ‘A’ levels in History and Psychology simply because I could. In 1982 it was suggested to me by the then Leader of the Council that my next promotion would be helped by being a member of the local ruling political party. This was a step too far for me. In all honestly, I could provide impartial unbiased advice as an official at the same time as being a member of the ruling political party bent on retaining power. At this time, I was studying ‘A’ level Government and Politics and by a series of coincidences I meant the Professor of Politics at Durham University, the late Professor Richard A. Chapman who was to become a dear personal friend.

Following a successful career in the public sector and discussions with Richard I decided to leave local government and study full time at Durham for a B.A. (Joint Honours) Degree in Social and Public Administration followed by a M.A. in Social Policy also at Durham. I made a conscious decision to embark on a career as a University Lecturer. Between I graduated with my B.A. in 1986 and now had both practical experience and theoretical knowledge to bring to the table.

Between 1989 and 1995 my administrative and managerial training stood me in good stead as I was appointed as the part-time Executive Director of a national local government association representing local authorities to national government. This provided an excellent opportunity to work with senior politicians of all political parties as well as Government Ministers and senior civil servants. I was able to lead on several projects involving the then Department of the Environment; the Audit Commission and the Public Accounts Committee. A highlight of this period was my involvement with the Standards Board for England introducing the Codes of Conduct for Standards in Public Life enacted in England for all elected members. This activity to a lesser extent continues today as I am the Independent Person on the Standards Board for Durham. The experience gained during this period enabled me to be closely involved with policy setting, the development of national legislation and the relationship management involved to make this activity a success. All skills which I have subsequently used in my leadership roles with the University as well as bringing the experience into the classroom as part of the leadership development curriculum.

Between 1986 and 1995 I worked as an Associate Tutor in Politics at the University of Durham and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. I knew I wanted to pursue a second career in education and I believed higher education was the objective. Following tenures at New College, Durham and the University of Durham I secured a role as a Senior Lecturer in the Sunderland Faculty of Business and Law in 1995.

5.4 The Sunderland Years

Learning Outcomes achieved

<u>Knowledge</u>

- (K2) A deep understanding of current theoretical frameworks and approaches which have direct

<u>Skills</u>

- (S2) Apply theory and research methods within the workplace and feel comfortable in integrating different approaches to address 'messy' multidisciplinary problems in a rigorous yet practical manner.
- (S5) Present and defend an original and coherent body of work which demonstrates, reflects upon and evaluates the impact upon practice which they have personally made.

In 1999 I was promoted to Principal Lecturer and Team Leader employed as subject area team leader for Strategic and International Management Studies.

As a Principal Lecturer my duties changed and I developed a role more related to educational leadership and management. My subject area teaching along with managing and leading programmes, supervision and additional student support continued and I was able to keep up to date with research in the field. In addition, I provided reports to Faculty management, learning and teaching committees and mentored and supported new staff in the team, all of which impacted on the direction of the team and its academic staff as well as developing my own leadership skills in a new management environment.

I have always been in a subject team linked to leadership and management and in turn this has always impacted on curriculum development and learning and teaching. In this phase of my career I was not only 'leading' the team I was also leading on curriculum development a task which enabled me to follow project from inception to implementation. The experience I have gained in module and programme development and as a module and programme leader ensured that I conducted research-aligned teaching, where the main pedagogic strands underpinning my teaching came from evidence-based practice and work-based learning. I have had personal impact on the development and delivery of several corporate programmes which have involved this approach to learning. At the same time, I approached leadership of the team in the same way as that from my previous career namely, be fair with people and hopefully they will be fair in return.

The activities I undertook enabled me to influence my community of practice. As a Senior Lecturer between 1995 and 1999 I gained experience in the workings of the University and the Faculty which was very different to my previous career and to my experiences at Durham. At the same time, I was able to further develop my craft and my research into learning and teaching has informed and impacted on my practice. I have learnt from my studies into student learning research that although techniques are important, it is the direct effect of the subtle and complex issues surrounding the relationship between theory and practice in my teaching that impact on student engagement and experience. I fully support the premise that teaching influences learning directly, where "educational research consists in careful, systematic attempts to understand the educational process and, through understanding, to improve its efficiency" (Nisbet & Entwistle, 1972:113). At this stage in my career, some of what I do is intuitive but as described by Brew, (2006), teaching and managing in HE is a continual self-reflexive process, taking the "*thinking form'* of an enquiry-based approach to "*understanding itself.*" I examine how I make decisions all the time. For example, a significant portion of my workload is postgraduate teaching and project supervision on the MBA Programme as well as the teaching and programme leadership for corporate clients on behalf of the Faculty.

At all times it is essential to consider issues such as: -

- Ensuring what is the nature of knowledge for the level of study?
- How do I know I am taking the right approach?
- Where can I add 'value' to already experienced managers as well students with lesser work experience?
- How do I link everything to demonstrate the relationship between theory and practice and enable the student to demonstrate knowledge and understanding?

Regarding my practice, I believe that my practical experience coupled with my academic experience gives me credibility with the students I am teaching. I understand the issues they face in the workplace and I can contextualise the range of possible suggested solutions for them to consider and determine. I take the opportunity to bring these together by using workshops and subsequent assessments designed not only to understand the link between theory and practice but also to encourage students to develop their critical thinking skills and then use those skills in a reflective manner. This approach has the dual effect of demonstrating learning and providing the student with the opportunity to reflect on how they can bring their acquired knowledge into the workplace.

In the classroom, I have continued this same self-reflective process by being thoroughly prepared with materials and ‘thinking on my feet’, watching the group to ensure engagement. There may be a changing of methods and style as necessitated by their responses as well as bringing different examples to the fore to ensure relevance and practicality to the topic being considered. I have found this to be especially true when teaching experienced managers; for example, Nissan UK (a corporate client) which has a pragmatic approach to management and a style based on some of the early management research developed by Taylor and the scientific principles of Fayol. One role is to influence the thinking of students to reflect on more organic and social relations styles of management and to show any preconceived bias which sometimes exists among engineers who have been exposed to regimented styles of management often for many years. I have always found this important, to be aware of and reflect upon these alternate views when developing teaching materials and dealing with change in the classroom as teaching progresses. For corporate clients, this shifting sand is especially true as teaching is undertaken on a full day basis rather than a shorter workshop or seminar basis. A successful student experience requires almost continuous classroom realignment as teaching progresses and I have learnt throughout my career that this continuous adjustment is needed to meet the challenges of different variables in terms of pressures for evidence from both internal and external stakeholders and the changing nature of the world of work.

One method of influencing my community of practice has been the way in which I have led staff development across our campuses in my own area of responsibility. Since 2014 I have successfully completed staff development sessions for our Sunderland, London and Hong Kong campus dissertation supervisors as well as similar sessions for our supervisors and markers in Vietnam, Singapore, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Kenya. These overseas sessions provide evidence of impact on how successful the redesign of my modules had been and provided the opportunity to engage in learning and teaching debates with experienced academics from different educational backgrounds on the feasibility of my approach to a variety of learners from different learning environments. This in turn has required me to reflect on my own learning and style of teaching and I have acquired now knowledge along the way as I have gained a better understanding of the nuances of different cultural environments from the teaching staff I have interacted with. These activities are supported by follow up Skype sessions to review the success of the changes initiated.

In assessing the impact of my style of leadership, I would cite two examples of success. First, I was the lead academic for the development and delivery of a Postgraduate Certificate in Leadership and Change. This programme was specifically designed for Nissan (UK) and their High Potential Managers Programme. This activity required me to successfully complete all elements for the approval of the programme prior to delivery and liaison with the staff development team of Nissan. Crucial to the practical delivery of the programme was the co-ordination of academics across subject area teams and ensure that the content delivered mapped to the learning outcomes and requirements of Nissan. The success of this programme has been especially rewarding personally as we are now on Cohort 11 of the programme with Cohort 12 approved for delivery. This means over 100 students have successfully completed the programme and given positive feedback to their employers. If this had not been the case, we would not have had such repeat business. This success has been a team effort; however, my leadership and subject expertise added impact to success of the programme. From a programme perspective and in the context of my current role I have led on the establishment of Degree Apprenticeships within the Faculty. We now have Degree Apprenticeship Programme at undergraduate and postgraduate level both of which have open and closed cohorts with more in the pipeline. Currently the Faculty has over 70 students on these programmes and as Programme Leader for the Level 7 programme and Chair of the Corporate/WBL Programme Studies Board I am able to influence the review and development of these programmes by bringing my practical and academic experience to the table.

My second example of impact relates to my time as subject team leader. During a Faculty restructure the decision was made to amalgamate subject teams. As team leader I was given the task of amalgamating two teams, the Planning and Operations team and the Strategy and Management team. In practical terms the members of both teams had opposing views of how they should be led and had in the past been through a difficult period of stressful leadership. They operated with very different cultures and had ingrained views of how they should be managed going forward. Looking back this was almost an identical situation to the one I faced forty years previously. By the end of one academic year I had amalgamated the teams, had a successful annual monitoring of all modules and programmes within its remit and had completed the successful validation of two new programmes for the following academic year. Looking back, I achieved this success because of my inclusive leadership style based on trust and mutual respect, as well as using the traits employed in my previous career, to bring together people from a diverse range of backgrounds to work towards common and focused goals.

Leadership can take many different forms and it is my opinion that unless you understand yourself then it is very difficult if not impossible to understand others. In addition to my first master's degree, I decided to study for a master's degree in Coaching for Organisational Excellence. The education I received in coaching proved invaluable for my own critical self-reflection and enabled me to adopt a coaching approach to my own leadership style. I value this experience to this day in terms of my interaction with corporate clients and in terms of my interactions with the staff I work with on a daily basis. This process of continuous improvement in my own professional development stood me well when in 2014 I was given the Faculty lead for Quality Assurance and Enhancement a post I was to hold for 4 years.

5.5 Quality Assurance and Enhancement

Learning Outcomes achieved

Knowledge

- (K1) A deep understanding of the recent developments in their profession nationally and internationally.

Skills

- (S1) Make a significant contribution within in their chosen field.
- (S5) Present and defend an original and coherent body of work which demonstrates, reflects upon and evaluates the impact upon practice which they have personally made.

The same process of critical self-reflection was applied to this area of responsibility as Chair of Faculty Quality Management Sub-Committee and a member of University Quality Management Committee. From 2014-2018 this made up a significant proportion of my role in the Faculty. The substantive post was Principal Lecturer for Quality and Enhancement which was cross cutting of all teams in the Faculty.

Throughout my time as a Principal Lecturer I have successfully influenced the increasing needs and demands of QAA visits, Periodic Reviews, Programme Validation events and the ever-present Annual Monitoring process in which I have always had a key Faculty wide role. In preparation for these events I have organised and successfully delivered staff development events through working groups, one-to-one sessions with staff and drop-in seminars. These events have been delivered to internal Faculty staff and the staff of our external transnational education (TNE) partners delivering programmes on behalf of the Faculty overseas. This has significantly impacted on our TNE provision where the staff development I have completed has led to increased student progression and success rates as tutors have improved their performance.

This example provides evidence of achievement at module level but I have also been involved in several programme periodic reviews which have involved the design of new programmes and the redevelopment of existing programmes within the Faculty. This began in 2000 when leading my team towards the revalidation of programmes within the subject area. My impact included the management of teams developing and reviewing programmes, the completion of required documentation and the co-ordination of staff members during the review process. As Chair of the Module Studies Board, I enlisted the support of existing students to contribute to this process via Staff/Student Liaison meetings and seek the views of students on the currency of the programmes from their perspective and the appropriateness of the learning and teaching strategies to add value to their experience.

When influencing my peers, I provided support that was aimed to encourage staff to reflect on their teaching practice, on student learning and skill development and programme development. At all times the emphasis was to introduce innovative ways to develop skills and monitor students' progress as well as ensure that all matters complied with QAA, University and Faculty requirements. This required the writing and approval of appropriate documentation and dissemination to a range of relevant stakeholders. The experience gained, together with my previous experience, meant in terms of my present role I bring extensive practical and academic knowledge to discussions and deliberations to practical programme development and to strategic issues at Faculty and University level. In terms of impact on quality assurance all programmes I have submitted to a Validation Panel have been successful. The impact I have made using my knowledge of how students learn; my practical knowledge of teaching across different subject disciplines; my professional training and academic achievement together with my extensive management experience equip me with the necessary skills to develop my own professionalism and pass on that knowledge in a supportive manner to others.

In terms of quality enhancement this has taken place not only in my Faculty and University roles involving Annual Monitoring but also at a programme and module level. I have been a module and programme leader as well as module and programme developer. This involved conducting the necessary research and making the required revisions and developments of relevant documentation resulting in the delivery of successful programmes.

During this phase of my career I was Chair of Faculty Quality Management Committee (FQMSC). I was responsible for Annual Monitoring at Faculty level adhering to all University quality assurance requirements. In terms of impact, this activity required me to manage, co-ordinate and mentor staff through this process. I worked with colleagues, peers and teaching teams on the development of their modules and programmes to ensure the material was up-to-date and met the needs of current and future students. In terms of annual monitoring this was achieved by attending Programme Studies Boards and influencing discussion.

Currently I provide these same functions in my present role as Principal Lecturer for Corporate and Work based learning where I lead on all work-based programmes and Degree Apprenticeships in the Faculty as Chair of the Corporate and Work based Programme Studies Board. There is also a cross faculty element to this activity as several programmes within the remit of my Studies Board are Police focussed programmes at UG and PG level. These programmes were initially Business programmes but were transferred to the Faculty of Education and Society which possessed specialist knowledge in this area. It was decided that responsibility of the programmes should remain in my Studies Board because of my (our) experience in working with corporate clients and in terms of experience in developing and providing this type of programme.

These internal roles have been supplemented by my role on behalf of University Academic Services when I act as a Periodic Review Panel Chair; Review Panel Member and a Chair and member of numerous revalidation and programme approval events in other Faculties. These roles have a major impact on programme validation and provide evidence of my dissemination within my wider community of practice.

Out with the University, I am an invited external member of many Validation Panels for programmes to provide subject expertise and confirmation of standards as part of the quality assurance process. Recent examples include University of Birmingham; Southampton University; University of Bedfordshire; UAE and University of Ulster

The experience gained continues to develop a platform for future validation events and provides valuable experience and impact in my current role.

Whilst this activity provides valuable experience and significantly impacts on my personal development its greater impact is on the ways in which I can influence the student experience through my own teaching. In this next section I will demonstrate how my practitioner-based experience and my academic development has supported my personal development and hence the student experience of those I come into contact with.

5.6 Teaching

Learning Outcomes achieved

<u>Knowledge</u>

- (K2) A deep understanding of current theoretical frameworks and approaches which have direct relevance to their own professional context.

<u>Skills</u>

- (S4) Reflect on their own work and on themselves and thus operate as a truly reflective independent practitioner.

The knowledge and skills I have identified in the preceding sections have been developed from my third area for review. I have taught since 1986 in both Further and Higher Education. I have always reflected upon and developed influences on the pedagogical approaches necessary to provide an excellent student experience. Studying work by Boyer and the Carnegie Foundation in the USA in the 1990s on redefining academic practice and educational theory underpinned how I interpreted practical developments in the curriculum. I can relate to the complex interrelationship, (Barnett, 2000), which exists between the conceptions of scholarship of university teaching and learning through the insights provided by Bourdieu, (1998), on practical reasoning and its impact on learning. This complexity is especially evident when dealing with students following a work-based learning programme. An example of this complexity was evident on the North East NHS Leadership Academy management development programme. I was lead academic during its development, one of the key deliverers of content and project supervisor. Students on the programme were highly experienced NHS managers, skilled in managing complexity in their work environment but class discussion revealed little reflection on the part of those managers in terms of the theoretical underpinning of the actions they were implementing. By using 'live' anonymised case studies brought by the students themselves, they began to more clearly understand the relationship between theory and practice.

This approach supports the notion provided by Boud, Keogh and Walker, (1985), on turning reflection into learning and its impact on experiential learning in the workplace.

In addition to my teaching activities to corporate clients, I have been an undergraduate and postgraduate dissertation supervisor since my appointment to the University. In 2014, I again became the MBA dissertation module leader and began a review and redesign of the module. This programme is delivered in Sunderland as well as our London and Hong Kong Campuses and several of our TNE partners. It was essential therefore that the teaching and learning strategy shared a common learning platform and that it was flexible enough to meet the needs of full and part time learners as well as on and off campus learners. It was my return to this module leadership that focussed my attention on this professional doctorate project. Drawing on my knowledge of developing student focussed learning and on appropriate theoretical approaches I decided on the design of the module, the scheme of supervision and signposts to suitable materials. Success of this module has been crucial as over 1000 students have taken this module. Whilst this example provides evidence of achievement at module level, I have been involved in a number of programme periodic reviews which have involved the design of new and the redevelopment of existing programmes within the Faculty portfolio. The experience I gained provided a platform for future validation and approval events and provided valuable experience in my current role.

The model of Trigwell, Martin, Benjamin and Prosser, (2000), is derived from work mainly from a Northern Europe or Australian context which has developed an understanding of teaching and learning approaches in different disciplines. I have used this literature in relation to my work in coaching and mentoring and practised it in my teaching of subject specific coaching support to corporate work-based learners. It was particularly helpful when I was working with a team of lecturers delivering a management development programme for NHS Managers who wanted to develop a coaching style of management. They could conceptualise the theory but not relate it to real examples. I contributed to their understanding by providing 'real' scenarios which could then be practiced in the non-threatening environment of the classroom which provided the students with support and meant that they did not need to use live scenarios from their experience where participants could be identified and exposed to other members of the workforce. Taking an evidence-based practice approach, I mentored the coaches in the team to embed the specialist health related material. I then used my knowledge of management and relevant coaching theories to write the scheme of work for coaches to follow when dealing with the student. The evidence for success of the team's approach was provided in positive student evaluations and their success in achieving the qualification which was a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (Level 7). This example shows respect for individual learners, diverse learning communities and subject material.

A further example focuses on when I was responsible for the development and approval of a Foundation Degree in Sales Management (Level 4 and 5) specifically developed for British Telecom. As lead academic and module deliverer I was able to develop this programme using the application of evidence-based research. One role was to give feedback to students and create a learning environment for the students who had not met the pass grade. This meant taking a phenomenographic approach so I could decide how best to give confidence to the student by providing a supportive environment. To achieve this, I had to undertake some further research in the sales literature and adjust my teaching approach to better suit the needs of the student. I would then embody a student learning approach, taking direction in how to feedback and move on, depending on what the student said.

When thinking about the approaches to learning available I would consider, among others, Kolb's (1984) learning cycle which is familiar to all in education, drawing on the experiential theories of Lewin, Piaget, and Dewey *et al.* This work on learning development was a strong influence in my own development but another of the major influences on my own academic practice has been the work of Kreber and Cranton, (2000), who identified different levels of reflection providing the basis for a multi-dimensional model of scholarship of research-informed teaching relating to 3 inter-connected domains of knowing about the curriculum, namely instructional, curricular and pedagogical knowing.

For each of these 3 levels of reflection my approach is: -

- Content reflection – what should I do in course design to select methods?
- Process reflection – how are the processes leading to strategies examined? How did I do? Was my course design effective?
- Premise reflection – a deeper reflection – why did I teach the way I did?

This approach has stood me well in terms of developing this section of the portfolio and my thinking in terms of critical self-reflection.

This approach has always been important to me since reading as a student the work of Irving Goffman, (1971), 'The presentation of self in everyday life.' Goffman presents the notion of 'acting' in organisational life and that participants portray different roles at different times whilst retaining their own personal and professional values. This approach is significant and important to me and informs my approach to my profession as an academic. This is not only in my own conduct but also the way in which those I am responsible for conduct themselves.

Following this structured approach to reflection, I am able to make practical changes through applying a different focus as follows: -

- From the point of view of learning and teaching methods developed for programme validation and subsequent delivery it was important to thoroughly understand the type of student on the programme. For example, for students requiring technical knowledge and understanding a problem-solving case study perspective meant the students had to understand the theory and relevant facts to undertake specific tasks. For example, in the Sales Management programme I would work with the specialist member of staff from the corporate client to use an evidence-based approach to design a case study that had specific theory-tasks to 'problem solve'.
- From the point of view of a communicative focus on learning, I would encourage the sharing of ideas and perceptions. I would encourage the agreement of a negotiated meaning in the group and develop the debate from that point. This approach also worked well with NHS staff I taught as their operational strategies were often very different from one another even though their strategic protocols were very similar.
- At an emancipatory level where there was a need to incorporate critical reflection and reasoning where the goal is self-knowledge, my coaching activities as part of taught programme provided opportunities for the student to benefit from my coaching skills in order to enable them to develop their own critical thinking and ultimately their own intended personal development pathway.

By continually reviewing and realigning these foci an improved student experience followed.

I have conducted these levels of reflection throughout my work from the teaching approach identified as 'social practice' by Kemmis and McTaggart, (2000). 'Social practice' in this context relates to understanding the specific organisational environments of the learners and developing approaches for their support and guidance throughout their programme of study.

As an academic I have had to study the nature of knowledge in my subject discipline to decide how best to make explicit to students what is implicit in the subject. This was achieved through my understanding and management experience. I was very fortunate to have been taught these subjects by excellent teachers who were inspirational and dynamic in their approach and I was lucky enough to work for very experienced managers in my previous career who shaped my management style. I have been able to model my own teaching practice on this 'best practice' approach which has developed and improved significantly over the years. As argued by Brew and Barrie, (1999), before any teacher can think about changing students' perceptions or attitudes to learning, the teacher must have experienced the sort of learning being implemented.

Aside from my teaching and supervisory roles, a significant part of my work was related to managing specific improvement projects, chairing and leading academic committees related to improving teaching practise. Examples included chairing Module and Programme Studies Boards, academic team meetings developing and reviewing programmes and subject specific working and steering groups when there was an imminent subject review or QAA visit. To address the specific objectives, I drew on both my professional teaching qualifications and experience to work with academic staff to address the senior managements' learning and teaching plans. Early work later moved onto ensuring all programmes of study adhered to University and Faculty Strategic Plans as Chair of FQMSC.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s my thinking was primarily concerned with how to improve my own learning and teaching of students. This thinking helped me to understand the value of combining methods when endeavouring to understand how students learn, and thereby ensure my own methods were applicable to both the subject and the student. I recognise that good lecturing is a skill in its own right, I also acknowledge that university teaching goes beyond that, so it has been critical in my role as an educationist to ensure I continually try to find explanations for the observations I have made. I have always tried to undertake the notion of disciplined enquiry that is, looking at ways to improve both my knowledge and techniques by collecting and interpreting evidence for good practice whilst not being restricted by any current dominant methodology.

To develop my own professional practice, support colleagues and brief Senior Management, I consulted with other universities on best practice and developed my thinking by acting as an External Examiner for programmes within my subject area within similar post 1992 HEIs. I have been appointed as External Examiner to the Universities of Staffordshire, Wolverhampton, Huddersfield, Bedfordshire Nottingham Trent and the University of Ulster. Currently I am an External Examiner for the University of Bolton examining the MSc. in International Management delivered on campus and off-campus in Malawi and from September 2019 in Greece. This appointment reflects my expertise in the subject area and importantly my expertise in delivering and managing programmes delivered overseas to our Transnational Education Partners.

These appointments helped me to reflect on what works/what is not so successful and then I am better able to lead my teams more effectively to form an informed view. I can work with staff to make sure the differences and diversity existing within programmes and module/programme teams is embraced in innovative ways without being prescriptive.

Internal to the University and having completed all required University training I have acted as a Periodic Review Panel Chair, University Validation Panel Chair and Validation Panel member as well as Faculty representative on numerous Validation Panels,

Between 1990 to 2000 the main shift in the field of research into learning and teaching in HE at the time, was from a tutor-led to student-led approach, with the focus more on student learning theories than teacher-practice methodologies. This supported students with the opportunity to see and reflect upon so they can understand how the subject or topic fits together. When I applied this method to academic staff, my approach was in effect, showing them how to embed evidence-based research into their own research informed/aligned teaching practice evaluations. This has proved particularly useful in the Peer Observation of Teaching sessions we are encouraged to undertake.

When working with my peers as a Subject Team Leader and Chair of Programme Studies Boards I provided support that was aimed to help and encourage staff to reflect on their teaching practice, on student learning and skill development and on programme development. At all times the emphasis was to introduce innovative ways to develop skills and monitor students' progress as well as ensure that all matters complied with QAA and University requirements. This compliance required the need for the writing and approval of appropriate documentation as well as dissemination to a range of relevant stakeholders.

This experience means I have been able to bring extensive practical and academic knowledge to discussions and deliberations not only in relation to practical programme development but also in terms of the strategic issues at Faculty and University level.

The reflections I have incorporated at the end of each chapter in the project has enabled me to focus my thinking in terms of the key themes arising in each of those chapters. The opportunity to write the project and complete the programme of study to this stage has meant that I have been able to write and reflect as the project has evolved. This has been an advantage as it is often the case when developing programmes or when leading an academic team, decisions are frequently made quickly due to approaching deadlines. Being able to reflect and then move on is sometimes a rarity in the competitive year-round business that we now find ourselves in.

My knowledge of how students learn; my practical knowledge of teaching across different disciplines; my professional training and academic achievement together with my extensive management experience gained both inside and outside HE equip me with the necessary skills to develop my own professionalism and pass on that knowledge in a supportive manner to others. It is this experience that encouraged me to undertake my Professional Doctorate in the first place and on completion it will hopefully lead me to the next stage of my involvement of its wider dissemination.

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Appendix 1.

Focus Group Notes of meeting held on 11th April 1918 in Berlin.

Attendees MBA Students from the October 2017 Cohort of students.

The following represents the notes of the views and opinions of the October 2017 cohort of students who were visiting Berlin as part of the Study Visit provided as an added value activity for the MBA Programme. The purpose of the visit is to allow the students to experience the culture of a country that they may not be familiar with and visit different companies to investigate how those chosen companies function.

By integrating theory and practice together during this visit the students get the opportunity to experience first-hand whether the experience of the 'real world' really is as that which has been suggested in the classroom.

By using this group for the focus group for my research I was able to spend some time with them during the visit which allowed me to establish a relationship with the group so that when we did discuss my research they felt at easy and comfortable with expressing their opinions rather than simply seeing as a senior member of Faculty staff. My intention was to keep the meeting informal although I did take care to ensure that all students were comfortable with participating and that no one felt pressured to contribute.

The 15 students in attendance were from the following countries:

China; Taiwan; Jordon; Vietnam; Thailand; Malaysia; UK and Germany. All students had visited the UK before although 7 members of the group had not been to Sunderland before their arrival at the start of their programme. Clearly whilst their views were their own it is fair to assume that they were representative of other students from that country who had chosen to study in the UK and Sunderland in particular.

My questions were semi structured and designed to follow a conversational style in order to attempt to encourage all students to participate.

Q1 – **What was it about the UK that made you want to study here?**

Chinese student – 'the UK is an important country in Europe and a good place to study with good Universities.'

Malaysian student – 'I studied my bachelor's degree in Business at home in my city University which was partnered with Sunderland, so I have a Sunderland Degree and I liked it.'

Jordanian student – 'One of my friends studied in Sunderland and he told me it was a good place to study.'

Vietnamese student – 'I have been to the UK before and my friends have also studied here, the UK Degrees are very good, and they have a lot of respect in my home country.'

Chinese student – 'The UK is important, and it has a long history which I wanted to know more about. Master's degrees are important for me to get a good job and a UK degree will help me to get a better job when I go home.'

Malaysian student – ‘I wanted to go to America, but it is very expensive. UK was the next best country to in and Universities have a good reputation here.’

German student – ‘I have studied Masters in Germany but I wanted to come to England and I am very lucky that I have the chance to study here as well. In Germany it is all about having the best degree you can get.’

UK student – I am the first in my family to go to University and the chance to get a Masters degree is such an opportunity. Sunderland is my local University and it was an easy choice.’

Thai student – ‘The UK is a nice country; the people are nice and you have good teachers. I think the league tables are important when you think about studying. Sunderland is not that high in the tables but my friends said it was a good University which helped me to make my mind up.’

Q2 – **What was it about a Sunderland MBA that interested you?**

Jordanian student – ‘For me it was about the programme title. I wanted to study Supply Chain Management but I also wanted a MBA not a MSc.’

Interviewer- **why not an MSc?**

‘The MBA is an important degree and will help me to get a better job also I want to be a manager and be a leader. The MSc might restrict me, a MBA will give me more jobs to choose from’

Chinese student – ‘For me it was the cost, MBA is very expensive but my family could afford to send me to Sunderland because the price was ok and it is quite cheap to live here’

Malaysian student – ‘Yes, it was the cost that was important for me as well. But I also knew about the way Sunderland lecturers teach and we get the chance to talk in class, it’s not all about just sitting listening to the lecturer like we do at home.’

German student – ‘For me it was being able to study option modules that I was interested in. The course meant I could choose things that interested me and my dissertation is something that I really want to write about’

Taiwanese student - ‘Yes, I like the options. I like to learn about different things. I want to be a good manager and I think I need a lot of skills to help me get a good job.’

UK student – I had to take a year out to work after my B.A. and I wanted to get started. The chance to start in February was a good time for me. It meant I didn’t have to wait longer until September.’

Vietnamese student – February was good for me. I finished my B.A. and it meant I didn’t have to wait. I stayed in the UK and that helped my language as well.’

Q3 – **What was your experience like during the recruitment process?**

Thai student – ‘It was easy, I applied online so it was no problem. When I was accepted there was no email from Sunderland for a long time to tell me what to expect when I got here. I had to go online to find out about Sunderland, it would have been nice to get some information from the University to tell me what to expect. But it was ok, the tutors at induction soon made me feel welcome.’

Chinese student – I talked to an agent back home and he told me about the programme and about Sunderland. He said that he had been to Sunderland and it was ok. He said the programme was good and that I would enjoy the place and that there were plenty of places to visit while I was here. It is important for me and my family to get my degree but I like to see lots of different things outside of the Uni. The Agent was a nice person and he helped me a lot.'

German student – 'I applied online but it was a long time before I got an answer maybe 4 weeks. I thought they had forgotten about me but it turned out ok. My friend went to Northumbria and he got accepted very quickly.'

Interviewer – **Did you think about Northumbria?**

'Yes, I had a look at the programme and I did think about it for a while when I heard nothing. But I like the Sunderland options and it turned out ok.'

Chinese student – I talked to an agent as well at home and she was really nice and helped me with my application. She said Sunderland was a nice place to study and it was a good place to get a master's degree. The international office is very good and they helped me when I first arrived. There was a lot to learn about the University but they were very helpful.'

UK student – 'Like I said Sunderland was my local Uni, I came to an open day which was pretty good and spoke to a couple of tutors which was good. It was also good to talk to the Ambassadors. They told me what it was really like!!

Malaysian student – 'My home University knew about Sunderland so I got a lot of information when I was thinking about applying. I asked about some other Universities but they told me I would be ok at Sunderland and that the programme was good.'

Vietnamese student – I was late applying because I didn't know about the February start at first. But it was ok, by the time I got everything sort to come to Sunderland, I had missed the induction but it was ok, Karen (NB programme leader) and the tutors were very helpful. I like the UK; my friend was studying in Portugal and he told me that the agents in that country only work for Universities in the UK. I don't know if that is true but that's what he told me.

Q4 – **What is it about the Sunderland programme that you like?**

Jordanian student – 'For me, it is about the route options. I know what I want to do when I go back home and the choices about the routes will help me to get what I want. I am an Engineer and supply chain is what I wanted to study. My dissertation is also about supply chain because it has to be and that is good'

Chinese student – 'I like the general MBA; I want to learn about a lot of things. I'm not sure what job I want when I get back home, I might work for my family and in their business, I think to study the general MBA will help me to work in different parts of the business.'

Malaysian student – 'the time to complete the programme is important. I like that it is a one-year programme. If it was longer, say 2 years I think that would be too long and too expensive.

Vietnamese student – ‘I agree 1 year is the right time but I also think that if it was to be a longer course then it should have a placement with the programme so we could get more work experience.’

Thai student – ‘The February start was good for me because it saved me having to wait until the new academic year. I also like that it is one year to complete, I think that is important.’

Chinese student – I was nervous when I first arrived because I didn’t know what to expect. The tutors made me feel welcome and I settled quite quickly. Now I am happy to be here and enjoying the programme.

German student – I like to learn from other students from other countries. Not just about the course and their ideas about the modules but also about their country and how business works there.

Taiwanese student – Yes, I like to learn about other countries and other culture, about how business works but also about what the people are like and what they think about things.

UK student – To study with students from different countries is a real opportunity, I like it. It’s also good fun to understand how and what they think.

Q5 – **When you graduate what do you think you will take away with you, apart from your Certificate and a lot of information about different subjects?**

Taiwanese student – I have made some good friends here and I would like to keep in touch with them I have learnt a lot from them and it is good to keep in touch afterwards.

Chinese student – I am enjoying the course and being here in the UK. I would like to travel around a bit before I go home. I have travelled already but would like to do some more. I don’t know what job I want to do yet and being on this course has helped me to learn to think about things more deeply and calmly.

German student – I have made some friends here, that’s important, I want to keep in touch with them. Who knows, maybe I will visit some of them or maybe work in their country sometime. I want to travel before I settle down with a professional job.

UK student – I am enjoying the course but I have really enjoyed learning about other cultures and what is going on in their country. I like to understand what makes people tick. Its more than what we can get from the course or the text books, it’s about what is going on in the real world.

Vietnamese student – I have learnt some things about people in the UK and Europe. I want to understand how business works in those countries so that when I go home, I can help to improve the business I will be working in.

Thai student – For me it is about learning about what is really going on here. It’s more than what we read in the books; it’s about talking to other people and learning from real experience.

Jordanian student – I have learnt many different things while I have been here. It is very different from Jordan. My wife and family are here with me so it’s different for me but it has been really good and I hope they have learnt something new as well.

Q6 – **Tell me how you think the course could be improved?**

Jordanian student – I think a placement would be a good idea. That way I could get some real work experience which would help me to get a better job when I get home.

Chinese student – Yes, I would like to experience a business here. It would help me to understand the theory and the ideas better.

German student – we have the company visits programme but they are quite short visits and you don't learn a lot. If we got to talk to some of the employees, I think that would be interesting.

Malaysian student – a placement is a good idea but I think that it would be good to meet ordinary workers. I like the Guest speakers programme and it is really interesting but I also think that we could learn from other people as well.

Thai student – The course is good but I think we could do so more social or cultural things so that I could understand how better how people in this country think.

Vietnamese student – I would like to mix more with students in the Faculty. We mix in our own nationalities and with our friends from the programme but we don't really mix with students from other programmes and from the local students who could help us to understand things better.

UK student – I like mixing with students from other countries. I would like the chance to maybe study or work in another country for a while and may the University could help me with the links they have with other Universities around the world.

Summary

The students were thanked for their participation and their honesty. I explained what the information was being used for and they liked the idea that they were contributing to make something better and that they were being listened to. It was interesting to note that the conversations continued after the group had concluded and it was also interesting that some of those conversations were between students who had not spoken much with each other previously in the class situations which I had observed.

Appendix 2

EFMD Conference 2017 - Athens

Questions and comments from 2 MBA students and 2 MBA Programme Directors.

"The purpose of this group was to illicit some alternative reflections to the Focus Group comprising of Sunderland students. The two MBA groups were attending the conference to present their views on studying for a MBA and to comment on their needs and aspirations. I was fortunate that this presentation coincided with my attendance and my research. I decided to enhance the views of the students with comments from 2 MBA Programme Directors who were also in attendance to seek their views as independent alternative providers. I believed this to be important as there was no competitive or market advantage to be gained by their involvement and from their perspective there was no advantage in giving biased responses. I decided I would follow a similar focus group style so that the four participants could interact with each other. Whilst I expected them to offer different views it was also an opportunity for them to comment on each other's views which might add richness to the comments overall."

Q1 What is it about an MBA that makes the programme so appealing?

Student 1 (ST1) Malaysian student

"For me, it was the opportunity to study for a worthwhile management qualification. My first degree was in engineering and I see that for my future work but I also want to progress and get promotion so I decided that I am needed a management degree to help me achieve that. The MBA is teaching me new skills in leadership and management as well as some of the skills I learnt as part of my engineering degree, like project management. I want to be able to understand the finances related to projects better so this programme helps me a lot to better understand costing and issues like that.

An MBA has a lot of respect with employers and I hope that if I am successful then an employer is more likely to give me a job. I want to travel and I think possibly that the MBA is well known around the world which might also help me in the future. I would love to work in America or Canada and I know that the MBA qualification is important in those countries. I know I must work hard because it is an important and difficult qualification but I think it will benefit me in the future."

Student 2 (ST2) Portuguese student

"I have a business bachelor's degree and my family have their own business at home so an MBA will help me to better understand management and means I can be better prepared to work in the family business when I return home.

Of course, if I don't like working for the family and I want to work for someone else or maybe even work for myself then an MBA will help me to get a much better job than if I just had my Bachelor's degree. If I work for myself then I will understand better how the business is supposed to work and this will help me when I am starting out."

Programme Directors (PD)

PD1 (Grenoble)

"I think these are two very good examples of why the MBA is such a popular programme for students to study. The MBA helps students from a very diverse range of experience and background to understand some of the core principles of management. The market for business and management programmes at both undergraduate and postgraduate level is growing with many kinds of product on the market. I think the MBA provides some stability to the market. With an MBA you know that you are going to get a broad business education but that you are also going to develop a whole range of transferable skills that will help you to find your way in later life."

PD2 (Mexico)

"I agree the market is changing and changing very quickly. I agree as well about the skills development; I think the type of students we now recruit is different from a few years ago. The students I see on my programme now are getting younger than they used to be. Sometimes they have less real work experience as well which means their skills level for the softer side of management is perhaps less than it used to be with older more experienced managers on the programme. The older students now tend to study the Executive MBA programme but in my country that is getting more expensive and it is sometimes difficult for companies to spend that sort of money on one person unless they are very high in the organisation. I guess that is the same in many countries today. The price of education is very high and it is a heavy burden for younger students to have that amount of debt to carry with them. I also think the nature of business has changed a lot in recent years. Companies are now often multinational even global and they want graduates who can perform well in several different countries and situations. We spend a lot of time teaching about culture and cross-cultural differences. Communications and social media also mean that young people learn a lot more quickly about each other and different nationalities."

Q2 Why did you choose your MBA programme and what were the key factors?

Student ST1

"I was looking for a programme that would give me the practical skills I think I need to be successful. Although I had my engineering degree, I didn't have the management skills or the leadership skills I think I need to be a good manager. When I enquired about the programme it was the practical elements that attracted me. There is a lot of visits to companies to see how they operate and we listen to presentations from the main managers of those companies. They explain to us what it is really like and how they learnt to do what they do. I am a practical person and for me it is important to understand how things work and how they can be improved. I understand that leadership is not easy and it is something that you learn during your whole life but my programme is a good opportunity to learn in real life which I think is important.

I am also very lucky because my tutors have published articles and attended conferences to talk about management and what they have learned themselves. They then pass on that knowledge to me and my other students which helps us to understand how the theory relates to the practice. We also have guest speakers who come to the Faculty and talk to us. Sometimes they sit with us when we are examining case studies and they give us their opinions and suggest what they might do if it happened in their business. I like this as it gives us an opportunity to learn from the experts and those with a lot of practical experience.

Also, I think it is important that the MBA programme is accredited. My programme has EQUIS and it is good to have the badge as employers can see what a good programme it is and they understand how hard I have had to study and this I think will help me to get a better job if the employer knows that the programme is of a high quality."

Student ST2

"Like…(ST1) I was very lucky. My University where I got my bachelor's degree also had an MBA which was accredited with EQUIS. It was good for me to stay at the same University because it meant I got a bursary and a reduction of my fees because I was an Alumni. This was a bit help to me. I think the accreditation is good although it means that I had to do some examinations which I am not so keen on as I find them difficult but that's ok, I guess because it shows I have had to work hard.

I like the practical work we do. We have company visits and guest speakers which is really good for helping us to understand the theory that we get from our lecturers. For me the practical experience is important because if I go to work in the family business then I will understand how different businesses work and I might be able to bring some new ideas and ways of working that might improve our business. I think it is important to learn from each other.

We use some case studies which I think is a really good way to learn. The tutors give us the material and the questions and then in groups we debate and come up with the answers. It's a sort of competition between the groups which makes it interesting and also fun. Sometimes we have also been able to study the case and then visit the actual company because our tutors have written the case beforehand. This is very good and helps us to understand the links between theory and practice.

It is hard work but as a group of students we get on very well together and we learn from each other. Our tutors also spend a lot of time talking to us about leadership and current things in the news. It's not all lectures which I think is good. All our lectures are available on-line and we can listen to then anytime which means we have more time to talk in the classroom and I think that is good."

Programme Directors

Q3 – How do you monitor the success of your programme to make sure it is up to date for your students?

PD1 "Like all Universities we have a regular review and monitoring process to ensure we are fit for purpose. A similar process applies at Faculty level. I think we go further than that because we have regular programme team meetings where we not only plan the programme looking forward but we also see how our research can influence the programme and improve it. Each of our postgraduate programmes has its own programme team, we have very few common modules because we believe our offering should be distinctive and that the students should be able to choose what they want to study rather than us deciding for them. We are in a competitive market and whether we like it or not it is the students that decide if they want to come and study with us. If the programme is not attractive to them, they will not come.

Accreditation is also important; I believe that the ‘badge’ does make a difference. If your competitor has it and you do not, then you are at a disadvantage. It is true they might not be easy to achieve but without them then you may not have a viable programme. I think we listen a lot to our students and they tell us what they like and do not like. They are not always right and we tell them that but it is also important to listen to your customer, is it not?”

PD2 “I agree accreditation is very important today, you must be able to compete in order to survive. It is not just a competition between Universities, I think it is also a competition within the University to bid for resources. We try to provide a very strong element to our programme. Everyone has visiting speakers today and company visits, students expect that. I think it is important to go further than that. Yes, we have company speakers who come to give a lecture but they also work with the students in our case study sessions, they contribute and that shows the students of what it is like in the real world of work. This is something that the tutor cannot always do even if they are active researchers. We also encourage our Faculty staff to do consultancy work for companies. This helps them to keep up to date. I think it is about keeping one step ahead of the competitors but it is also about being able to spot the next trend that will interest the students and make them want to come to you.”

Interviewer, thank you for your time as I appreciate, we only had a short slot available.

Appendix 3

Questions and comments from AC1 – International Office and their interaction with agents.

Some of the key agents were contacted with an invitation to participate in the research. Those contacted were all reluctant to participate and I believe it was because they were concerned that to comment might jeopardise their relationship with the University. For this reason and to ensure that the University and its agents were not compromised I decided to interview a member of staff in the International Office to seek their views. The following is

Q1 Outline the University strategy for its relationship with agents as you see it?

"Like almost all UK HEIs the University relies on international agents in a number of countries to recruit its international students. We have several agents around the world and we also have agents in those countries where we also have partner institutions delivering Sunderland programmes on our behalf in country. This gives us a two-fold advantage. First it means we can offer prospective students a choice between coming to Sunderland to study and studying in their own country. Second, it means we can more closely monitor the performance of the agents in those countries when the University Centre Leader or International Officer Relationship Manager visits the country as part of their normal activities. This advantage is important for us as we have a high proportion of our international students recruited by those agents, especially in south-east Asia."

Supplementary question – What sort of number are we talking about?

"We in 2016/17 the University target for the use of agents was 70% of the total number of international students recruited. By the end of the year the actual figure was 80%. The University target for 2017/18 was set at 60%, which I thought was very ambitious. The actual figure be the end of the academic year was 70%. At present given the very competitive nature of the market I do not see this figure changing significantly. The level of investment needed to make a fundamental change and reduction on the reliance of agents is just too great now."

Q2 How would you describe the working relationship between the University and some of your key agents?

"Most of the agents we use have been with the University for a few years and they are on balance pretty good. A few ago I think we were less vigilant with our agents than we are today. We have to undertake a lot more due diligence today than we used to say 10 years ago. The University goes to a much great degree of management in terms of the relationship than we used to. It's fair to say we try as far as we can to performance manage the agents we use. Its much more professional today with the big agents who are much more professional themselves in the way they operate than they used to be.

One of the difficulties we have is that some of the agents use a form of 'sub-contracting' of other agents to recruit students in country. This can be a problem for us as we can't always track whether the agent actually recruited the agent personally or whether it was one of his/her sub agents."

Q3 Are there any other disadvantages to the system of agents in use?

"The use of sub agents is a problem but I think this may be a common issue with other Universities. Several the agents we work with actually work for more than one University. One agent we use works for 70 different establishments. I couldn't believe it when I found out but he complies with what we need from him and meets his target. The only alternative would be to contract him as a sole agent and that would be too expensive. I'm sure we will not be the only one with multiple clients. We are anxious to recruit students so we have to accommodate some of the wishes of the agents.

We check with the students from different agents to try to ensure that the service they receive is what we are paying for and the quality of the service meets our specification. Sometimes I think the students are reluctant to say precisely what their experience has been like as often it is the parents of the student that make the arrangements so checking on fees can be difficult to check."

Q4 Looking ahead can you see any changes in the relationship taking place?

"I think the major change will be in terms of performance management. It will be about ensuring the agents comply with the terms of the contract. We gather much more data than we used to and that helps us to make sure that the agents are working correctly for us. It's not just about recruiting numbers of students, it's also about ensuring that the reputation of the University in country is maintained. It is always going to be a challenge using agents but the level of investment needed to provide alternative arrangements would be too expensive. We know some Universities use their own staff in local offices in country to recruit students and some Universities have partnership arrangements in place where they work in country with partner Universities to share the cost. I don't think we are at that stage at the moment.

It will be about making the contract arrangements tighter and for those agents that do not meet our targets or comply with the contract we have then we will have to consider whether we continue with them."

Appendix 4

Questions and comments from AC2 – Faculty academic with strong links and role profile associated with employability.

Q1 How do you see employers' opinions on employability currently?

"I think employer's attitudes towards degrees have changed in recent years. Foundation Degrees saw some changes recently. We have really had constant change in business education. If you think back to the vocational degrees of Edxcel qualifications during the days of ONC and HNC. University degrees have always had a strong sense of place in the education system and in the eyes of employers. I think one thing that has changed is the way in which employers view graduates at interview. I think employers now see degrees as the achievement of a minimum standard, something that they can build on if the graduate shows enough initiative and enthusiasm. Business prefers business ready graduates with a sound knowledge and understanding of not just the technically specialist issue such as accounting practices or engineering or HRM, they want the softer skills in place as well. They want graduates with transferable skills, communication skills, and critical thinking skills. They want them to be job ready. Yes, there will be further training to be undertaken but they regard the degree award as a benchmark of how quickly that further training will pay dividends. How much training will have to provide to get the graduate employee they want.

Many Universities now regard employability not just as an added value activity to the degree programme, they see it as an integral part of the programme of study. We have employability modules at all three levels of our undergraduate business programme. They incorporate the softer skills necessary for the students to compete after graduation. It must be more than guest speakers and company visits. It's not just CV preparation, that's part of it but it also must be about the critical thinking and problem-solving skills necessary for the student to deal with more complex interview processes.

We frequently hear that the business world is much more complex today. I think it has always been complex and it has always been competitive. I think it is the scale of complexity which has changed. Take globalisation for example, it is no longer UK graduates competing against each other for employment in UK own companies. It is now graduates from several different countries competing for jobs in companies owned in many countries. Managers have more choice available to them."

Q2 What about the changing nature of education, how do you see that from an employer point of view?

"As I said, attitudes have changed and the expectations of employers I think is greater when it comes to appointing graduates. It is also the case that employers are often more choosey about how much they are willing to invest in post entry training for their staff. It's like they want their graduates to be factory ready, able to function quickly in a range of different roles and activities. Consider degree apprenticeships, I think this type of education provides a rick blend of theory and practice, it makes the curriculum interesting for the student because it directly relates to their role in an organisation. At the same time, employers are paying into the levy for apprenticeships yet some businesses simply can't afford to let a student away for the 20% requirement for off the job training. Other employers are clearly waiting for the outcome of the Auger review. Fees for undergraduate business Das have already been reduced, employers are waiting to see if the same will happen to postgraduate fees. Part time study has always been of interest to employees but usually if it means that students can study in their own time and not on work time.

I think employers want graduates that have the necessary softer skills as part of their programme of study but they also want to be able to mould the student into the culture of the organisation. This can be a difficult balance to achieve. Profit margins for business are getting tighter all the time. As businesses grow then more and appropriately qualified staff are needed as the economy grows. There is however also a lot of uncertainty. Consider Brexit over the last two years or so. This not only affects business decisions it affects us all.

Another change which I think has an impact is the idea that people have no longer got a job for life. They have a job as long as they can add value to the organisation. Think about it, in some jobs you could remain with a business for your entire career. I don't think this is the case any longer. You need to make a difference and you need to give yourself an advantage or those who perhaps once were colleagues but could now be very easily after your job. If that is the case, then a young graduate entering the world of work has it all to do. They need to be work ready as I said earlier."

Q3 What more can the Business School do to get our graduates work ready?

"We have made a lot of progress both as a University and a Faculty, we realise how important it is to have the employability agenda at the forefront of our offering. We have several initiatives already in place and we work closely with the careers service and others to ensure that we can do as much as we can. As I said we have modules at each level in our undergraduate business portfolio and we have a similar agenda in place for the postgraduate suite which has had activities in place for some time. It’s good to see the shift from added value activities into embedded activities for the postgraduate students and the changes made to the MBA programme give an additional dimension to our offering. The introduction of the placement element for 2018/19 on the MBA is a sign of the progress we have made. We will continue to make progress at both undergraduate and postgraduate level and I hope that the success of these initiatives will be shown in our graduates into work data.

In terms of what more can be done, I think a major step forward would be the way we integrate employers and other stakeholders more into the development of our offering. We have the Faculty Advisory Panel which meets once a term but I think that could be developed further. At the moment it operates as a sounding board but it is not really brought into the programme development process, it is more of a, ‘what do you think of this?’ element. We have the Programme Studies Boards which take on the role for programme development but I think we could make greater use of the employer representatives we have and bring them together with the students and the academics into a more integrated forum. I sometimes think it is the spark of creativity that might be missing. We have the ability it is more about making the communication process better.

Resources will always be an issue but overall, I think we get our share. There is always something that can be done given the available funding but I think at the moment it is more about presentation and communication of what we do. The activities we have are more embedded in our offering today and it is about getting the message to our students and other supporters about what we offer and how that can improve the skills side of our portfolio to ensure our students are work ready.”

Appendix 5

Extract from the Staff Student Liaison Meeting Minutes held on 4th May 2017

"UNIVERSITY OF SUNDERLAND
SUNDERLAND BUSINESS SCHOOL
POSTGRADUATE BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT STAFF-STUDENT LIAISON COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Postgraduate Business and Management Staff-Student Liaison Committee took place on Thursday 4th May 2017 at 2:00pm in Room RV412, Reg Vardy Centre, Sir Tom Cowie Campus at St. Peter's.

Present: John Dixon-Dawson (Chair), Linda Barkas, Kym Drady, Robert Hall, Becky McClen and Augustus Osseo-Asare

In Attendance: Anna Little (Board Officer)

Student Representatives: Sajiya Begum (MSc Human Resource Management), Jade Oxlade (MBM), Octavian Lazin (MBA) and Robert Sisson (Student Representative Co-ordinator)

"6d) **Master of Business Administration**

Overall Satisfaction:
The student representative advised that they had received positive feedback from their peers on the Barcelona Trip, adding that this had positively influenced their group-work activities in other modules."

Appendix 6

Extract from the Staff Student Liaison Meeting held on 16th May 2018

“UNIVERSITY OF SUNDERLAND
SUNDERLAND BUSINESS SCHOOL
POSTGRADUATE BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT STUDENT-STAFF LIAISON COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Postgraduate Business and Management Student-Staff Liaison Committee took place on Wednesday 16TH May 2018 at 2:00pm in Room RV220, Reg Vardy Centre, Sir Tom Cowie Campus at St. Peter’s.

Present: John Dixon-Dawson (Chair), Helen Fraser, Becky McClen (Liaison Librarian), Julia Nobari, Augustus Osseo-Asare, Janet Ward and Yvonne Dixon-Todd.

In Attendance: Louise Thompson (Board Officer)

Student Representatives: Abed Alzghoul and Nanda Suresh – MBA, Mansa Murali and Nancy Nduwimana – MSc HRM and Rebecca Burnett - MAM

6. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

6.1 <u>Master of Business Administration</u>

17.15 **Noted:** the following from the student representatives present:

i. That more students are attending lectures and were finding semester 2 better as they are more experienced in the topics and had gained confidence from work undertaken in semester 1.

ii. The students found the CV writing session useful, interesting and well attended.

iii. That the students are learning marketing in semester two and gained a lot of experience from the German trip.

The Chair explained that the programme is to be modified with a change from 15 to 30 credits. It is his hope that the PG harmonisation will provide more focus. He expressed his appreciation to the student representations stating that feedback provided features into our programme, helps them to evolve and benefits future cohorts.”

Appendix 7

Survey Season, Anonymised email March 2019

Anonymised email from March 2019 similar to those circulated on a weekly basis during the period February to March each year.

"Dear All
Next update on the current response rates for the various surveys

NSS
For the Faculty as a whole, the position is very good. We have a 62.87% response rate, against the University's overall rate of 62.35%
A reminder that the institutional target response rate is 75% but we need to achieve 50% response as an institution for data to be published, and the threshold for JACS subjects and programmes is a minimum of 10 respondents AND 50% of cohort.

- [redacted] 41% - 4 more respondents required for us to have a published return here.
- [redacted] 58.3% - no change for a few weeks now.
- [redacted] 72.1% - best response rate we have had for a while from memory
- [redacted] 68.8%
- [redacted] 100%
- [redacted] 92.9% (no change)
- [redacted] 100
- [redacted] 50% - big increase since the last report and now publishable! This is running about 13% behind where we were this time last year though and still more than 20% away from the final position last year

At a JACS code level, [redacted] at 42.55% (68.97% this time last year), [redacted] is at 60.42% (61.08% this time last year), [redacted] at 92.65% (86.67% this time last year) and [redacted] at 50% (63.64% this time last year)

UKES
[redacted] remains a concern with no students having completed it. [redacted] can you please confirm that the briefing has been given to the 1st/2nd years [redacted]

- [redacted] – [redacted] is on 62% (no change for a while) but [redacted] remains at 0%
- [redacted] – 42%
- [redacted] – 73%
- [redacted] = 18%
- [redacted] – 38% - just a couple more respondents required for the 40%
- [redacted] – 6% [redacted] can you confirm that the [redacted] students have been briefed please.
- [redacted] is at 40%/30% respectively. [redacted] Stage 1/2 is at 23%/31% respectively
- [redacted] is looking good with 25% and 73% respectively Stage [redacted]
- [redacted] is at 41%/35% respectively

Everything else is pretty small with only 1 or 2 respondents for each programme. I would be grateful for a further big push particular in respect of programmes like [redacted] where we should probably be expecting a good response from the students.

PTES is showing some mixed results – some very good figures now for [redacted]nce (65%) [redacted] (54%) [redacted] (61%) [redacted] (65%)

We do not seem to be picking up as we might have expected for the [redacted] (0%), [redacted] (15%) and [redacted] (7%). I note the [redacted] and the [redacted] are also very low but the student briefing is not scheduled till next week.

[redacted] Can you also confirm when the briefing for the [redacted] will be taking place?

Thank you again for your efforts to date; if we can press a little harder where the numbers are particularly, I would be grateful.

[redacted]

Appendix 8

Extract from PG Programme Studies Board Minutes meeting on July 2017

"UNIVERSITY OF SUNDERLAND
SUNDERLAND BUSINESS SCHOOL
POSTGRADUATE BUSINESS & MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME STUDIES BOARD

A meeting of the Postgraduate Business Programme Studies Board was held on Friday 7th July 2017 at 10:00am in room RV104a, Reg Vardy Centre, Sir Tom Cowie Campus at St. Peter's.

Present: John Dixon-Dawson (Chair), Yahaya Alhassan (London Campus), Linda Barkas, Ian Carr, Robert Hall, Julia Nobari and Karen Wharton

In Attendance: Anna Little (Board Officer)

16.94 **Noted:** In accordance with action 16.73 Programme Leaders had met to discuss concerns relating to student attendance and engagement; highlighting that often students will attend sessions only immediately prior to the hand-in date of assessments. Programme leaders advised of perceived flaws in the system for monitoring of attendance which currently only deals specifically with non-attendees; adding that this approach may be under abuse from some students, potentially risking Visa compliance requirements.

It was agreed that Module and Programme Leaders would gather their own attendance data across SEM1/TRM1 of 2017/8 with a view to mapping this against system data for accuracy and further analysis against assessment submission/performance information in order to fully understand the situation and raise concerns with teams as appropriate.

ACTION: Module & Programme Leaders"

Appendix 9

'The University Timebomb' Summary of a Radio 4 programme broadcast in March 2019

Radio 4 Thursday 22nd March 2019. The following is a synopsis of some of the key points raised in this radio programme.

The national economy is sluggish. £9250 pa currently for fees. Currently the state repays 45% of graduate outstanding loans because graduates earning less that the repayment threshold. 24% of students never repay any part of their loan that's per cohort which means the debt falls on public finances. (2017 figures).

Cost of right offs is 8.5bn pounds per cohort. Only 9% of students earn over 25K currently. If economy is sluggish then less loans are repaid. If national economic growth is 1% lower, then £1bn is added to the Government bill each accounting year. With a stronger economy with strong graduate earnings then everything would be ok. But it's not, it's sluggish and this is expected to remain at least in the short term.

Initially University funding does not form part of government spending it's considered separately. David Willets introduced student fees up to 9k. This policy started a major back lash by the general public. When they were first introduced there was a slight dip in applications but there has been no real impact thereafter. This backlash was not expected by Government. Nor did the element of competition between HEIs result which the Government also expected. In really all HEIs went straight to the upper limit. Government Minister David Willetts expected competition and that was a mistake. Government expected incomes to rise overall and as a result loans would be paid back over time. Students didn't choose to go to University based on cost therefore there was no price competition. The opinion was that price also conferred prestige. Student Unions were protesting publicly and then going back to their University and asking the University Executive to place the higher fee. The lack of competition on price and lack of part time study generally created the problem.

In the run up to the 2010 general election the Lib Dems campaigned based on the removal of funding. The formation of a Coalition government meant that the Lib Dems had to compromise. This caused a political backlash for the Lib Dems despite their public apology on the issue. The 2015 general election for Labour saw a chance to drop fees to 6K – this would help the best paid graduates and appeal to the middle classes in an attempt to win votes. For Labour this was a calculated political gamble. Difficult to judge if this worked for Labour but it did put Labour at the forefront of the debate. Labour did a lot of polling and it was a popular policy.

By the 2017 election the cost of University education was an issue when campaigning on the doorstep and the headline figure was important to the electorate. It was now a political problem. The PM speech at the 2017 conference was an announcement about HE funding and a promise to undertake a full review of funding. There was also an announcement to increase the repayment threshold amount to 25K before repayment started after graduation. The effect of raising the threshold was immediate. Initially this looked like a good deal but the increase in non-repayment went from 5 – 6.8bn overnight per cohort. Government didn't realise the true cost of a small announcement. Creative accounting covered the anomaly and now its reported to be billions. Over 50% falls on taxpayer currently around 12bn. It was thought best advice at the time e.g. ONS suggestion. Expectation was money would come back. It hasn't. Accountants have now turned completely around and Uni funding is in direct competition with other government funding.

The Office for Students (OFS) suggests major decisions are now needed. Is austerity over? Clearly education will be a major part of that debate. In essence there are only 2 choices, cut spending or increase taxes?

The Auger review has been put back from January 2019 to the earliest May 2019. There is speculation that there could be fees of £7500 per annum. The Chair of Universities UK suggests that 20% of HEIs would need to run a deficit. Even if the sector is reduced by no replacement funding there is a real possibility that some Universities may go out of business. Reading University has reported itself to OFS over a £120m loan. This action resulted in a question in the House of Commons. Chris Skidmore, Universities Minister referred to the possibility of a 'competitive exit' for some Universities because of competitive pressures!!!

The practical effects of this funding situation are now evident. A NUS study shows a significant casualization of staff; the closure of programmes and PhD students taking on more teaching. There is also evidence of more borrowing by Universities when they don't hit recruitment targets.

March 2019 Government announced an increase from 440,000 to 650,000, the number of international students who can pay higher fees. The Government has also approved the introduction of 2-year degree programmes.

The first part of the programme concluded that there is now something of a perfect storm for Universities. The UK demographic for student recruitment is falling and borrowing is increasing. Consequently, Universities face some tricky decisions. What does future hold? Some Universities are borrowing heavily resulting in an exposed financial position for some. The question is, can a University go bust in next 5 years? If you have fixed or falling prices against higher costs then something needs to change – it may mean mergers, different priorities and plans? There are also the resultant changes to communities. If a university goes under there is clearly an impact on the local community. What about Further Education? Should they get more money?

This will be considered in Part 2 of the programme.

Part 2

More younger people studying now than ever before. Do we need wholesale reform for over 18 education? Funding for colleges has been decimated over last 10 years. Should more funding be given to FE to fund the known skills gap.

Currently in the UK approximately 50% of 18-24 olds go to university. This is higher than many EU countries measured by OECD data. The UK also has many more people getting better degrees by classification but the programme raises the question of whether the skills any better? OECD data suggests that 18-24-year olds in terms of relevant skills is the same as the population of 50-64 years old and moving towards retirement. This means in the years to come the skills level overall is not increasing. The programme suggested that the UK has an alarming skills shortage. Robert Halpern

Chairman of the Select Committee on Education suggested on the programme that in his opinion there is a huge skills deficit. He also suggested that this deficit needs to be met by Universities.

This view seems to affirm the few of many policy makers that there is an obsession about elite Universities and a view of the 3-year degree as a 'gold standard'. Others suggest that this is a form of snobbery. OECD data shows that in Germany 70% of students study for vocational qualifications. It is important to think about how the world is changing and the type of skills that are and will be required in by the future workforce.

University research can and does create new knowledge. The question is, how does this help fill the gap? Further Education colleges are at a disadvantage as Universities have been sheltered from austerity and the economic impact thereof. In response to the reduction in Government funding FE has collaborated with business to create new ways of learning. Stansted Airport is a good example with a purpose-built college to train future air industry employees. Covering Engineering and mechanical processes as well as several others. The College was developed using major investment from the Local Enterprise Partnership; Essex County Council and the Manchester Airports Group. It is argued that FE does not get the same funding as Universities. Association of Colleges Chief Executive reported a 30% real time funding cut over the last 10 years. 3-year degrees are not the only answer to the skills gap.

As already reported Student loans weren't counted as public funding and this illusion has back fired for FE as it gave a bias to degree qualifications. The imbalance between FE skills qualifications and higher education degrees needs to shift to enable better skills qualifications to be developed which in turn will lead to a stronger economy. The Auger Review was announced to looking at funding but is not yet published. Initially due to report in January this year it is now delayed until possibly May 2019. Government proposal is a £7500 fee band except for high band funding e.g. for nursing or medicine. Other subjects will probably not see top up funding. Those that teach more than research are likely to suffer more.

The University fight back is an emphasis on the civic role of Universities and the place they play in the local community with the impact of the growth they bring to the local community. The notion of a civic university – putting the university at the centre of the community and thinking how better to interact. This is a clear part of the identity of Sunderland University – see Sunderland mission!

University students' fees and loans are very different in the eyes of the students. Some students interviewed for the programme did not regard fees as a 'big deal' and commented that, "the repayment is not that big over time."

As an alternative strategy the University of Wales has made a significant shift in policy by instead of supporting fees, they have moved to supporting living costs. In the opinion of the Assembly for Wales it is the upfront day to day costs which is a barrier to students going to University. The Assembly has introduced a scheme where maintenance and loans packages are based on the statutory minimum wage. The first year the policy was introduced there was a significant increase in part time study mainly via the Open University. If fees are set at £9k then Wales will need to monitor its strategy and if Universities in England cut fees Wales will have to follow. All this depends on the outcomes of the Auger Review.

There are other consequences to be considered. For example, it is not expected that there will be no cap on numbers or an overall spending cap but Government does want to get a grip on spending. It may be repayment over a longer period. Currently the Government is making use of Inland Revenue data and 'Leo' repayment data to track student earning after graduation but this is not an accurate method of assessment in the opinion of many.

It is also the case that public sector professions could be at a disadvantage so, for example, nurses and teachers versus bankers in terms of their ability to repay. The conclusion of many is that Inland Revenue records is too narrow a focus. The Labour Party, seeking to win political battle, have reaffirmed the abolition of tuition fees and pledged to fund universities directly. Scrapping fees may only benefit the well off and some argue that the ideology is in the wrong place. For example, a bright person from a poor background should be able to go to best university and this should begin with education soon in the cycle. Good education is regarded by many as a core value of the UK. To be successful as a nation we need to level up the skills of young people. Looking to the future the UK workforce needs interchangeable skills. It is expected that people will change jobs many times in their working life therefore transferable skills are needed to address this rather than industry specific skills alone. An easier route through vocational skills network is required. University students need skills development to support their education. More people with a high skills level must be a priority and it is more that the norm of a 3-year degree. A successful economy requires several different routes and flexibility is the key. Skills may prove to be the money of the modern economy and high skills level is regarded as essential for a successful future.

Whatever the future holds the debate is not settled. The next couple of years will see change but that will not be the end of the debate. All would agree that as a nation we need a skilled population and one which is as skilled as our competitors or we will lose out as a national economy.

University of Sunderland

Quality Handbook

Postgraduate Programme Specification

Master of Business Administration

Version	Occasion of Change	Change Author	Last Modified
1.0		*Karen Wharton*	*Jan 17*
2.0	Revised post Periodic Review event in line with panel requirements	*Karen Wharton*	*May 17*
3.0	Minor modifications – restructure to 30 credit model and introduction of new route MBA (Cybersecurity)	*Karen Wharton*	*January 2018*
4.0	Addition of PGBM160 as an option module Minor modification – update to TLA matrix for PGBM146	*Linda Barkas* *Karen Wharton*	*May 2018*
5.0	Minor modification – PGBM73 MBA Dissertation changed to PGBM161 MBA Project. Approved Programme Specific Regulations added for the standalone PG Certificate and PG Diploma award titles.	*John Dixon-Dawson*	*June 2018*
6.0	Minor modification - change of title to PGBM132 and replaced by PGBM162	*Karen Wharton*	*July 2018*
7.0	Minor modification to PGBM161 to incorporate new route MBA (With Placement) Route). New MBA Route MBA (With Placement)	*Karen Wharton* *John Dixon Dawson* *Yvonne Dixon Todd*	*October 2018*

SECTION A: CORE INFORMATION

Programme Name: Business Administration
Business Administration (Finance)
Business Administration (Marketing)
Business Administration (Supply Chain Management)
Business Administration (Human Resource Management)
Business Administration (Enterprise and Innovation)
Business Administration (Hospitality Management)
Business Administration (Creative and Cultural Industries)
Business Administration (Cybersecurity)
Business Administration (With Placement)

Award Title: Master of

Is this part of a group of linked programmes between which students can transfer at agreed points? (e.g. a group of programmes with a common set of taught modules): NO

Is the programme a top-up only? No

Level of award: Level 7

Awarding body: University of Sunderland

Which department is it in? Sunderland Business School

Programme Studies Board: Postgraduate Business & Management

Programme Leader: Karen Wharton

How and where can I study the programme?

FULL MBA

At Sunderland:	
Full-time on campus	√
Part-time on campus	√
As work-based learning	
As work-based learning part-time	
As a full-time sandwich course	
As a part-time sandwich course	
By distance learning	

At UoS London campus:	
Full-time on campus	√
Part-time on campus	
As work-based learning full-time	
As work-based learning part-time	
As a full-time sandwich course	
As a part-time sandwich course	
By distance learning	

MBA FINAL STAGE

At Sunderland:	
Full-time on campus	√
Part-time on campus	√
As work-based learning	
As work-based learning part-time	
As a full-time sandwich course	
As a part-time sandwich course	
By distance learning	

At London	
Full-time on campus	√
Part-time on campus	√
As work-based learning	
As work-based learning part-time	
As a full-time sandwich course	
As a part-time sandwich course	
By distance learning	

At a partner college:	
Full-time in the UK	√
Part-time in the UK	

At a partner college:	
Full-time in the UK	√
Part-time in the UK	
Full-time overseas	√
Part-time overseas	√
By distance learning	
As a full-time sandwich course in the UK	
As a part-time sandwich course in the UK	
As a full-time sandwich course overseas	
As a part-time sandwich course overseas	
As work-based learning full-time in the UK	
As work-based learning part-time overseas	
Other (please specify)	

How long does the programme take?

	Min number of years / months	Max number of years / months
Full-time	1	4
Full-time MBA (with Placement)	1 ½ (18 months)	4
Part-time	2	4
Distance learning	1	4
Work-based learning		

For start-dates please see the current edition of the Prospectus or contact the relevant department at the University. For start-dates for programmes delivered in a partner college, please contact the college.

SECTION B – FURTHER CORE INFORMATION

Learning and teaching strategy

The QAA Benchmark Statement for Masters Awards in Business and Management principally identifies four areas which must be addressed throughout the programmes. In as much as the curricula, and indeed extra-curricular, activities focus on these aspects, so to do the teaching, learning and assessment strategies. The strategy is based on the following purposes:

- the advanced study of organisations, their management and the changing external context in which they operate through the use of seminars, workshops, tutorials and case studies;
- preparation for and/or development of a career in business and management by developing skills at a professional or equivalent level, or as preparation for research or further study in the area through formative and summative assessment linked to skills development in a range of modules;
- development of the ability to apply knowledge and understanding of business and management to complex issues, both systematically and creatively, to improve business and management practice through case studies, organisational visits, on-line discussions and in peer learning and support group tasks;
- enhancement of lifelong learning skills and personal development so as to be able to work with self-direction and originality and to contribute to business and society at large through original and independent study and research

To continue to promote social inclusion, equality of opportunity, access and widening participation; and *to design an internationalised curriculum and its delivery, such that it is informed by research, reach-out and stakeholder input, that it is not a barrier to any of the diverse range of members of the University learning community*

- The design of the Programme and its teaching and learning strategy is based on a continued commitment to, and is intended to support the diversity of students and the University's successful widening participation policy. It does this via:
  - A detailed induction programme which introduces students to their programme and to the University. This involves sessions on study skills, support services, on the UK 'style' of education and on cross cultural team working.
  - A student handbook, which provides information on the module reading lists, the VLE content, and study skills as well as providing information on the course structure and the learning outcomes.
  - Developing the VLE site with information on study skills, support services, policies and procedures as well as a section on Frequently Asked Questions. This site will be operated in conjunction with the programme leader, the module leaders and the Peer Action Learning Sets.
  - Guidance on careers and progression. Whilst a number of students may arrive on the programme with a clear idea of their future career path, others are not so certain. In consequence, the Programme Team will work closely with the Careers and Opportunities Centre to help students understand the options available to them

*To provide a high quality, appropriately resourced, safe and healthy learning environment for all members of the academic learning communi*ty based on an understanding of how learners learn and *continuously improve quality in all aspects of academic delivery*

- As noted in Section 5.0 (above) a number of modules within the curriculum are directly related to staff research/reach-out/professional activity (specifically, E-Marketing, Service Operations Management, Organisational Behaviour, Enterprise and Entrepreneurship). Additionally, a number of staff research interests focus on Management Education and their research directly influences their teaching approaches or the operating practices of the Programme.

To support and enable continuous improvement of the learning experience, including the e-learning experience, through a blended approach of learning modes

- The teaching and learning methodologies are designed to encourage, over the duration of the Programmes, a greater independence within students for taking responsibility for their own learning. The balance of lectures and workshops, the varying uses of the VLE (including self-assessment exercises and asynchronous debates) and the incorporation of self-directed study into the modules all contribute to the development of independent learners. In addition, extra-curricular activities such as organisational visits and guest speaker's programmes encourage students to engage in activities which, although not assessed, contribute directly to their learning and to their career prospects.

Responsible Leadership, Ethics, Responsibility and Sustainability

All the postgraduate business programmes are vocational in the sense that they are clearly aimed at helping graduates move in to successful business and management careers. The programmes are clearly linked to an organisational visits and speakers programme that aims to give students access to key organisations in the region. Ethics, responsibility and sustainability (ERS) in the field of business, management and responsible leadership adheres to the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) specifically: ***Principle 1 – Purpose*** : developing capabilities of students to be future generators of sustainable value for business and society at large and to work for an inclusive and sustainable economy; ***Principle 3 – Method***: create educational frameworks, materials, processes and environments that enable effective learning experiences for responsible leadership and ***Principle 5 - Partnership*** – interact with managers of business corporations to extend our knowledge of their challenges in meeting social and environmental responsibilities to explore jointly effective approaches to meeting these challenges. The University's management programmes also adhere to the values promoted by the accreditation bodies such as the European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD). The Masters' programmes therefore are aligned against the guiding standard produced by the EFMD's Educational Planning and Assessment System (EPAS) to shape its programme and module design and redesign to ensure that 'all students are provided with a perspective on the role of ERS in modern management and business so that, as future managers, they contribute to societal well-being'.

Underpinning Activities

- The development of post-graduate programmes has an ERS theme embedded into them. Our curriculum framework has been developed to include ERS as part of the deliberation process when developing and revising all aspects of pedagogy at the school during the product review and refresh process.
- We continue to explore the significance of ERS for each specific subject discipline and module and consider how relevant content can be best delivered to enhance the student learning experience
- Ongoing engagement and interaction with managers of business includes business breakfast seminars which cover issues of ERS, a speaker series involving managers and leaders from a range of organisational contexts and organised company visits
- ERS is integrated throughout all relevant taught modules (see below for programme specific ERS integration)

The modules across all the Masters programmes have ethics, responsibility and sustainability (ERS) themes. More specific aspects of ERS are inherent in PGBM156 Strategic Management in an International Context and PGBM141 Professional Management and Leadership Development, students also have an opportunity to further examine ethics, responsibility and sustainability (ERS) in a specific context during their MBA Project.

Retention strategy

The University's Academic Strategy emphasises the student experience and the postgraduate programmes team has been recognised consistently as providing excellent support to students as evidenced through the feedback obtained at Staff/Student Liaison meetings as well as staff and student feedback at both module and programme level. There are a number of elements relating to student support (both academic and personal) which have contributed to the programme teams achievements and which continue to be at the centre of all our academic provision. All Sunderland and London Campus students will have direct or remote access to the University's central support services including Counselling, Disability service, Health and Well-being, Chaplaincy, financial support and advice, International Office and the Careers and Employability Service. The Students Union provides an independent service which offers advice and support across the full range of personal and academic issues which students may encounter. Students wishing to lodge a complaint or an appeal can seek advice from the Students Union or from University Academic Services. Full details of these services can be found on the University's website. Where appropriate, academic or support staff in the Faculty will sign post students to these specialist services. In addition, students have access to a personal tutor section on the VLE which is an information source for many of these services. The Programme Leader will continue to be available to all students should they require advice or one-to-one support on a particular issue.

SECTION C - TEACHING AND LEARNING

What is the programme about?

The Master of Business Administration (MBA) programme in the Sunderland Business School is a postgraduate degree aimed at helping participants to become capable and competent managers in a range of organisations operating within an increasing international setting. The programme is modular in design and covers all of the main areas of management within a balanced curriculum. The programme will enhance the participant's knowledge, develop their management skills and potential and provide an environment where students can learn from each other as well as from the teaching staff. It is particularly designed to develop a range of conceptual and analytical skills for dealing with a variety of practical management problems of an operational and strategic nature.

Emphasis will be given throughout the programme to:

- Developing the participant's awareness and understanding of contemporary business concepts and models and how those concepts and models may be applied to the solution of complex business problems within and across all business functions.
- Developing the skills of participants so that their employment potential is enhanced across different business sectors and in a range of management roles.
- Enhancing awareness of how interpersonal and cross-cultural factors and perspectives affect decision making.
- Promoting a critical and reflective approach to the solution of business problems.
- Assisting participants with their current and future personal development.

What will I know or be able to do at the end of the programme?

By the end of this part of the programme successful students should know, understand or be able to do the following:

Learning Outcomes Postgraduate Certificate – Skills

S1 Demonstrate a broad range of management skills and an integrated view of management practice.

S2 Critically evaluate the process of management in a range of enterprises in diverse business environments

S3 demonstrate effective communication using a range of media, including the preparation of business reports

Learning Outcomes Postgraduate Certificate – Knowledge

K1 Demonstrate a broad range of management knowledge and an integrated view of management practice

K2 Employ a comparative conceptual framework, informed by current research and practice, to analyse and appraise management ideas and philosophies

K3 Understand the theoretical perspectives, concepts and issues involved in managing people and organisations

Learning Outcomes Postgraduate Diploma – Skills

S4 Set up collaborative and consultative working relationships and demonstrate the ability to reflect on and to enhance his/her learning from practice and experience

S5 Critically evaluate how strategic decision-making enables an organisation to relate to its markets, resources, objectives and environment

S6 Analyse and appraise the skill repertoires and personal competencies required to provide effective and creative management across cultural and international boundaries in pursuit of competitive advantage

Learning Outcomes Postgraduate Diploma – Knowledge

K4 Apply knowledge, interventions and analytical techniques to formulate innovative solutions to complex business problems

K5 Appraise the development of appropriate business policies and strategies within a changing context to meet stakeholder interests

K6 Understand the processes available to collect information and synthesise it into an appropriate form to evaluate decision alternatives

Learning Outcomes Masters of Business Administration – Skills

S7 Demonstrate skills in the planning and management of organisational change using a cross-disciplinary perspective

S8 Demonstrate critical thinking skills and the ability to conduct research into business and management issues

S9 Demonstrate problem solving and decision-making skills to provide effective solutions to business problems

S10 Critically evaluate and apply appropriate personnel and development approaches to enhance organisational, group and individual performance

Learning Outcomes Masters of Business Administration – Knowledge

K7 Evaluate and monitor the success or failure of the medium/long term business mission, objectives and policies of an organisation

K8 Develop systems for the enhancement of organisational performance, and business processes, and for appropriate organisational development

K9 Evaluate the impact of contextual forces on organisations including ethical, economic, environmental, social and technological change issues

K10 Compare the use and limitations of a range of research methods / techniques, both qualitative and quantitative, and an understanding of their strengths and weaknesses for providing information and evaluating options

What will the programme consist of?

Taught postgraduate programmes generally consist of a number of taught modules leading to the award of a Postgraduate Certificate (60 credits) or Postgraduate Diploma (120 credits). A Masters qualification (180 credits) usually culminates in a major piece of independent work such as a project or dissertation. All modules are at postgraduate level (level 7 in the UK's national scheme). The summary below describes briefly what is contained in the programme.

MBA Programme Structure

University Award Eligible	Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value
Term 1 Postgraduate CERTIFICATE	PGBM01	Financial Management and Control	15
	PGBM156	Strategic Management in an International Context	15
	PGBM141	Professional Management and Leadership Development	30
Term 2 Postgraduate DIPLOMA	PGBM146	Value Creation in Organisations Managing Operations and Marketing	30
	Various PGBM150	*Optional Module or *Route Module Innovation Entrepreneurship and Technology Transfer Designated option for cohorts without options or routes	30

Term 3 MBA	PGBM161	MBA Project MBA (With Placement) programme is extended to 18 months to incorporate placement and project submission.	60

*Select One Option from the list below: - Note not all options may be offered, optional modules require viable numbers and may not run each academic year, and students will be informed in Term 1 which options are available.
PGBM136 Contemporary International Human Resource Management
PGBM145 Management Accounting and Finance for Decision Making
PGBM150 Innovation Entrepreneurship and Technology Transfer
PGBM152 Digital Marketing
PGBM147 Managing Brands
PGBM154 Management Consulting
PGBM160 Management Information Systems: Business by Design
PGBM162 Operations, Logistics and Supply Chain Management

MBA (Finance) Programme Structure

University Award Eligible	Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value
Term 1 Postgraduate CERTIFICATE	PGBM01	Financial Management and Control	15
	PGBM156	Strategic Management in an International Context	15
	PGBM141	Professional Management and Leadership Development	30
Term 2 Postgraduate DIPLOMA	PGBM146	Value Creation in Organisations - Managing Operations and Marketing	30
	PGBM145	Management Accounting and Finance for Decision Making	30
Term 3 MBA	PGBM161	MBA Project	60

MBA (Marketing) Programme Structure

University Award Eligible	Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value
Term 1 Postgraduate CERTIFICATE	PGBM01	Financial Management and Control	15
	PGBM156	Strategic Management in an International Context	15

	PGBM141	Professional Management and Leadership Development	30
Term 2 Postgraduate DIPLOMA	PGBM146	Value Creation in Organisations - Managing Operations and Marketing	30
	PGBM152 PGBM147	Digital Marketing or Managing Brands	30
Term 3 MBA	PGBM161	MBA Project	60

MBA (Supply Chain Management) Programme Structure

University Award Eligible	Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value
Term 1 Postgraduate CERTIFICATE	PGBM01	Financial Management and Control	15
	PGBM156	Strategic Management in an International Context	15
	PGBM141	Professional Management and Leadership Development	30
Term 2 Postgraduate DIPLOMA	PGBM146	Value Creation in Organisations - Managing Operations and Marketing	30
	PGBM162	Operations, Logistics and Supply Chain Management	30
Term 3 MBA	PGBM161	MBA Project	60

MBA (Human Resource Management) Programme Structure

University Award Eligible	Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value
Term 1 Postgraduate CERTIFICATE	PGBM01	Financial Management and Control	15
	PGBM156	Strategic Management in an International Context	15
	PGBM141	Professional Management and Leadership Development	30
Term 2 Postgraduate DIPLOMA	PGBM146	Value Creation in Organisations - Managing Operations and Marketing	30
	PGBM136	Contemporary International Human Resource Development	30
Term 3 MBA	PGBM161	MBA Project	60

MBA (Enterprise and Innovation) Programme Structure

University Award Eligible	Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value
Term 1 Postgraduate CERTIFICATE	PGBM01	Financial Management and Control	15
	PGBM156	Strategic Management in an International Context	15
	PGBM141	Professional Management and Leadership Development	30
Term 2 Postgraduate DIPLOMA	PGBM146	Value Creation in Organisations - Managing Operations and Marketing	30
	PGBM150	Innovation Entrepreneurship and Technology Transfer	30
Term 3 MBA	PGBM161	MBA Project	60

MBA (Hospitality Management) Programme Structure

University Award Eligible	Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value
Term 1 Postgraduate CERTIFICATE	PGBM01	Financial Management and Control	15
	PGBM156	Strategic Management in an International Context	15
	PGBM141	Professional Management and Leadership Development	30
Term 2 Postgraduate DIPLOMA	PGBM146	Value Creation in Organisations - Managing Operations and Marketing	30
	CHTM27	Hospitality Management Studies	30
Term 3 MBA	PGBM161	MBA Project	60

MBA (Creative & Cultural Industries) Programme Structure

University Award Eligible	Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value
Term 1 Postgraduate CERTIFICATE	PGBM01	Financial Management and Control	15
	PGBM156	Strategic Management in an International Context	15
	PGBM141	Professional Management and Leadership Development	30
Term 2 Postgraduate DIPLOMA	PGBM146	Value Creation in Organisations - Managing Operations and Marketing	30
	ARTM74	Managing Solutions Across the Creative and Cultural Industries	30
Term 3 MBA	PGBM161	MBA Project	60

MBA (Cybersecurity) Programme Structure

University Award Eligible	Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value
Term 1 Postgraduate CERTIFICATE	PGBM01	Financial Management and Control	15
	PGBM156	Strategic Management in an International Context	15
	PGBM141	Professional Management and Leadership Development	30
Term 2 Postgraduate DIPLOMA	PGBM146	Value Creation in Organisations - Managing Operations and Marketing	30
	CETM30	Fundamentals of Cybersecurity	30
Term 3 MBA	PGBM161	MBA Project	60

MBA (With Placement) Programme Structure

University Award Eligible	Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value
Term 1 Postgraduate CERTIFICATE	PGBM01	Financial Management and Control	15
	PGBM156	Strategic Management in an International Context	15
	PGBM141	Professional Management and Leadership Development	30
Term 2 Postgraduate DIPLOMA	PGBM146	Value Creation in Organisations - Managing Operations and Marketing	30
	CETM30	Fundamentals of Cybersecurity	30
Term 3/ 4/ 5 (Depending on PG Calendar) MBA	PGBM161	MBA Project	60

The MBA Final Stage Programme Structure – 90 Credits

Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value
PGBM01	Financial Management and Control	15
PGBM16	Strategic Management in an International Context	15
PGBM161	MBA Project	60

The MBA Final Stage Programme Structure – 60 Credits

Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value
PGBM161	MBA Project	60

How will I be taught?

Scheduled teaching activities	√
Independent study	√
Placement	

A range of teaching and learning methods are employed across each level of the Programmes, as indicated in the table below. These methods encourage learners to develop the intellectual and cognitive skills that are required of all graduates irrespective of their final destination. Module descriptors are available separately. The diversity of teaching and learning approaches is designed to impart knowledge, to encourage understanding and to provide opportunity for the application of that knowledge to actual or hypothetical situations. It is also intended to foster enthusiasm within the student body. In addition, the employment of any particular method within modules and across levels will vary so as to cater appropriately for both the subject and the student. That notwithstanding all modules will employ to some extent the following features:

- **Didactic exposition**: although this will vary from module to module, and indeed from teacher to teacher, all modules will take advantage of the opportunity for the tutor to explain to the whole class, a concept, to take questions, to outline areas of knowledge, indicate methods of tackling a problem and demonstrate methods of analysis and synthesis of materials. Audio-visual aids will be used as appropriate, such as the use of overhead slides, 'PowerPoint' and video. Key points will normally be outlined in handouts.

- **Interactive sessions**: whether during seminars or whole group teaching sessions, students will be expected in the course of all modules to interact with each other and/or with the tutor to develop ideas, work on tasks, practice skills or explain material.
- **Research**: During induction and the programme, students will be introduced to the research techniques. The induction programme contains activities which introduce students to the library (including practical exercises) and to the available electronic sources of information e.g. Emerald. All modules, throughout the Programme, require students to engage in the research of both primary and secondary sources of management information. The level and depth of research required for the completion of modules will then increase as the student progresses throughout their Programme culminating in the final MBA Project module.
- **Directed Private Study:** This will include reading, preparation for class or for assessment, group activity, revision, and carrying out assessment work. All module guides will provide students with advice in respect of this, and as a minimum will provide details of required reading (for preparation of timetabled sessions and/or for the completion of assessments). Whilst these methods will form the backbone of much of the teaching and learning strategy, the programmes utilize a much wider, more eclectic combination of approaches.

As is evident throughout this specification, the VLE has become an important element of the teaching and learning strategy with its specific usage varying from module to module. Where modules are delivered off-campus, our strategic partners may use other Virtual Learning Environment systems to support student learning. In some instances, the VLE is used mainly as a repository for module documents, such as lecture materials and overhead slides, whilst others involve direct web links, discussion boards and self-assessment exercises. The VLE is part of the programme teams aim to offer a blended approach to teaching and learning by using a range of tools in the delivery of the modules.

Case studies are extremely common throughout the Programme and are intended to enable students to develop, inter alia, the ability to;

- Identify the issues in need of research;
- Apply subject specific knowledge to a realistic and/or practical context;
- Make critical judgments of the merits of a particular argument; and
- Present and make reasoned choices between alternative solutions.

The case studies may take the form of real cases or issues in debate at any given moment in time or may be hypothetical problems which are reflective of realistic problems.

Peer Action Learning Sets and Support Groups - Collaborative work is supported by an integral part of our (PALS) provision. This scheme has the following aims:

- Enable students to learn with and from each other by reflecting on real and theoretical problems and issues
- Encourage and develop skills in cross cultural team working
- Develop an active approach to learning
- Provide mutual support to group members from a range of diverse backgrounds

The Peer Action Learning Sets seek to draw on the strengths of the group members by sharing practical and academic experiences, and by encouraging critical reflection on the nature of the subjects being studied. Jacques, D. (2000) argues that: "*groups are demonstrably valuable for many of the more sophisticated aims of Higher Education to do with critical thinking, making diagnoses or decisions, solving problems, and changing or maintaining attitudes to the subject under study."* The role of the PALS is to support the programme's intellectual aims of enhancing criticality, judgement, analysis and understanding of values as well as providing the support to underpin them. This could include strengthening the student's sense of belonging to the programme, helping develop trust and encouraging enthusiasm for the subject. These issues are even more important when dealing with international students who may be studying in the UK for the first time. Team working skills are of course seen as of vital importance for future management roles. The PALS enables students to develop experiences in collaborative decision making, interpersonal skills and negotiation. Groups are encouraged to engage in Action Learning through a continuous process of learning and reflection, supported by their peers. Through this process individuals learn with and from each other by working on real problems and reflecting on their own experiences. The key to the PALS is the relationship between reflection and action,

Self-directed study is included in all modules as a way of encouraging students to take a greater responsibility in respect of their learning experience.

Study Skills and Development Week takes place part way through the first term. No module workshops or lectures take place during this week but instead the time is used to enable students to focus on developing skills and reflecting on other aspects of their learning and career aspirations. This might include attending workshops on cross cultural group working, information skills, bibliographical referencing, job-seeking skills, writing curriculum vitae and participating in organisational visits. The Programme Leader team work closely with the PALS coaches, the Library, the Careers Centre and Languages Staff to provide opportunities for students to reflect on and develop a range of subject specific and transferable skills.

The teaching and learning methods adopted take account of the diverse educational backgrounds of students and also consider students with special needs and specific learning difficulties, the VLE being particularly helpful in this respect. It has been noted for example that some International students are happier engaging in on-line discussions then they might be in face-to-face debates in workshops. The Business and Management team recognises the importance of appropriate support and guidance, for all students, in the overall teaching and learning strategy. The ability of students to make the most of the learning opportunities offered to them may be adversely affected by non-academic factors, and Section 7.0 outlines the provisions within the Programmes, School and the wider University which are available.

How will I be assessed and given feedback?

Written examinations	
Coursework	√
Practical assessments	√

The programme utilises a range of methods to assess the learning outcomes of the programme and the modules.

Formative assessment is utilised throughout the programme and will take place through the adoption of a range of approaches which are detailed in the module descriptors, indicatively these approaches may include: group work, observations, individual or group presentations, student conferences, round table debates, blog/journal activities, discussion board questions and feedback, peer review, question and answer sessions, debriefing exercises, Socratic seminars, role play, progression tests, assignment discussion, case study activity and theory/practice related discussions.

Summative assessment will be conducted for each module. The marking criteria will be followed throughout assessments. All assignments are designed to test students' understanding of theory and applied perspectives and their ability to use this appropriately to critically analyse individual and/or organisational practices, evaluating current practice and research.

Students are required to demonstrate self-reflection and reflective practice where appropriate and to demonstrate reflexivity in relation to rigorous exploration of their beliefs and behaviours as individuals who critically analyse situations and theory. It is recognised that not all subjects lend themselves to this approach, but the programme as a whole will present many opportunities for students to demonstrate these skills.

Students will be provided with feedback on their assignments to help them prepare later assessments.

Summative Assessments may include**:** examinations, reports, case studies, essays, dissertations, professional projects, written reflections, presentations and portfolios. Specific details related to the assessment approach will be noted in the module descriptors.

This programme uses the Generic University Assessment Criteria	**YES**	
This programme uses the Subject Specific Assessment Criteria		**NO**

The assessment strategy adopted on the programme is designed to;

- Ensure that all graduates have achieved the learning outcomes for the Programmes. Module Learning Outcomes are directly related to Programme Learning Outcomes and all assessments indicate which Module Learning Outcome they are assessing.
- Assess achievement, both formatively and summatively over the whole of the degree programme.
- Distinguish between levels of achievement and reward attainment of objectives
- Utilise a range of assessment methods and techniques which engage student interest and foster enthusiasm for the subject.

Students are informed, via Module Guides, of the nature, timing and criteria for each assessment used. The programme leaders work with staff to ensure that the deadlines for assessed work are spread across the assessment period. All assessments are internally moderated by designated members of the team and by the relevant External Examiners before issue. Careful moderation processes and scrutiny of assessment ensure equivalence of standard and appropriateness of assessment for measuring outcomes. An internal and external moderation operates likewise with regard to completed student work.

The assessment strategy requires the use of a diverse range of methods; research assignments, case studies, essays and reports offering the opportunity for students to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and application of both theory and practice. Such methods will also allow students to indicate both the breadth and depth of their directed and independent research. Examinations are deliberately kept to a minimal level as they are not necessarily thought to be the best way of assessing knowledge and understanding. This is a view that the team has taken following a great deal of discussion with external examiners and within subject groups. Case studies, based on real or hypothetical facts of varying degrees of complexity, are a common assessment method adopted across the programme. Whilst most are fictional, all have elements of fact within them, and thus students are well schooled and tested in the ability to identify the material details, discuss the relevant theoretical frameworks citing appropriate primary and secondary sources and displaying appropriate skills in writing and evaluation. Students are encouraged to participate in group work, particularly in seminar or workshop activities, Its formal inclusion in assessments however is limited, principally on the grounds that the final qualification is awarded to individual students and thus should be based on individual work. Where group work is used the module guide will indicate in clear terms how individual performance is assessed. Presentation skills are also an important element of the programme and are utilised frequently within seminars and workshops.

Module List

Award, Route (if applicable) and Level ALL LEVEL 7	New/Existing/ Modified Module	Module Title	Module Code	Module Credit Value	Core or Option (C/O)	Must choose	Assessment weighting %	Pre-/co-requisites	Module leader	Other comment (if required)	Date of Entry on SITS.	JACS Code
MBA (1)	E	Financial Management and Control	PGBM01	15	C		100	NONE	Andy Turton			N300
MBA (1)	E	Strategic Management in an International Context	PGBM156	15	C		100		Augustus Osseo-Asare			N211
MBA (1)	E	Professional Management and Leadership Development	PGBM141	30	C		100		Linda Barkas			N100
MBA (1)	E	Value Creation in Organisations - Managing Operations and Marketing	PGBM146	30	C		20:80		Karen Wharton			N290
MBA (1)	E	MBA Project	PGBM161	60	C		100		John Dixon-Dawson			N100
MBA (2)	E	Management Consulting	PGBM154	30	O		100		Ian Carr			N100
MBA (2)	E	Management Information Systems: Business by Design	PGBM160	30	O		100		Linda Barkas			N100
MBA (2) (3)	E	Management Accounting and Finance for Decision Making	PGBM145	30	O		70:30		Andy Turton			N400
MBA (2) (4)	E	Digital Marketing	PGBM152	30	O		100		Alan Charlesworth			N500
MBA (2) (4)	E	Managing Brands	PGBM147	30	O		100		Karen Wharton			N500
MBA (2) (5)	N	Operations, Logistics and Supply Chain Management	PGBM162	30	O		30:70		Stella Sofianopoulou			N100
MBA (2) (6)	E	Contemporary International Human Resource Management	PGBM136	30	O/C		40:60		Kym Drady			N600
MBA (2) (7)	E	Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Technology Transfer	PGBM150	30	O/C		100		Derek Watson			N212
MBA (8)	E	Hospitality Management	CHTM27	30	C		70:30		Serkan Uzunogullari			N862
MBA (9)	E	Managing Solutions Across the Creative and Cultural Industries	ARTM74	30	C		40:40:20		Antony Eddison			W900
MBA (10)	E	Fundamentals of Cybersecurity	CETM30	30	C		50:50		Alistair Irons			I100

1. All routes 2. MBA 3. MBA (Finance) 4. MBA (Marketing) 5. MBA (Supply Chain Management) 6. MBA (HRM) 7. MBA (Enterprise and Innovation) 8. MBA (Hospitality Management) 9. MBA (Creative and Cultural Industries) 10. MBA (Cybersecurity)

MBA

Module	Code	Core / Option	Modes of T&L	Modes of Assessment	LO K1	LO K2	LO K3	LO K4	LO K5	LO K6	LO K7	LO K8	LO K9	LO K10	LO S1	LO S2	LO S3	LO S4	LO S5	LO S6	LO S7	LO S8	LO S9	LO S10
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL	PGBM01	C	Case study; Debate discussion; Lecture; Self-directed study; Seminar; VLE	Case Study; Essay; Report Formative – Seminar activity	T D A			T D A			T D A					T D A	T D A						T D A	
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT IN AN INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT	PGBM156	C	Case study; Debate discussion; External Visits; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Presentations; VLE; Workshop; Company visits	TCA; Formative –Group Work, Support Group; Presentation; Seminar activity	T D A	T D A			T D A		T D A	T D A	T D A			T D A	T D A			T D A			T D A	
PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	PGBM141	C	Case study; Debate discussion; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Tutorials; Video multi-media; VLE; Workshop; Company visits; Business Game Simulation	Case Study; Report; Work Based; Formative – PALS Support Group	T D A	T D A	T D A								T D A	T D A	T D A			T D A	T D A		T D A	T D A
VALUE CREATION IN ORGANISATIONS - OPERATIONS AND MARKETING MANAGEMENT	PGBM146	C	Case study; Debate discussion; External Visits; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Tutorials; Workshop; Company visits	Case Study; Report; Research Exercise; Presentation; Group Work Formative – Seminar activity				T D A	T D A	T D A		T D A	T D A				T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	
MBA PROJECT	PGBM161	C	Debate discussion; Group work; Lecture; Workshop, Self-directed study; Visiting speakers	Research Exercise formats: Business Project Route Specialism project Applied Project	T D A	T D A		T D A		T D A		T D A	T D A	T D A				T D A				T D A	T D A	

Plus, one Option Module see below or * options on route module tables below

MANAGEMENT CONSULTING	PGBM154	O	Case study; Debate discussion; External Visits; Group work; Self-directed study; Tutorials;	Report; presentations	T D A		T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A		T D A		T D A			T D A	T D A	

MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS: BUSINESS BY DESIGN	PGBM160	O	Case study; Debate discussion; Visits; Group work; Self-directed study; Tutorials;		TDA	TDA	TDA	TDA																

MBA Routes

*Options available for the generic MBA.

Where C/O is indicated this indicates one core module is necessary to support the route however there may be a choice of modules.

MBA (Finance)

Module	Code	Core / Option	Modes of T&L	Modes of Assessment	LO K1	LO K2	LO K3	LO K4	LO K5	LO K6	LO K7	LO K8	LO K9	LO K10	LO S1	LO S2	LO S3	LO S4	LO S5	LO S6	LO S7	LO S8	LO S9	LO S10
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL	PGBM01	C	Case study; Debate discussion; Lecture; Self-directed study; Seminar; VLE	Case Study; Essay; Report Formative – Seminar activity	T D A			T D A			T D A					T D A	T D A						T D A	
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT IN AN INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT	PGBM156	C	Case study; Debate discussion; External Visits; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Presentations; VLE; Workshop; Company visits	TCA; Formative –Group Work, Support Group; Presentation; Seminar activity	T D A	T D A			T D A		T D A	T D A	T D A			T D A	T D A			T D A			T D A	
PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	PGBM141	C	Case study; Debate discussion; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Tutorials; Video multi-media; VLE; Workshop; Company visits; Business Game Simulation	Case Study; Report; Work Based; Formative – PALS Support Group	T D A	T D A	T D A								T D A	T D A	T D A			T D A	T D A		T D A	T D A
VALUE CREATION IN ORGANISATIONS - OPERATIONS AND MARKETING MANAGEMENT	PGBM146	C	Case study; Debate discussion; External Visits; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Tutorials; Workshop; Company visits	Case Study; Report; Research Exercise; Presentation; Group Work Formative – Seminar activity				T D A	T D A	T D A		T D A	T D A				T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	
MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE FOR DECISION MAKING	PGBM145	*C/O	Case study; Debate discussion; Lecture; Self-directed study; Seminar; VLE	Case Study; Essay; Report; Presentations Formative – Seminar activity	T D A			T D A		T D A	T D A		T D A			T D A	T D A					T D A	T D A	
MBA PROJECT	PGBM161	C	Debate discussion; Group work; Lecture; Workshop, Self-directed study; Visiting speakers	Research Exercise formats: Route Specialism project Applied Project	T D A	T D A		T D A		T D A		T D A	T D A	T D A				T D A				T D A	T D A	

MBA (Marketing)

Module	Code	Core / Option	Modes of T&L	Modes of Assessment	LO K1	LO K2	LO K3	LO K4	LO K5	LO K6	LO K7	LO K8	LO K9	LO K10	LO S1	LO S2	LO S3	LO S4	LO S5	LO S6	LO S7	LO S8	LO S9	LO S10
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL	PGBM01	C	Case study; Debate discussion; Lecture; Self-directed study; Seminar; VLE	Case Study; Essay; Report Formative – Seminar activity	T D A			T D A			T D A					T D A	T D A						T D A	
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT IN AN INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT	PGBM156	C	Case study; Debate discussion; External Visits; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Presentations; VLE; Workshop; Company visits	TCA; Formative –Group Work, Support Group; Presentation; Seminar activity	T D A	T D A			T D A		T D A	T D A	T D A			T D A	T D A			T D A			T D A	
PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	PGBM141	C	Case study; Debate discussion; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Tutorials; Video multi-media; VLE; Workshop; Company visits; Business Game Simulation	Case Study; Report; Work Based; Formative – PALS Support Group	T D A	T D A	T D A								T D A	T D A	T D A			T D A	T D A		T D A	T D A
VALUE CREATION IN ORGANISATIONS - OPERATIONS AND MARKETING MANAGEMENT	PGBM146	C	Case study; Debate discussion; External Visits; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Tutorials; Workshop; Company visits	Case Study; Report; Research Exercise; Presentation; Group Work Formative – Seminar activity				T D A	T D A	T D A		T D A	T D A					T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	
MANAGING BRANDS	PGBM147	O	Case study; Debate discussion; Lecture; Self-directed study; Seminar; VLE	Case Study; Report; Presentations Formative – Seminar activity		T D A			T D A			T D A	T D A				T D A		T D A	T D A				
DIGITAL MARKETING	PGBM152	O	Debate discussion; Lecture; Self-directed study; VLE; Workshop	Report; Formative – Seminar activity		T D A			T D A			T D A							T D S	T D A				
MBA PROJECT	PGBM161	C	Debate discussion; Group work; Lecture; Workshop, Self-directed study; Visiting speakers	Research Exercise formats: Route Specialism project Applied Project	T D A	T D A		T D A		T D A		T D A	T D A	T D A				T D A				T D A	T D A	

MBA (Supply Chain Management)

Module	Code	Core / Option	Modes of T&L	Modes of Assessment	LO K1	LO K2	LO K3	LO K4	LO K5	LO K6	LO K7	LO K8	LO K9	LO K10	LO S1	LO S2	LO S3	LO S4	LO S5	LO S6	LO S7	LO S8	LO S9	LO S10
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL	PGBM01	C	Case study; Debate discussion; Lecture; Self-directed study; Seminar; VLE	Case Study; Essay; Report Formative – Seminar activity	T D A			T D A			T D A					T D A	T D A						T D A	
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT IN AN INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT	PGBM156	C	Case study; Debate discussion; External Visits; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Presentations; VLE; Workshop; Company visits	TCA; Formative –Group Work, Support Group; Presentation; Seminar activity	T D A	T D A			T D A		T D A	T D A	T D A			T D A	T D A			T D A			T D A	
PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	PGBM141	C	Case study; Debate discussion; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Tutorials; Video multi-media; VLE; Workshop; Company visits; Business Game Simulation	Case Study; Report; Work Based; Formative – PALS Support Group	T D A	T D A	T D A								T D A	T D A	T D A			T D A	T D A		T D A	T D A
VALUE CREATION IN ORGANISATIONS - OPERATIONS AND MARKETING MANAGEMENT	PGBM146	C	Case study; Debate discussion; External Visits; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Tutorials; Workshop; Company visits	Case Study; Report; Research Exercise; Presentation; Group Work Formative – Seminar activity				T D A	T D A	T D A		T D A	T D A				T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	
OPERATIONS, LOGISTICS AND SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT	PGBM162	*C/O	Case study; Debate discussion; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Tutorials; Video multi-media; VLE; Workshop; Company visits	Case Study; Report; Problem Solving, Group Work Exercise Formative – Seminar Activity				T D A	T D A			T D A	T D A				T D A		T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A		
MBA PROJECT	PGBM161	C	Debate discussion; Group work; Lecture; Workshop, Self-directed study; Visiting speakers	Research Exercise formats: Route Specialism project Applied Project	T D A	T D A		T D A		T D A		T D A	T D A	T D A				T D A				T D A	T D A	

MBA (Human Resource Management)

Module	Code	Core / Option	Modes of T&L	Modes of Assessment	LO K1	LO K2	LO K3	LO K4	LO K5	LO K6	LO K7	LO K8	LO K9	LO K10	LO S1	LO S2	LO S3	LO S4	LO S5	LO S6	LO S7	LO S8	LO S9	LO S10
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL	PGBM01	C	Case study; Debate discussion; Lecture; Self-directed study; Seminar; VLE	Case Study; Essay; Report Formative – Seminar activity	T D A			T D A			T D A					T D A	T D A						T D A	
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT IN AN INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT	PGBM156	C	Case study; Debate discussion; External Visits; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Presentations; VLE; Workshop; Company visits	TCA; Formative –Group Work, Support Group; Presentation; Seminar activity	T D A	T D A			T D A		T D A	T D A	T D A			T D A	T D A			T D A			T D A	
PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	PGBM141	C	Case study; Debate discussion; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Tutorials; Video multi-media; VLE; Workshop; Company visits; Business Game Simulation	Case Study; Report; Work Based; Formative – PALS Support Group	T D A	T D A	T D A								T D A	T D A	T D A			T D A	T D A		T D A	T D A
VALUE CREATION IN ORGANISATIONS - OPERATIONS AND MARKETING MANAGEMENT	PGBM146	C	Case study; Debate discussion; External Visits; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Tutorials; Workshop; Company visits	Case Study; Report; Research Exercise; Presentation; Group Work Formative – Seminar activity				T D A	T D A	T D A		T D A	T D A				T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	
CONTEMPORARY INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	PGBM136	*C	Case study; Debate discussion; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Tutorials; Video multi-media; VLE; Workshop; Company visits	Case Study; Report; Problem Solving, Group Work Formative – Seminar Activity			T D A		T D A			T D A	T D A		T D A		T D A		T D A		T D A	T D A	T D A	
MBA PROJECT	PGBM161	C	Debate discussion; Group work; Lecture; Workshop, Self-directed study; Visiting speakers	Research Exercise formats: Business Project Route Specialism Project Applied Project	T D A	T D A		T D A		T D A		T D A	T D A	T D A				T D A				T D A	T D A	

MBA (Enterprise and Innovation)

Module	Code	Core / Option	Modes of T&L	Modes of Assessment	LO K1	LO K2	LO K3	LO K4	LO K5	LO K6	LO K7	LO K8	LO K9	LO K10	LO S1	LO S2	LO S3	LO S4	LO S5	LO S6	LO S7	LO S8	LO S9	LO S10
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL	PGBM01	C	Case study; Debate discussion; Lecture; Self-directed study; Seminar; VLE	Case Study; Essay; Report Formative – Seminar activity	T D A			T D A			T D A					T D A	T D A						T D A	
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT IN AN INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT	PGBM156	C	Case study; Debate discussion; External Visits; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Presentations; VLE; Workshop; Company visits	TCA; Formative –Group Work, Support Group; Presentation; Seminar activity	T D A	T D A			T D A		T D A	T D A	T D A			T D A	T D A			T D A			T D A	
PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	PGBM141	C	Case study; Debate discussion; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Tutorials; Video multi-media; VLE; Workshop; Company visits; Business Game Simulation	Case Study; Report; Work Based; Formative – PALS Support Group	T D A	T D A	T D A								T D A	T D A	T D A			T D A	T D A		T D A	T D A
VALUE CREATION IN ORGANISATIONS - OPERATIONS AND MARKETING MANAGEMENT	PGBM146	C	Case study; Debate discussion; External Visits; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Tutorials; Workshop; Company visits	Case Study; Report; Research Exercise; Presentation; Group Work Formative – Seminar activity				T D A	T D A	T D A		T D A	T D A				T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	
INNOVATION ENTREPRENEUR SHIP AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER	PGBM150	*C	Lecture; Workshop; Case Study, Debate; Group Work; Self-directed study;	Management Report; Seminar Activity			T D A		T D A		T D A				T D A		T D A		T D A					T D A
MBA PROJECT	PGBM161	C	Debate discussion; Group work; Lecture; Workshop, Self-directed study; Visiting speakers	Research Exercise formats: Route Specialism Project Applied Project	T D A	T D A		T D A		T D A		T D A	T D A	T D A				T D A				T D A	T D A	

MBA (Hospitality Management)

Module	Code	Core / Option	Modes of T&L	Modes of Assessment	LO K1	LO K2	LO K3	LO K4	LO K5	LO K6	LO K7	LO K8	LO K9	LO K10	LO S1	LO S2	LO S3	LO S4	LO S5	LO S6	LO S7	LO S8	LO S9	LO S10
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL	PGBM01	C	Case study; Debate discussion; Lecture; Self-directed study; Seminar; VLE	Case Study; Essay; Report Formative – Seminar activity	T D A			T D A			T D A					T D A	T D A						T D A	
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT IN AN INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT	PGBM156	C	Case study; Debate discussion; External Visits; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Presentations; VLE; Workshop; Company visits	TCA; Formative –Group Work, Support Group; Presentation; Seminar activity	T D A	T D A			T D A		T D A	T D A	T D A			T D A	T D A			T D A			T D A	
PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	PGBM141	C	Case study; Debate discussion; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Tutorials; Video multi-media; VLE; Workshop; Company visits; Business Game Simulation	Case Study; Report; Work Based; Formative – PALS Support Group	T D A	T D A	T D A								T D A	T D A	T D A			T D A	T D A		T D A	T D A
VALUE CREATION IN ORGANISATIONS - OPERATIONS AND MARKETING MANAGEMENT	PGBM146	C	Case study; Debate discussion; External Visits; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Tutorials; Workshop; Company visits	Case Study; Report; Research Exercise; Presentation; Group Work Formative – Seminar activity				T D A	T D A	T D A		T D A	T D A				T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	
HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT STUDIES	CHTM27	C	Lecture; Workshop, tutorial support; self-directed study	Essay; Seminar Activities	T D A	T D A	T D A									T D A								
MBA PROJECT	PGBM161	C	Debate discussion; Group work; Lecture; Workshop, Self-directed study; Visiting speakers	Research Exercise formats: Route Specialism Project Applied Project	T D A	T D A		T D A		T D A		T D A	T D A	T D A				T D A				T D A	T D A	

MBA (Creative & Cultural Industries)

Module	Code	Core / Option	Modes of T&L	Modes of Assessment	LO K1	LO K2	LO K3	LO K4	LO K5	LO K6	LO K7	LO K8	LO K9	LO K10	LO S1	LO S2	LO S3	LO S4	LO S5	LO S6	LO S7	LO S8	LO S9	LO S10
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL	PGBM01	C	Case study; Debate discussion; Lecture; Self-directed study; Seminar; VLE	Case Study; Essay; Report Formative – Seminar activity	T D A			T D A			T D A					T D A	T D A						T D A	
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT IN AN INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT	PGBM156	C	Case study; Debate discussion; External Visits; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Presentations; VLE; Workshop; Company visits	TCA; Formative –Group Work, Support Group; Presentation; Seminar activity	T D A	T D A			T D A		T D A	T D A	T D A			T D A	T D A			T D A			T D A	
PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	PGBM141	C	Case study; Debate discussion; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Tutorials; Video multi-media; VLE; Workshop; Company visits; Business Game Simulation	Case Study; Report; Work Based; Formative – PALS Support Group	T D A	T D A	T D A								T D A	T D A	T D A			T D A	T D A		T D A	T D A
VALUE CREATION IN ORGANISATIONS - OPERATIONS AND MARKETING MANAGEMENT	PGBM146	C	Case study; Debate discussion; External Visits; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Tutorials; Workshop; Company visits	Case Study; Report; Research Exercise; Presentation; Group Work Formative – Seminar activity				T D A	T D A	T D A		T D A	T D A				T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	
MANAGING SOLUTIONS ACROSS THE CREATIVE AND CULTUIRAL **INDISTRIES**	ARTM74	C	Lecture; Workshop, tutorial support; self-directed study.	Essay, Collaborative Project, Journal Seminar Activities		T D A	T D A		T D A	T D A					T D A	T D A	T D A					T D A	T D A	
MBA PROJECT	PGBM161	C	Debate discussion; Group work; Lecture; Workshop, Self-directed study; Visiting speakers	Research Exercise formats: Route Specialism Project Applied Project	T D A	T D A		T D A		T D A		T D A	T D A	T D A				T D A				T D A	T D A	

MBA (Cybersecurity)

Module	Code	Core / Option	Modes of T&L	Modes of Assessment	LO K1	LO K2	LO K3	LO K4	LO K5	LO K6	LO K7	LO K8	LO K9	LO K10	LO S1	LO S2	LO S3	LO S4	LO S5	LO S6	LO S7	LO S8	LO S9	LO S10
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL	PGBM01	C	Case study; Debate discussion; Lecture; Self-directed study; Seminar; VLE	Case Study; Essay; Report Formative – Seminar activity	T D A			T D A			T D A					T D A	T D A						T D A	
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT IN AN INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT	PGBM156	C	Case study; Debate discussion; External Visits; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Presentations; VLE; Workshop; Company visits	TCA; Formative –Group Work, Support Group; Presentation; Seminar activity	T D A	T D A			T D A		T D A	T D A	T D A			T D A	T D A			T D A			T D A	
PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	PGBM141	C	Case study; Debate discussion; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Tutorials; Video multi-media; VLE; Workshop; Company visits; Business Game Simulation	Case Study; Report; Work Based; Formative – PALS Support Group	T D A	T D A	T D A								T D A	T D A	T D A			T D A	T D A		T D A	T D A
VALUE CREATION IN ORGANISATIONS - OPERATIONS AND MARKETING MANAGEMENT	PGBM146	C	Case study; Debate discussion; External Visits; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Tutorials; Workshop; Company visits	Case Study; Report; Research Exercise; Presentation; Group Work Formative – Seminar activity				T D A	T D A	T D A		T D A	T D A				T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	
FUNDAMENTALS OF CYBERSECURIT Y	CETM30	C	Lecture; Workshop, tutorial support; self-directed study.	Research Exercise; Report; Formative – Seminar Activity				T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A				T D A		T D A			T D A	T D A	
MBA PROJECT	PGBM161	C	Debate discussion; Group work; Lecture; Workshop, Self-directed study; Visiting speakers	Research Exercise formats: Route Specialism Project Applied Project	T D A	T D A		T D A		T D A		T D A	T D A	T D A				T D A				T D A	T D A	

MBA (With Placement)

Module	Code	Core / Option	Modes of T&L	Modes of Assessment	LO K1	LO K2	LO K3	LO K4	LO K5	LO K6	LO K7	LO K8	LO K9	LO K10	LO S1	LO S2	LO S3	LO S4	LO S5	LO S6	LO S7	LO S8	LO S9	LO S10
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL	PGBM01	C	Case study; Debate discussion; Lecture; Self-directed study; Seminar; VLE	Case Study; Essay; Report Formative – Seminar activity	T D A			T D A			T D A					T D A	T D A						T D A	
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT IN AN INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT	PGBM156	C	Case study; Debate discussion; External Visits; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Presentations; VLE; Workshop; Company visits	TCA; Formative –Group Work, Support Group; Presentation; Seminar activity	T D A	T D A			T D A		T D A	T D A	T D A			T D A	T D A			T D A			T D A	
PROFESSIONAL MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT	PGBM141	C	Case study; Debate discussion; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Tutorials; Video multi-media; VLE; Workshop; Company visits; Business Game Simulation	Case Study; Report; Work Based; Formative – PALS Support Group	T D A	T D A	T D A								T D A	T D A	T D A			T D A	T D A		T D A	T D A
VALUE CREATION IN ORGANISATIONS - OPERATIONS AND MARKETING MANAGEMENT	PGBM146	C	Case study; Debate discussion; External Visits; Group work; Lecture; Self-directed study; Tutorials; Workshop; Company visits	Case Study; Report; Research Exercise; Presentation; Group Work Formative – Seminar activity				T D A	T D A	T D A		T D A	T D A				T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	T D A	
MBA PROJECT	PGBM161	C	Debate discussion; Group work; Lecture; Workshop, Self-directed study; Visiting speakers	Research Exercise formats: Business Project Route Specialism project Applied Project	T D A	T D A		T D A		T D A		T D A	T D A	T D A				T D A				T D A	T D A	

Plus, one Option Module see * options on route module tables below

How does research influence the programme?
Adequate support for developing research skills is embedded in the Programme. Activities which support development of research skills, include, the marketing management activity at **induction**, organised for students on the PG Programmes. At the end of the activity students are awarded prizes in the form of Amazon book vouchers. Adequate support and opportunities exist to develop MBA students as researchers. For example, during **Reading week** (which usually occurs mid-way during each term), specific sessions on skills development are delivered by the Library services. The activities include, Harvard referencing skills, academic writing skills development, searching for books and journals online, English language skills, etc. In addition, the **Company Visits** programme enables students to visit at least one organisation, in class groups. It is the responsibility of each student to research information about the organisation being visited and to develop potential questions and topics for discussion during the visit. The Company visits have several purposes, including, providing students with insight into how organisations are structured and to gain an appreciation of their development, enabling students to identify the value and purpose of particular business management practices, enabling students to engage with managers of the organisations on a range of issues related to the strategies being developed and the directions being taken by the organisations, and ensuring that students can highlight some key factors affecting the development of the organisations.

Modules on the MBA programme have been developed specifically to enhance subject knowledge. The MBA Project enables students to investigate a contemporary business and management topic utilising primary and secondary sources of information. The investigation involves a literature search, an evaluation of that literature and the development of conclusions on the status of the management topic. Some students may wish to do a work-based project by working in a consultative capacity with a specific organisation, or by applying the concepts and theories encountered from previous organisational experience. This type of project involves analysing and evaluating substantive strategic problems or issues within the organisation and formulating appropriate solutions and/or recommendations.
Opportunities exist for students to network with practitioners from industry, through the Guest or Visiting speakers' programme, which enables guest speakers to discuss their business and management experiences with the students. In some instances, the speaker present case material related to his/her organisation.

SECTION D EMPLOYABILITY
How will the programme prepare me for employment?
The Faculty's employability strategy is underpinned by the philosophy that graduates will be more employable if they have clear self-awareness. Our role and the objective of our programmes is to provide our students with opportunities to explore, discover and express their unique identity and to encourage engagement with experiences which will increase self-efficacy and provide tangible evidence of their identity and thereby their employability.

This is achieved through a comprehensive range of curriculum based teaching, learning and assessment strategies which explicitly and implicitly support our employability objectives, providing students with opportunities to explore their values, challenge and grow their intellect, demonstrate their ability achieve performance objectives, and to successfully engage with others, including employers and wider networks. The programme content and learning approach is underpinned by graduate attributes and the University's Futures employability strategy. Specific activities are embedded in the modules, for example, extra curricula learning activities and as noted above, group work on the case studies and the Peer Action Learning Sets (please see page 10)

The programme gives you the opportunity to develop advanced skills and knowledge which you can use in the future. Some postgraduate programmes are associated with a particular career path, but most skills can be applied to a range of employment situations. The skills which this programme is designed to develop are listed below.

All the postgraduate business programmes are vocational in the sense that they are clearly aimed at helping graduates move in to successful business and management careers. The programmes are clearly linked to an organisational visits and speakers programme which aims to give students access to key organisations in the region. In addition, we offer an option in Enterprise and Entrepreneurship which is designed to support students that are interested in thinking about starting their own businesses. The curriculum includes a broad range of modules based on research in both subject and pedagogy, for example, Strategic Management in an International Context and the MBA Project. The Team makes extensive use of the VLE on a programme and module basis including on-line discussion boards, surveys and scheduled chats. All programmes make use of Peer Action Learning Sets (PALS) which have been developed and refined over a number of years to encourage cross cultural learning. These groups have been the subject of an extended research project the findings of which have recently been published in the International Journal of Management Education.

The Postgraduate Business team provide some information and guidance on the possible careers available to students through a variety of mechanisms.

- The University VLE has specific pages attached to the Programme space with links to external sources of information such as the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development and the Chartered Institute of Management and direct links to the Careers and Employability Service.
- The Visiting Speakers Programme includes guest speakers some of whom are our own graduates. We encourage all speakers to talk about their own career paths to help students to understand the options available to them. In a similar manner the Company Visits programme provides an opportunity for students to enquire during the visits what skills and competences they might require to pursue employment within a particular organisation or business sector.
- The PALS activities allow students to identify and have regard to future careers and this allows PALS tutors to offer advice and/or redirect the student to University services such as the Careers and Employability Service
- The Programme and Module learning outcomes are clearly business and management related and thus provide students with the necessary subject knowledge to progress into management careers. The Programme also encourages the development of key transferable employability skills; abilities to research, to present information and communicate orally and in writing, to work independently and as a member of a team, to reflect on one's own performance and provide and respond to feedback and to make critical judgements are all addressed by specific Programme learning outcomes.

Some business and management students will want to continue their studies after they graduate. This may further academic study at Ph.D. level or a course leading to a vocational qualification in a related field, for example, professional accountancy qualifications. Some students will also move on to the PGCE and look for a career in teaching, again with the potential of making use of their business and management skills in the teaching of AS/A Level Business Studies. The Graduate Research School and the Careers and Employability Service has a wide range of information available to students should they choose to continue with their studies.

There are also opportunities for on-campus students outside your programme of study. For information about other opportunities available to our students who study on campus. Additional opportunities to develop your experiences more widely will vary if you study at one of our partner colleges. For information about the extra-curricular activities available in any of our colleges please contact the college direct.

Professional statutory or regulatory body (PSRB) accreditation

PSRB accreditation is not relevant to this programme	
PSRB accreditation is currently being sought for this programme	
This programme currently has PSRB accreditation	√

The programme is currently accredited until: Ongoing subject to moderation
The relevant PSRB(s) is/are: Chartered Management Institute
The terms of the accreditation are as follows: Achievement of Master of Business Administration
The programme is recognised as: CMI Level 7 Diploma Strategic Leadership and Management

There are programme-specific regulations relating to the following. Details are given in the programme regulations:

The modules to be studied	
Pass-marks for some or all modules and/or parts (elements) of modules	
Placement requirements	
Attendance requirements	
Professional practice requirements	
Final or overall mark for the award	
Other	✓

Interim or exit awards are not accredited.

SECTION E PROGRAMME STRUCTURE AND REGULATIONS

PART B - PROGRAMME REGULATION/S

Name of programme: Master of Business Administration
Master of Business Administration (Finance)
Master of Business Administration (Marketing)
Master of Business Administration (Supply Chain Management)
Master of Business Administration (Human Resource Management)
Master of Business Administration (Enterprise and Innovation)
Master of Business Administration (Hospitality Management)
Master of Business Administration (Creative and Cultural Industries)
Master of Business Administration (Cybersecurity)
Master of Business Administration (With Placement)

Award Title: MBA

Interim awards: Postgraduate Certificate of Higher Education in Management Studies
Postgraduate Diploma of Higher Education in Management Studies

Accreditation: CMI

University Regulation (please state the relevant University Regulation)**:**

6.1.3 *Exit qualifications may be awarded for all Master's degrees as Postgraduate Certificates or Diplomas of Higher Education. The name of the exit qualification shall be the same as that for the Master's degree unless an alternative name is approved at programme validation and recorded as a programme-specific regulation.*

MBA interim award titles: *Postgraduate Certificate of Higher Education in Management Studies*
Postgraduate Diploma of Higher Education in Management Studies

Regulations apply to students commencing their studies from (please state the date / intake that these regulations will apply to students for each Stage)**:**

Regulations apply to students	Date the regulations apply	Intakes affected
Level 7	2017/8	All

<u>Stage 1</u>

MBA

Core modules:

Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value
PGBM01	Financial Management and Control	15
PGBM156	Strategic Management in an International Context	15
PGBM141	Professional Management and Leadership Development	30
PGBM146	Value Creation in Organisations - Managing Operations and Marketing	30
PGBM161	MBA Project	60

Option modules:

Choose modules to the value of 30 credits from the following list:

Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value
PGBM154	Management Consulting	30
PGBM145	Management Accounting and Finance for Decision Making	30
PGBM147	Managing Brands	30
PGBM152	Digital Marketing	30
PGBM162	Operations, Logistics and Supply Chain Management	30
PGBM136	Contemporary International Human Resource Management	30
PGBM150	Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Technology Transfer **Designated option for programme without options or routes**	30
PGBM160	Management Information Systems: Business by Design	30

MBA (Finance)

Core modules:

Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value
PGBM01	Financial Management and Control	15
PGBM156	Strategic Management in an International Context	15
PGBM141	Professional Management and Leadership Development	30
PGBM146	Value Creation in Organisations - Managing Operations and Marketing	30
PGBM145	Management Accounting and Finance for Decision Making	30
PGBM161	MBA Project	60

MBA (Marketing)

Core modules:

Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value
PGBM01	Financial Management and Control	15
PGBM156	Strategic Management in an International Context	15
PGBM141	Professional Management and Leadership Development	30
PGBM146	Value Creation in Organisations - Managing Operations and Marketing	30
PGBM161	MBA Project	60

Option modules:

Choose modules to the value of 30 credits from the following list:

Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value
PGBM147	Managing Brands	30
PGBM152	Digital Marketing	30

MBA (Supply Chain Management)

Core modules:

Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value
PGBM01	Financial Management and Control	15
PGBM156	Strategic Management in an International Context	15
PGBM141	Professional Management and Leadership Development	30
PGBM146	Value Creation in Organisations - Managing Operations and Marketing	30
PGBM162	Operations, Logistics and Supply Chain Management	30
PGBM161	MBA Project	60

MBA (Human Resource Management)

Core modules:

Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value
PGBM01	Financial Management and Control	15
PGBM156	Strategic Management in an International Context	15
PGBM141	Professional Management and Leadership Development	30
PGBM146	Value Creation in Organisations - Managing Operations and Marketing	30
PGBM136	Contemporary International Human Resource Management	30
PGBM161	MBA Project	60

MBA (Enterprise and Innovation)

Core modules:

Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value
PGBM01	Financial Management and Control	15
PGBM156	Strategic Management in an International Context	15
PGBM141	Professional Management and Leadership Development	30
PGBM146	Value Creation in Organisations - Managing Operations and Marketing	30
PGBM150	Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Technology Transfer	30
PGBM161	MBA Project	60

MBA (Hospitality Management)
Core modules:

Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value
PGBM01	Financial Management and Control	15
PGBM156	Strategic Management in an International Context	15
PGBM141	Professional Management and Leadership Development	30
PGBM146	Value Creation in Organisations - Managing Operations and Marketing	30
CHTM27	Hospitality Management Studies	30
PGBM161	MBA Project	60

MBA (Creative & Cultural Industries)
Core modules:

Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value
PGBM01	Financial Management and Control	15
PGBM156	Strategic Management in an International Context	15
PGBM141	Professional Management and Leadership Development	30
PGBM146	Value Creation in Organisations - Managing Operations and Marketing	30
ARTM74	Managing Solutions Across the Creative and Cultural Industries	30
PGBM161	MBA Project	60

MBA (Cybersecurity)
Core modules:

Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value
PGBM01	Financial Management and Control	15
PGBM156	Strategic Management in an International Context	15
PGBM141	Professional Management and Leadership Development	30
PGBM146	Value Creation in Organisations - Managing Operations and Marketing	30
CETM30	Fundamentals of Cybersecurity	30
PGBM161	MBA Project	60

MBA (With Placement)
Core modules:

Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value
PGBM01	Financial Management and Control	15
PGBM156	Strategic Management in an International Context	15
PGBM141	Professional Management and Leadership Development	30
PGBM146	Value Creation in Organisations - Managing Operations and Marketing	30
PGBM161	MBA Project	60

Option modules:
Choose modules to the value of 30 credits from the following list:

Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value
PGBM154	Management Consulting	30
PGBM145	Management Accounting and Finance for Decision Making	30
PGBM147	Managing Brands	30
PGBM152	Digital Marketing	30

PGBM162	Operations, Logistics and Supply Chain Management	30
PGBM136	Contemporary International Human Resource Management	30
PGBM150	Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Technology Transfer **Designated option for programme without options or routes**	30
PGBM160	Management Information Systems: Business by Design	30

MBA Final Stage – 90 Credits
Core modules:

Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value
PGBM01	Financial Management and Control	15
PGBM156	Strategic Management in an International Context	15
PGBM161	MBA Project	60

MBA Final Stage – 60 Credits
Core modules:

Module Code	Module Title	Credit Value
PGBM161	MBA Project	60

Progression Regulations
None

<u>PART B</u> - <u>PROGRAMME REGULATION/s</u>

Name of programme: Postgraduate Certificate in Management Studies
Title of final award: Postgraduate Certificate in Management Studies
Interim awards[1]: None
Accreditation: None

University Regulation (please state the relevant University Regulation)**:**

6.4.2 Programme regulations may specify particular combinations of modules required for either or both the Certificate or Diploma. In other cases, only the number of credits gained will be taken into account.

Regulations apply to students commencing their studies from (please state the date / intake that these regulations will apply to students for each Stage)**:**

Regulations apply to students	Date the regulations apply	Intakes affected
Stage 1	September 2018	None

Stage 1

Core modules:

Code	Title	Credits
PGBM01	Financial Management and Control	15
PGBM156	Strategic Management in an International Context	15
PGBM141	Professional Management and Leadership Development	30

Optional Modules
None

Elective Modules
None

Progression Regulations
There are no programme-specific progression regulations

Award Regulations
Where students enrol onto the Postgraduate Certificate in Management Studies, the combination of modules specified above will be required in order to obtain the award of Postgraduate Certificate in Management Studies.

PART B - PROGRAMME REGULATION/s

Name of programme: Postgraduate Diploma in Management Studies
Title of final award: Postgraduate Diploma in Management Studies
Interim awards[2]: None
Accreditation: None

University Regulation (please state the relevant University Regulation)**:**

6.4.2 Programme regulations may specify particular combinations of modules required for either or both the Certificate or Diploma. In other cases, only the number of credits gained will be taken into account.

Regulations apply to students commencing their studies from (please state the date / intake that these regulations will apply to students for each Stage)**:**

Regulations apply to students	**Date the regulations apply**	**Intakes affected**
Stage 1	September 2018	None

Stage 1

Core modules:

Code	Title	Credits
PGBM01	Financial Management and Control	15
PGBM156	Strategic Management in an International Context	15
PGBM141	Professional Management and Leadership Development	30
PGBM146	Value Creation in Organisations - Managing Operations and Marketing	30
PGBM150	Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Technology Transfer	30

Optional Modules
None

Elective Modules
None

Progression Regulations
There are no programme-specific progression regulations

Award Regulations
Where students enrol onto the Postgraduate Diploma in Management Studies, the combination of modules specified above will be required in order to obtain the award of Postgraduate Diploma in Management Studies.

SECTION F ADMISSIONS, LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND SUPPORT
What are the admissions requirements?
The admissions policy incorporates the guidance from Corporate and Recruitment Services and Sunderland Business School Recruitment Office (see the University Admissions Policy). The MBA is an internationally recognised programme for post experience graduates with relevant work experience. Candidates are likely to be mature entrants whose first degree is not in a business and management discipline and therefore the curriculum must reflect a general coverage of the subject areas. The subjects are likely to be geared at the strategic rather than technical / operational level reflecting career development aims. The MBA is designed to draw upon the experience of the candidate and in recognition of the applied nature of the award the programme will emphasise an integrated and practical (professional) orientation over a theoretical approach.

Entry Requirements:
- At least a UK second lower honours degree (or international equivalent) with a minimum of 6 months appropriate work experience
- A third class honours degree or UK equivalent professional qualification with a minimum of 2 years appropriate work experience
- Applications from those in senior roles without a formal academic background will be considered by academic judgement. Applications should be made with a portfolio of evidence demonstrating capability and managerial experience

Note: The work experience must be at a graduate level, in either a managerial or professional capacity which may include voluntary work, placements, internships, project management etc. And all applications are subject to University approval.

- Support is available for all students to develop their English Language skills in addition to their main study programme, and students who complete one of the modules in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) or English for Business Studies (EBS) are eligible for the award of the University of Sunderland Certificate in EAP or EBS.

The University's standard admissions requirements apply. Programme-specific requirements which are in addition to those regulations are given below.

Can students enter with advanced standing?	**Yes**	

The Master of Business Administration (MBA) Final Stage will be offered with tutor support provided by one of our approved collaborative partners under the University of Sunderland Collaborative Provision arrangements.

- The normal entry criterion for admission to the MBA Final Stage is that students will have successfully completed an honours degree from a UK University or its equivalent overseas qualification in any subject area.
- In addition, they must also hold a Level 7 postgraduate diploma in management e.g. the Edexcel BTEC Level 7 Extended Diploma in Strategic Management and Leadership. Or the Chartered Management Institute Level 7 Executive Diploma in Strategic Management
- Applicants are required to demonstrate post degree relevant work experience

The University has a process by which applicants whose experience to date already covers one or more modules of the programme they are applying for may seek Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL).

What kind of support and help will there be?

In the department: The Induction Programme is intended to introduce students to all aspects of their time at Sunderland – to the staff associated with their programme; to the School; to the wider University and indeed to the study of their programme. The Induction week is an important aspect of the Programme. All students will;

- Be provided with a Programme Handbook
- Be introduced to the programme curriculum and to some of the skills involved in the study of their programme
- Be provided with information on academic referencing including information on the University Regulations on Cheating, Plagiarism and Collusion
- Be provided with information in respect of central University support facilities i.e. student counselling, the Chaplaincy, the Student Office, financial guidance and assistance
- Be provided with specific guidance of disability support facilities within the University, how these may be accessed and the benefits of so doing
- Be introduced to the University's VLE and the support facilities available in relation to the Programme, to modules and to careers services
- Be given an opportunity to interact with the staff of the Business School and each other and have some fun!

All students are allocated to a PALS group and assigned a PALS group tutor by the end of Induction Week. The Tutor is a member of academic staff from the Business School and will work closely with the PALS group in forming effective working relationships and developing management and transferable skills over the course of the programme. This element of critical self-reflection will help in refining the skills and experience they already possess as MBA students. The activities are designed to develop the students' transferable skills alongside their awareness of cross-cultural issues and the simulation of working across international boundaries. The PALS groups provide an opportunity for students to practice self-management skills which are beneficial to them both as students and as future employees. It helps students to:

- take responsibility for their own learning

- be aware of how learning relates to the wider context
- improve general skills for study and career management
- provide evidence of achievements.

In most instances, and with regard to specific modules, the first point of contact for studies advice will be the module leaders and/module tutors, all of whom are willing to provide advice at the end of formal class contact time, in module surgery sessions (where these form a part of the teaching and learning strategy for the module) and in staff surgery time. Academic staff post times when they are available (on a weekly basis) for consultation outside of the normal class contact time. (Sunderland Only) Basic study skills are included in the induction programme, in the Student Handbook and on the VLE. Students are encouraged to make use of these additional facilities in terms of the value added to the overall learning experience. Students are given detailed, hands-on training in the use of the University's VLE as part of the Induction Programme. They are offered the opportunity to post questions or initiate discussions through a number of module spaces and through the Programme space. Academic staff and other students can engage in these discussions and thereby encourage the whole academic community to act as a support mechanism for its members. Various web links are provided to ensure that students have the most up to date information available.

What resources will I have access to?
On campus

General Teaching and Learning Space	√
IT	√
Library	√
VLE	√
Laboratory	
Studio	
Performance space	
Other specialist	
Technical resources	

University Library & Study Skills Services, (ULSSS), supports students with the provision of a high quality learning environment, comprehensive print and online resource collections, 1400 study places, 300+ PCs, My Module Resources and study skills support.

All students have the full use of the University's two libraries. The libraries are open extensive hours and are staffed for 59 hours a week, including weekends and evenings. During core teaching weeks, The Murray library is open 24x7 and St Peters library is open until 12 midnight.

The ULSSS web site provides a gateway to information resources and services for students both on and off campus. Tailored resources and support are available from specific subject areas of the ULSSS web site and a 'Live Chat' function enables student to access library support and help 24/7.

Module reading lists are live interactive resource lists available from within online module spaces on the VLE and the University's library website.

What do you get?

- Real time library information, both availability and location of print books, plus being able to place reservations on books that are already on loan
- Allows you to set up RSS alerts for changes and additions to your Module Resource list
- Smartphone and tablet friendly – providing QR capture, touch screen functionality and e-resource access

How does this help you?

- Getting the right resources easily from flexible access points
- Receive guidance from your tutor on what to read at a point of need by using search filters
- Access to a wider range of resources to support learning.

Study Skills Support

University Library Services includes a robust study skills support offer, available to all our students across the University both on and off campus, contributing to students' attainment and the quality of their experience.

Skills delivery options include:

- Online Skills Support including: videos, webinars and Skype sessions and online tutorials. Online assignment drop-ins using Live Chat will be held weekly to engage those students not on campus and provide additional support at the point of contact.
- On campus assignment skills drop-in events throughout key teaching weeks when students are encouraged to attend with any assignment queries.
- Embedded skills sessions - Throughout teaching periods embedded skills sessions are a key element to support academic learning. Study skills support team and Liaison Librarians continue to cultivate relationships and provide the support necessary in their subject areas.
- Project workshops - Project skills support will be provided in early June to 'Kickstart your Project'. Bookable workshops will be held demonstrating how to begin a project, using University library resources to support your work, and managing references for a substantial project. Sessions will be cross-subject focusing on the skills and resources required for completing a project.
- One to One - Study Skills Advisers will be on hand to advise and support students in a range of study skills including: effective reading, reporting writing, academic writing and referencing, note taking, critical thinking, analysis and evaluation, reflective writing, group work and presentation skills. Sessions will be booked centrally, catering for embedded academic sessions, study groups and 1 to 1 advice. For those studying independently away from the university campus, 1 to 1 support is available via Skype.

If an embedded skills session best suits student learning outcomes, academic staff will be asked to complete an online request form so that a session can be arranged.
The request form is available from:
library.sunderland.ac.uk/services-and-support/services-for-staff/

Access to other libraries

There may be occasions when students studying postgraduate programmes would find it useful to use other university libraries for their studies, in addition to the resources available at the University of Sunderland. Postgraduate students may be able to borrow items or to access collections on a reference basis at a number of institutions throughout the UK by joining the Sconul Access Scheme. Please see the relevant college prospectus or website for details of college learning resources if you are planning to study in one of our partner colleges.

Are there any additional costs on top of the fees?

No, but all students buy some study materials such as books and provide their own basic study materials.	*X*
Yes (optional) All students buy some study materials such as books and provide their own basic study materials. In addition there are some are additional costs for optional activities associated with the programme (see below)	

Yes (essential) All students buy some study materials such as books and provide their own basic study materials. In addition there are some are essential additional costs associated with the programme (see below)	

How are student views represented?
All taught programmes in the University have student representatives for each programme who meet in a Student-Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) where they can raise students' views and concerns. The Students' Union and the faculties together provide training for student representatives. SSLCs and focus groups are also used to obtain student feedback on plans for developing existing programmes and designing new ones. Feedback on your programme is obtained every year through module questionnaires and informs the annual review of your programme. Student representatives are also invited to attend Programme and Module Studies Boards which manage the delivery and development of programmes and modules. Faculty Academic Committee also has student representation. This allows students to be involved in higher-level plans for teaching and learning. At university level students are represented on University level Committees by sabbatical officers who are the elected leaders of the Students' Union.

Every year we participate in the national Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES), which is run by the Higher Education Academy.

Programmes offered in partner colleges: If you are studying in one of our partner colleges the college will have its own mechanisms for obtaining student feedback. Some of these may be the same as that on-campus at the University but others may be different. You should ask your college for further information.

For distance learning operated from Sunderland: if you are studying by distance learning you will have slightly different arrangements from those used on campus. In particular, you are likely to have virtual rather than physical meetings and discussions. However, these arrangements should provide comparable opportunities for you to give feedback. Details are given below.

SECTION G QUALITY MANAGEMENT

National subject benchmarks

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education publishes benchmark statements which give guidance as to the skills and knowledge which graduates in various subjects and in certain types of degree are expected to have.

Are there any benchmark statements for this programme?	**YES**	

The subject benchmark(s) for this programme is/are: Masters Degrees in Business & Management

The QAA also publishes a Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) which defines the generic skills and abilities expected of students who have achieved awards at a given level and with which our programmes align. The FHEQ can be found

How are the quality and standards of the programme assured?
The programme is managed and quality assured through the University's standard processes. Programmes are overseen by Module and Programme Studies Boards which include student representatives. Each year each module leader provides a brief report on the delivery of the module, identifying strengths and areas for development, and the programme team reviews the programme as a whole. The purpose of this is to ensure that the programme is coherent and up-to-date, with suitable progression through the programme, and a good fit (alignment) between what is taught and how students learn and are assessed - the learning outcomes, content and types of teaching, learning and assessment. Student achievement, including progress through the programme and the way in which the final award is made, is kept under review. The programme review report is sent to the

Programme Studies Board and the Faculty in turn reports issues to the University's Quality Management Sub-Committee (QMSC).

External examiners are appointed to oversee and advise on the assessment of the programme. They ensure that the standards of the programme are comparable with those of similar programmes elsewhere in the UK and are also involved in the assessment process to make sure that it is fair. They are invited to comment on proposed developments to the programme. Their reports are sent to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) as well as to the Faculty so that issues of concern can be addressed.

All programmes are reviewed by the University on a six-yearly cycle to identify good practice and areas for enhancement. Programmes are revalidated through this review process. These reviews include at least one academic specialist in the subject area concerned from another UK university. The University is subject to external review by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education on a six-year cycle.

SITS SUMMARY PROGRAMME/SHORT COURSE DETAILS

(Form to be completed electronically by the Faculty and forwarded to the Quality Support Officer supporting the Approval event, or sent to Planning & MI for faculty devolved processes before sending to Quality Support (with the exception of Short Courses and GRS))

This form is to be completed when a new programme has been validated and approved so that the programme codes and progression and awards rules can be set up in SITS. This also needs to be completed at periodic course review when there have been significant modifications to the course.

Please note that all details entered onto this form will go onto every student's record that is attached to this programme and it is therefore imperative that the information is correct.

1 Programme Details		
New/ Modification/Review: Please ensure the minor modification document is included	Modification	
Full Programme Title:	Master of Business Administration **-** SSMBAM Master of Business Administration (Finance)-MBAFIN Master of Business Administration (Marketing)-MBAMKT Master of Business Administration (Supply Chain Management)-MBASCM Master of Business Administration (Human Resource Management)-MBAHRM Master of Business Administration (Enterprise and Innovation)- MBAINN Master of Business Administration (Hospitality Management)- MBAHPM Master of Business Administration (Creative and Cultural Industries) – MBACCI Master of Business Administration (Cybersecurity)-MBACYS Master of Business Administration (With Placement)-CODE TBC	
If replacement for existing course, specify title and course code:		
Qualification Aim: e.g. Foundation degree of Science, Bachelor of Arts (Honours)	Masters	
Qualification Level (NQF level):	7	
JACS 3.0 code JACS code = e.g. (V100) History, (I100) Computing Science, etc. See HESA Website https://www.hesa.ac.uk/jacs3	N100	
Is the programme Open or Closed:? A course is defined as closed when specifically designed for a certain group of people and not also available to other suitably qualified candidates. It may be designed for a particular company however if the same course is also run for other suitably qualified candidates, not employed by the company, then the course is not closed.	Open	
Faculty and School:	Business, Law and Tourism	Sunderland Business School
Location of study: e.g. SAGE, Sunderland in London, Sunderland	Sunderland London Campus Off Campus	
Last Date Registration (PBI) Number of days:		

The number of days after the start date of the course that it is possible for students to register onto it. It is also referred to as the migration date.	
Programme Leader:	
Academic Team for the programme:	Postgraduate Business
Date of Approval/Modification/Review:	July 2018 (Modification)
Date of next review (*QS to complete*):	2022/23
Accrediting Body or PSRB If yes please attach a completed PSRB form	No
Programme Specific Regulations If yes, please attach a completed Programme Specific Regulations form	No
Does this programme come under the Key Information Set return? If yes, please attach a completed KIS form	No
Is this an undergraduate programme whose primary (but not necessarily only) purpose is to improve the effectiveness of practitioners registered with a professional body? If yes, please specify which body:	No Professional Body:

Interim Awards

If a student does not achieve their qualification aim, what lower awards might they be entitled to, assuming they have the credits? The subject title for any lower level award should be given where this is different from the subject of the qualification aim.

	Interim Award Title	Credits Required	Interim Structure Please show mandatory requirements if applicable e.g. core module codes
1	Postgraduate Certificate in Management Studies	60	Any
2	Postgraduate Diploma in Management Studies	120	Any
3			

Combined Subjects Programmes only	
Will the subject run as Major/Minor/Dual:	
Any subject(s) not permitted to be combined with this subject:	

2 Mode Of Attendance		
01	Full-time *Full-time students are those expected to study for more than 24 weeks per year, for a minimum of 21 hours per week and are paying the full-time fee.*	✓
02	Other Full-time *Students who attend full-time for a period less than 24 weeks per year*	
31	Part-time *Students who are expected to study for less than 21 hours per week.*	✓
31	Part-time at Full-time Rate	

Students who are studying full-time credits over part-time attendance	

3 Admissions An admissions or MCR code will be created to allow student applications.	Tick appropriate
U UCAS Universities and Colleges Admission Services *Required for full-time undergraduate programmes only.*	
D Direct Entry *Required for FT, PT, PG and PGR, only where students will be admitted though the admissions teams or where the programme needs to be advertised on the web*	✓
G GTTR Graduate Teacher Training Registry *Education only, where applicable*	

4 Collaborative Provision	UK	
	Overseas	✓
Institution	Collaborative Model	Funding Arrangements
Various	Model D/Full Franchise and Model B/Joint Franchise.	

5a Course Block	
Full-time - Overall length of the programme in months:	12 months
Part-time - Overall length of the programme in months:	24 months
Does this course offer a sandwich placement? If **yes**, please indicate which programme year this placement is to take place.	YES MBA (With Placement) Programme Year: 1
Is this compulsory or optional?	Optional
Does this course offer a study abroad year out? If **yes**, please indicate which programme year this placement is to take place.	No Programme Year:
Is this compulsory or optional?	Compulsory/Optional

6 Major Source of Funding **Please note** this relates to funding for the programme and **not** individual students	
HEFCE Higher Education Funding Council for England	
Skills Funding Agency/EFA/Degree Apprenticeship	
NCTL National College for Teaching and Leadership	

Wholly NHS Funded Partially NHS Funded Departments of Health/NHS/Social Care. ***For all Health funded programmes please indicate whether the programme is eligible for an NHS Bursary*** - Eligible for NHS Bursary Y/N	
Standard Fee If no then the Learning Resources Form should be attached	Yes/No
Other Funding:	✓
– Please Specify:	

7 Education Programmes Only This section must be completed for any programmes marked above as 'NCTL' funded	
Teacher Training Identifier:	
Teacher Training Scope:	
Qualification Aim: QTS and academic award, QTS only, QTS by assessment only	

DETAILS SUPPLIED BY… DATE…

Appendix 11

PGBM163 Module Descriptor

TITLE:	MBA Placement Project
CODE:	PGBM163
CREDITS:	60
LEVEL:	7/MASTERS
FACULTY:	BUSINESS, LAW AND TOURISM
MODULE BOARD:	MARKETING, MANAGEMENT AND STRATEGY
PRE-REQUISITES:	NONE
CO-REQUISITES:	NONE
LEARNING HOURS:	600 hours, the exact nature of which is specified in the module guide

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this module, students will have demonstrated

Knowledge

K1. That they can understand specific substantive problems or issues of an organisation (with which they complete a work placement) placing them into a strategic context within the research investigation.

K2. A critical understanding of valid research questions via a review of the academic literature; a critical review of the activities and operations of the organisation/sector and the environment in which it operates.

K3. A clear understanding of different research methodologies and their limitations and be able to critically explain when one might be more appropriate than another in the context of the chosen research topic.

K4. That the project findings have been logically derived and that the conclusions/solutions and recommendations are fully supported by the evidence presented.

K5. That the recommendations for strategic change in the organisation/business sector investigated are capable of implementation

K6. How the personal and organisational learning that has taken place has affected the development of your skills and competences during the completion of your programme of study.

Skills

S1. The necessary skills to design and undertake appropriate qualitative and quantitative research as necessary to analyse your chosen organisation/business problem or task.

S2. How to interpret record and analyse data relating to the research topic.

CONTENT SYNOPSIS

The module is a combination of classroom delivery (workshops), engagement with value-added activities and the completion of a placement project and reflective portfolio. Students will obtain a placement either through their own endeavours (subject to the approval of the module leader) or by successfully acquiring one of the opportunities sources by the Faculty's Placement Team. In the event of a suitable placement opportunity not being obtained, the student would be required to transfer to the generic MBA programme and would complete the standard MBA Project (PGBM161).

Students will have successfully acquired a placement before formally starting this module. The research methods workshops will enable a project proposal to be developed prior to the student's completion of the placement. To do this, the student should engage in discussions with the employer to identify a potential area of research within the organisation; then working with the academic supervisor, the student will articulate the key issues to be analysed within the main body of the dissertation or project. The proposal is a purely formative element to enable the student to begin the investigation phase. The supervision process will involve a series of one-to-one meetings during which the academic supervisor will:

- **Aid the student with the strategic context in which the project is being set as well as determining the scope of the literature review to be undertaken by the student.**
- **Help the student to clarify the research methodologies that will be used by the student in gathering data/ intelligence for the project.**
- **Discuss with the student the findings arising in the project and help the student to reflect upon the conclusions and recommendations of the project.**
- **Review with the student any final issues before submission.**

Part of the formal teaching will also include the delivery of practice-based workshops covering issues relating to critical skills, employability and research practice skills to enable the student to formulate a portfolio of evidence demonstrating their personal development and critical thinking skills during the completion of their programme of study.

The Placement Project Report will include a critical reflection of the work undertaken during the placement experience. The actual format will vary dependent on the particular placement and will be developed in consultation with the placement supervisor and employer.

Students will also submit a personal portfolio, which will take an evidence-based approach to the learning embedded during the programme. A number of added value activities are available to students to support their core knowledge and learning. These include the Study Visit; the Company visits programme; the Guest Speaker Programme; CMI Training and the MBA Challenge. The overarching style will be critical self-reflection on the part of the student to enable them to build a portfolio that shows their personal development. The Portfolio will also show evidence of reflection on the personal and organisational learning as a result of undertaking the project and how that learning relates to the programme as a whole.

TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS:

Scheduled activities		**Independent study**		**Placement**		**Total hours**
Hours	Detail	Hours	Detail	Hours	Detail	
20	Research Methods Workshops					
20	Developing Leading and Management Competence Workshops	151		400	A placement of 6 months. It may be paid or voluntary work	591
9	Supervision					9
					Total	600

ASSESSMENT METHODS

						Required For KIS return to HESA							
Seq.	Element	% of module assessment weighting	Summary	Pass Mark	LO	Written exam – central timetable (% of the element)		Written exam – local timetable (% of the element)		Coursework (% of the element)		Practical (% of the element)	
						%	Type	%	Type	%	Type	%	Type
001	Project	70%			All					100			
002	Portfolio	30%			All					100			

Assessment

Each element of the assessment strategy is assessed internally by two members of staff. A sample of work is also sent to external examiners.

Assessment 001: Students will be required to complete a Placement Project Report of approximately 15000 words (this is for guidance only). The report will be a critical review of an element of the placement experience and centred on a work-based project which was undertaken by the student during the placement. The project remit will be developed whilst out on placement and with the involvement of the placement supervisor and the work-based mentor. The report will outline the chosen project and review the various processes followed to achieve a strategic outcome which would provide real benefit to the placement business.

Assessment 002: This will be a portfolio of critical self-reflection supported by evidence and will take the form of a critical reflection upon the development of skills and competences derived from the experience of undertaking the programme of study, the added value activities and the final project. This element of the assessment will be approximately 2,500 words (for guidance only).

MyModuleResources List Link

The reading list will be the same as that outlined in PGBM161

Relevant journals will be consulted by the students depending upon the area of study and chosen topic.

The module will draw upon a range of printed and electronic sources suitable to reflect on the contemporary issues of the subject material. Some texts are regarded as key to understanding the development of the subject and may not therefore be the current edition of a particular text but the reading list will be reviewed annually to ensure its relevance and appropriateness.

PROGRAMMES USING THIS MODULE AS CORE:

MBA (with placement)

Is the programme delivered On-Campus or Off-campus:	On-campus
College(s)	n/a
Work based learning:	Yes
Professional Accreditation:	Yes
Module Leader	
Lead Deliverer	
JACS CODE:	N100

Appendix 12 Faculty Plan 2018/19 to 2020/21

Introduction

Faculty Vision:

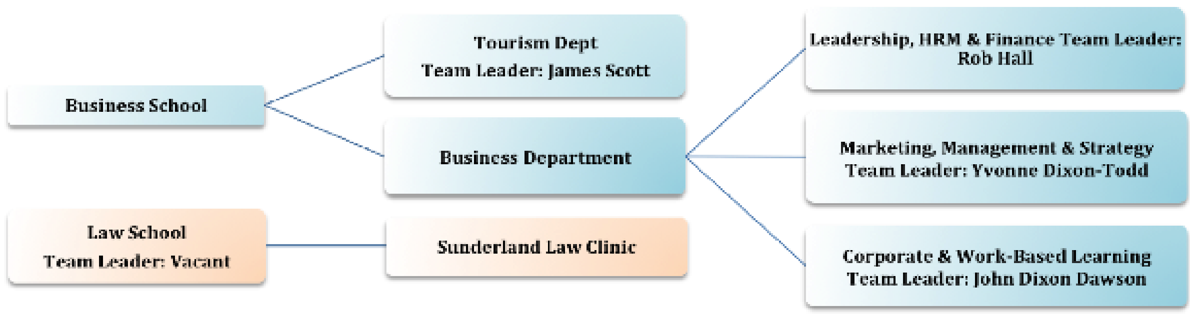
To be internationally recognised for the excellence of our academic and professional programmes, the success of our graduates, the quality of our applied research and the effectiveness of our external partnerships and the opportunities they offer our students and staff.

To achieve this recognition, the Faculty's **mission** is to:

- Develop relevant, accredited programmes that are inspiring, innovative and inclusive. Working with employers in both their development and delivery, we will ensure that these programmes raise the aspirations of our learners and fuel ambitions of enterprise and entrepreneurship and extend international opportunities. In the period of this plan this will include:
    - Development of new tourism programmes relating to aviation **[Priority 1]**
    - **Develop and extend programmes in Accounting and Finance and International Business areas [Priority 1]**
    - Acquisition of EPAS accreditation **[Priority 2]**
    - **Revise the Law portfolio in light of the SRA changes to legal education and developments in the field of policing [Priority 1]**
- Deliver a learner experience that is innovative and that also reflects pedagogic best practice. Recognising that learners are partners in, and co-creators of, the learning experience, we will engage critically with them through a research-informed, dynamic curriculum that is delivered through a wide range of learning and teaching approaches including the use of technology. In the period of this Plan, this will include;
    - **The development of learning materials to support not only the development of new distance/independent learning programmes but which will also support the delivery of programmes to our TNE partners and facilitate personalised learning for on-campus students [Priority 3]**
    - **The development of an embedded experiential learning opportunities designed to offer students practical experience in investigating, analysing, managing and resolving real-life business problems [Priority 3]**
- Deliver high quality, impactful research that underpins our academic programme development and delivery. In addition, we will establish an externally facing research focus that is internationally recognised and that empowers collaborative engagement with a range of stakeholders including businesses, public and third sector organisations and community groupings**. [Priority 5; Priority 6]**
- Develop effective external partnerships which promote which raise the Faculty's profile and credibility as:
    - (i) a provider of accredited and professionally recognised programmes and of continuing professional development and training **[Priority 1; Priority 2; Priority 3; Priority 6];**
    - (ii) a leader in global Transnational Education delivering successful graduates in country, extending the reach of the University's programmes and international reputation and offering opportunities around the world for staff and students **[Priority 3; Priority 4; Priority 6];**
    - (iii) a key partner in research working collaboratively with the Research Institute, Research Centres and external partners **[Priority 5; Priority 6]**

The proposals are made in response to the Quality and Sustainability Review (completed September 2017) and the Vision remains relevant but is marginally enhanced to reflect the international accomplishments of the Faculty.

Faculty Structure:



Academic Dean: Professor Lawrence Bellamy
Deputy Dean: Dr. Karen Hadley

Review of 2017/18

Key Achievements: [@ the time of writing]

(a) Approval of the MBA Strategic Leadership and its development to be ready for delivery from May 2018
(b) Approval of the Business Economics route through the Business suite
(c) A likely over-recruitment in relation to the Level 6 Degree Apprenticeship
(d) Strong league table positioning for Tourism provision and indications of strong student satisfaction in selected business and management areas

Key Challenges:

(a) The successful launch of the degree apprenticeship programmes has led to operational challenges and the Faculty is working with its business partners across the institution to improve systems and facilitate more effective and efficient processes.
(b) The continually evolving nature of the TNE strategy and portfolio requires excellent communication and careful planning in order to ensure that relationships with partners are positive, that programmes operate efficiently and that an excellent student experience is maintained.
(c) Creating capacity to innovate the curriculum to develop high-quality provision which is distinct in the market

Outcomes of QSR:

Perhaps as a result of periodic reviews on the entire faculty portfolio in the previous 18 months, few substantive changes arose solely as a result of the QSR. Key portfolio changes arising out of the QSR include:

(a) New programmes in Tourism, linked with aviation and the potential development of a tourism route through the Level 6-degree apprenticeship programme [see **Priority 1**]
(b) Review the accounting portfolio to consider a 4yr integrated Masters programme aimed primarily at an international market (particularly direct entry to level 6), and at the possibilities for an accounting degree apprenticeship. As part of this review, ICEAW accreditation is being pursued and the proposal for the Bloomberg Trading floor is being evaluated with the Faculty [see **Priority 1**].
(c) Work with M&R to assess the Business portfolio to include (a) a review of the programme titles, (b) the development of learning materials to support on campus, distance and TNE delivery, (c) the acquisition of EPAS accreditation and (c) the development of a business clinic/ experiential curriculum to support the institution's employability agenda [see Priorities 1, 2, 3 and 5]
(d) Implement and monitor the programme level Retention, DLHE (including participation in the *Launchpad* programme), NSS and Achievement Plans submitted to SDAG in December 2017
(e) Contribute, as required, and respond to the Institution's evolving International and TNE Strategies [**Priority 1, 3**]
(f) Evaluate the demand for an International Business Top-Up programme on-campus, at London and HK and for the TNE markets, including integrated top-up and masters provision [**Priority 1**]
(g) Review the LLB programme in light of the changes being imposed by the SRA, the operation of the clinic and the development of a teaching law firm [see **Priority 1**].
(h) Terminate the Business Law Top-Up programme once the Foundation Degree at Hartlepool Sixth Form College is completed

Student Outcomes:

			Business School			
	KPI	Faculty	Accounting	Business	Tourism	Law
Retention Stage 1	89	85.1	86.3			82
Retention Stage 2	89	93.6	94.7			90
Good Honours	66	73	73.9			65.8
Student Satisfaction	83.88	n/a	78.79	86.38	100	89.19
DLHE - EPI	94.2	96.2	95.9			96.9
DLHE - GPI	68.3	72.7	69.7			79.7

Data (including KPIs) Supplied via SDAG

The majority of Faculty results are above the KPIs identified through the Student Data Analysis Group (SDAG) at the start of 2017/8. Plans have been submitted through SDAG for the improvement of, inter alia, Stage 1 retention on a number of programmes across the Faculty, achievement on the LLB programme, and the NSS in Accounting, Business and

External Environment Assessment (based principally upon the Environmental Scanning Reports from M&R)

For UG Business:

- Business Studies enrolments have increased across the sector and in Sunderland in 2015/16.
- Northumbria was the top recruiter followed by Westminster, Anglia Ruskin and Manchester Metropolitan.
- Across these top institutions, courses offered which are not currently available at Sunderland are International Business Management and Business and Healthcare Management.
- Finance has increased across the sector in 2015/16; however, it has seen a small decrease over the same period in Sunderland. Middlesex and Coventry were the top recruiter of benchmark and competitor institutions. Rankings and accreditations are all relevant.
- Of these institutions, popular courses offered that were not listed in Sunderland were Investment and Financial Risk Management, International Finance, and Actuarial Science.

For PG Business:

- Business Studies has reduced across the sector and within Sunderland; 2015/16 enrolments are at their lowest in the last 5 years although for Sunderland, much of this has been a reduction in international numbers.
- Selected Russell Group institutions and Loughborough University showed the most significant intake increases and offered course titles offered which were not available at Sunderland related to Leadership and Strategy, Business Analysis and Strategic Management.
- Despite reductions, Sunderland was the highest recruiting NEI in 2015/16 with International Management, Business Administration, and Business Management the most popular courses.
- Northumbria had the second highest intake in the North East; following a consistent decline since 2011/12, Northumbria enrolments increased by 46% (105 students) in 2015/16, with Financial Management and International Management the most popular courses
- There are opportunities for interdisciplinary developments aligned to selected sectors including health and engineering as regionally significant.
- Delivery modes vary greatly between competitors and should be reviewed for both regional and international markets.

For Tourism:

- At a UG level, latest enrolment figures show a small increase across the sector (+165, +1%) and across Sunderland (+45, +14%). Sunderland was the highest recruiter of the NEIs.
- At a PG level, Sunderland was the only NEI to offer this subject at this level with Tourism and Hospitality and Tourism and Events. Tourism and Aviation Management programmes are very likely to be successful based upon distinctiveness for both UG and PG levels. Key to this is collaboration with airlines and effective marketing. In the UK, the University of West London recruits 600 students per year to their Aviation courses and several other Universities, including Surrey, have recently introduced Aviation programmes. In the North East, traditionally our largest recruitment area, Stockton College, Middlesbrough College, Darlington College, Gateshead College all teach BTEC/GNVQ and Foundation degree/HND in Tourism and Aviation and there is no University offering an option for these students to top up to full degree status. Newcastle College offer the opportunity for students to get full degree status but it is believed that many prospective students from this and the other named colleges would be attracted by the University experience at a highly ranked Tourism Department. Coupled with expansion at both Newcastle and Teesside airports, this appears an extremely viable development both in terms of student numbers and the potential for corporate collaboration.

For Law:

- Law has seen a small reduction (-540, -2% compared to 2014/15) across the sector however numbers have remained relatively stable in Sunderland.
- At a PG level, the M&R report appears to have omitted consideration of the LPC programme, stating that Sunderland's enrolments have fallen to the lowest in five years which this is not the case.

The external environment for Law is changing significantly and this will impact both UG and LPC provision. In September 2020 the SRA is changing the way people qualify as solicitors. The vocational and post-1992 market will 'diversify significantly and, whereas currently all law degrees are broadly the same in form and content, there will be a huge choice of provision open to students as the SRA will withdraw from regulating the education sector altogether. The Bar Council has yet to change its position. The Law School will need to develop a competitive UG offering that both prepares those who wish to qualify as solicitors through the SQE route, whilst maintaining our attractiveness to those seeking a conventional legal and skills education in readiness for employment, hence requiring fundamental portfolio review to be completed.

Priorities 2018/19 to 2020/21

Priority 1 Curriculum Developments	Link to Strategic Aims	1.1 1.2 1.3	2.1 2.2 2.3	3.2 3.3		5.1 5.2	6.1

In response to the QSR, identified home and international market opportunities (which will be existing provision-based) the following is proposed:
Tourism, Hospitality and Events: MSc Tourism Management, MA Tourism and Aviation and BA(Hons) and Top-up provision in Tourism and Aviation, where aviation routes are operated through collaboration with Swissair, British Airways and Emirates, which the team has contacts with, to provide experiential/ demonstration/ specialist operations elements.
Business and Management: PT BA(Hons) Accounting and Finance roll-out, MFin (integrated 4 year with Level 6 entry) investigation, BA(Hons) International Business development, MBus (integrated 4 year with Level 6 entry) investigation, BA(Hons) Business Economics roll-out and related to Economics; Trade, Investment, Finance, Banking and Accounting programme development investigation, Accounting Degree Apprenticeship investigation*
Law: Total UG Curriculum portfolio redevelopment in response to the SRA changes making QLD's obsolete. SLS will develop its Law Clinic to provide training opportunities for trainee solicitors and apprentices and will exploit new regulatory rules that will allow it to undertake fee-charging work so as to develop a 'teaching law firm'. This will begin by extending the existing collaboration with North East Law Centre through the provision of a joint legal aid contract in family law that will allow us to develop this provision at no financial risk to the University. Extension of the area will also include related investigation of Policing programmes.

KPI/PI Impacts
- Increase in Home/EU/International On-Campus Recruitment at both UG and PG
- Retention from the first year of operation
- Other impacts in relation to NSS, student achievement and DLHE

Risk Impacts
Improvements/protection of strategic risks in relation to:
- Student numbers (Key Risk 1); enhancing the curriculum and the extra-curricular activities to make programmes more attractive and thereby improve recruitment

Additional capital investment requested
- *Bloomberg Trading Floor to support from 2020 dependent on development/recruitment of appropriate programmes; (Building works, furniture, equipment & AV and contingency costs @ 2018 costings) £102,000

Additional revenue funding requested
- THE: 2018/9 – Replace 1FTE lost 2017/8 Academic Year - 2 x 0.5FTE. [**Item 2** Summary of Requested Resources]
- THE: 2020/21 and beyond 1additional FTE will be required [**Item 3** Summary of Requested Resources]
- £1500 per year for Swissport/Servicesair endorsement and fee/student+£300 transport for specific training events [**Item 4** Summary of Requested Resources]
- BM: 0.4FTE to support (through back-fill of existing staff) the development of new programmes in the business and accounting areas. 30hrs x 20 members of staff across the subject areas. [**Item 5** Summary of Requested Resources]
- BM: 2019/20 1additional business FTE will be required [**Item 6** Summary of Requested Resources]
- BM: 2020/21 and beyond 1additional FTE will be required [**Item 7** Summary of Requested Resources]
- BM: Bloomberg Trading Floor from 2020 capital investment plus annual subscription £80K [**Item 1** and **Item 8** Summary of Requested Resources]
- Law: development a new offer@50hours per FTE. [**Item 9** Summary of Requested Resources]
- Law: Staff for realised growth. [**Item 10** Summary of Requested Resources]
- Law: 2 x 0.5FTE Postgraduate Teaching Assistants at GP23. Fee waivers to be applied for the PhD. Broadly cost neutral [**Item 11** Summary of Requested Resources]
- Professional indemnity insurance [**Item 12** Summary of Requested Resources]

Support required from other Faculties and Services
New products launch with Marketing and Recruitment

Priority 2 EPAS Accreditation	Link to Strategic Aims		2.1	3.1 3.2 3.3	4.1		

International business school accreditation systems have historically been the province of high-ranking universities. However, recently these accreditations have become more prevalent in ‘modern’ Universities (e.g. MMU; AMBA and AACSB, NTU; AACSB, EPAS and EQUIS, Northumbria; AACSB and EPAS, Coventry EPAS). A number of similar institutions have also commenced the journey (e.g. UCLAN and Edge Hill; AACSB). The commitment to acquire such is substantial, but does place the institution in a relatively elite club (for the moment) with enhanced international recognition added. The criteria for these accreditations are demanding with regard to staff profiles and activities, resources and educational protocols. Currently the Faculty is not in a position to make an application (though investment in this should be assessed and considered going forward) for overall accreditation but should take initial steps with programme specific (rather than full faculty) accreditations, which complement the wide-range of subject specific professional certifications already in place which have varied international value. EPAS is internationally recognised, relatively accessible and would assist transition within a longer-term objective of Faculty-wide accreditation, if desirable. It would also support the International Office in the promotion of the programmes to the world stage. Given the strong international profile and experience of the Faculty then this would be a good fit and progression point if a longer journey to accreditation is to be considered and a suitable market statement if not.

KPI/PI Impacts o Increase in Home/EU/International FT On-Campus Recruitment at both UG and PG	**Risk Impacts** Improvements/protection of strategic risks in relation to: o Student numbers (Key Risk 1) o Reputational impact and avoiding adverse impact in failing to acquire it.
Additional capital investment requested	**Additional revenue funding requested** o Funding for initial application plus cost/expenses for the visit/assessment and circa 0.5FTE across the Faculty to support the PL Learning & Teaching in the preparation of relevant documents for the assessment [**Item 13** Summary of Requested Resources]
Support required from other Faculties and Services	

Priority 3 Pedagogic Developments	Link to Strategic Aims		2.1	3.1 3.2 3.3	4.1		

Experiential Learning

In order to enhance student experience and employability the following experiential curriculum enhancements are proposed (Enterprise Agenda):

- **Development of module content to be embedded as cores in programmes (wherever curriculum space allows) in the areas of: Business Start-Up, assessed Internships, Consultancy Project (within a Business Clinic concept approach), current Employment/ Volunteering experience assessed module, software driven simulations**
- **Embedded international semester/ module experiences**
- **Dean's award Marketing initiative (5x £1000 student digital ambassadors, supporting recruitment) to generate and distribute student-facing content with M&R**

On-line and Blended Delivery

To augment the current delivery arrangements to encourage flexibility and access the following on-line developments are proposed, which will help to also act as a platform for further related development and critically as a vessel for staff up-skilling:

- **On-line/ blended Global MBA**

KPI/PI Impacts

- Increase in Home/EU/International FT On-Campus Recruitment at UG and PG
- Support for TNE
- Enhanced DLHE performance (plus potential to scale cross-institution).

Risk Impacts

Improvements/protection of strategic risks in relation to:

- Student numbers (Key Risk 1)
- Reputational impact and avoiding adverse impact in failing to acquire it.

Additional capital investment requested

None recognised at this time, although we would need to ensure that we have the appropriate IT equipment and the space in which to record relevant input. This request however is consistent with the University Learning and Teaching Strategy and consequently this is likely to be covered.

Additional revenue funding requested

- Staff Time for the development of 4 modules@30hours per module. [**Item 14** Summary of Requested Resources]
- 0.4FTE Clinic Supervision @GP28 [**Item 15** Summary of Requested Resources]
- 1FTE Internships/International Study Co-ordinator as a Graduate Internship [**Item 16** Summary of Requested Resources]
- Introduce business simulations into the PG curriculum (Edmundo/SAP) [**Item 17** Summary of Requested Resources]
- Dean's Marketing Awards [**Item 18** Summary of Requested Resources]
- Educational Technologist to support operation/delivery of IDL/blended programmes 0.5FTE at GP22 (Grade D) [**Item 19** Summary of Requested Resources]
- Staff Time for their own development and the development of learning materials (6 UG module leaders plus programme leader; 8 PG module leaders assuming options on the MBA are limited plus programme leader) @30hours per module. [**Item 20**

Support required from other Faculties and Services

Careers for experiential and CELT for on-line/ blended developments. Marketing and Recruitment, Enterprise and Innovation to support opportunities

Priority 4 Learning Environment	Link to Strategic Aims		2.1	3.1 3.2 3.3	4.1		

The Reg Vardy building is a multi-use facility hosting provision from FBLT, FES and Administrative functions. Space must therefore be configured and furnished to be suitable for all users and convey an appropriate professional image. Student feedback has previously indicated a number concerns including: Overcrowding of the canteen at peak periods, inadequacy of IT facilities within the building (but with the PGR suite underutilised) unsuitability of furniture in classrooms (small/ cramped desks), lack of light/ ventilation and excess heat at points in some teaching spaces, slow/ inoperative IT kit in teaching rooms, non-productive areas, unsuitable PGR environment, malfunctioning doors. In addition Colleagues using the building have noted outdated information displays, mixed furnishings in classrooms, dark/ drab entrance areas, Level 1 corridors dim/ dreary, stained/ inconsistent carpets, lack of natural light in areas, inadequate signage. In some classrooms the furniture does not meet the pedagogical requirements. The proposal is therefore based upon some general ideas for enhancement:

- **General upgrades to décor and selectively lighting, prioritising the lower floors and entrance areas inside and out**
- **A rationalisation of furniture throughout the space, to give a particular look/ feel to an agreed minimum standard and configurable for various teaching layouts**
- **A review of IT equipment within the rooms to ensure the required functionality is achieved to an agreed minimum standard**
- **Exploring opportunities for creating high quality social learning space centrally (possibly integrating the Atrium Cafe and the Learning Hub)**
- **Reallocation of unproductive areas, possibly for PGR/ AT/ small meeting space usage**
- **Creation of a Corporate Teaching space particularly in light of the growing volume of degree apprenticeship provision**
- **Opening up and reconfiguration of the Level 1 PGR(PT) space for IT access/ flexible teaching**
- **Review of light/ ventilation for selected teaching rooms (Level 2/3)**
- **Consideration of display usage and devices for information/'infotainment' near entrances and across social learning spaces**
- **A welcoming (and fully operative) main entrance from the main road**

KPI/PI Impacts	Risk Impacts
o Increase in Home/EU/International On-Campus Recruitment at both UG and PG o Retention from the first year of operation o Other impacts in relation to NSS, student achievement and DLHE	o Student numbers (Key Risk 1); enhancing the learning environment, appearing more appealing to applicants, better student retention resulting

Additional capital investment requested	Additional revenue funding requested
o None – from Facilities' Budget	o None – from Facilities' Budget

Support required from other Faculties and Services
Facilities' Budget – provisional sum £300K (tbc) and implementation of agreed plans

Priority 5 EIS ("Ice") Centre	Link to Strategic Aims		2.1	3.1 3.2 3.3	4.1		

The University has realised success within a number of funded projects including: The Hope Street Exchange, CESAM and Creative Fuse North East. Each of these to a greater or lesser extent deals with the related themes of Enterprise, Innovation and Sustainability. With the Faculty building capacity in the area of Enterprise in relation to the experiential curriculum a natural progression would be the extension of capability to support EIS areas, aligned with opportunities to attract funding and therefore provide a suitable vessel from which to deliver a research and impact agenda for the business, marketing and management areas going forward.

To achieve this the Faculty would wish to appoint a strategic lead, probably at Professorial level, tasked with working closely with E&I going forward and on existing projects to prime Faculty operations and support capacity building within the area, alongside the existing and extended Corporate Team within Faculty. This would therefore facilitate opportunities for data collection helping to drive forward the Faculty research agenda and demonstration of impact.

Long-term objectives arising from this not only include research output, project income generation, staff development (through involvement) and commercialisation opportunities too, but also reputation building through activity profile and recognition through devices such as the Small Business Charter award. Resulting internal benefits would also be through the research-informed curriculum and enterprise education agenda delivery, extending potentially across the institution. Matched funding would support the appointments short-term, with opportunities for sponsorship, bids and income generating research, conferences and CPD going forward.

KPI/PI Impacts	Risk Impacts
o Student recruitment (building distinctiveness) o Student outcomes (DLHE) o REF, KEF and potentially KEF	o Student numbers o Student achievement
Additional capital investment requested None – to work within existing infrastructure	**Additional revenue funding requested** o 1 FTE at a Professorial level from September 2018 o 1 FTE at GP23 from March 2019 o 1 additional FTE at GP23 from September 2019 o Non-staff operating costs for centre (out with projects) £10K

Support required from other Faculties and Services

Enterprise and Innovation, Hope Street Exchange, Marketing and Recruitment to promote

Priority 6 Global Centre for Executive Education	**Link to Strategic Aims**		2.1	3.1 3.2 3.3	4.1		

The University is unique within the sector for the extent of its international network and campus locations. Whilst this is realising strong revenue through TNE and growing satellite campus activities it also positions the provision as a springboard into international executive education. The proposal is to build a portfolio of programmes which can be marketed to appeal to executives in the business community. This could include specialist MBAs (for example in the area of finance or international trade), target certificates and diplomas, specialist masters programmes (for example Strategic Leadership and Change or Corporate Financial Management) or to tap into the growing international demand for DBA provision (a result of extended provision of MBA from the sector). Candidates, depending on programme configuration could choose to study at one, two or three locations.

Demand for the provision would come not only from local markets, but also through incentivising the partnership network to recruit candidates and upskill their staff. Benefits arising from this proposal would also include opportunities for research which could be conducted collaboratively across locations, adding to the international appeal, reach and impact of output. This would build reputation and would be used as a device to increase desirability of the programmes, which would be charged at a relative market premium.

Delivery would generally be by block teaching, locally support and with blended learning included as appropriate. A hybrid ‘flying faculty’ model would be used and value extracted from staff undertaking additional operations as associated with their trip (e.g. recruitment, local staff training and review activities). To lead the provision, the Faculty would need to employ a Colleague of Professorial status, with extensive international and executive education experience. Support would be required in respect to project management of delivery, administration and marketing, given the complexities of managing such a programme.

KPI/PI Impacts

- Student recruitment (building distinctiveness)
- Student outcomes (DLHE)
- REF, KEF and potentially KEF

Risk Impacts

- Student numbers
- Student achievement

Additional capital investment requested

None – to work within existing infrastructure

Additional revenue funding requested

- 1 FTE at a Professorial level from September 2018
- 1 FTE at GP23 from March 2019
- 1 additional FTE at GP23 from September 2019
- Non-staff operating costs £25K

Support required from other Faculties and Services

International Office, Marketing and Recruitment, Hong Kong Campus, London Campus, CAPE

Appendix 13

Quality Handbook

Annual Programme Review Portfolio Report

	Programme/Suite of programmes	MBA / Postgraduate FBLT
	Cluster	MMS – Marketing, Management and Strategy
	Programme leader	

	Student Satisfaction NSS/UKES/PTES	Issues identified by SDAG– No	If issues identified for programme please provide link to action plan
	Retention/progression/achievement	Issues identified by SDAG- No – 87%	If issues identified for programme please provide link to action plan
	DLHE data	Issues identified by SDAG- No 53.3%	If issues identified for programme please provide link to action plan
	External examiner report(s)	Date considered by PSB: 22.11.17	http://services.sunderland.ac.uk/academic-services/external-examiners/
	Responses to long term recommendations made at periodic review/programme approval (if applicable)	Date considered by PSB: 22.11.17	Provide responses
	Review of new subject benchmark(s) if applicable	Date considered by PSB 22.11.17	Link to QAA Subject benchmark review form
	Collaborative Provision (if applicable) Centre Leader reports	Date(s) considered by PSB	Provide link to action plan in response to issues emerging for collaborative provision.

	Faculty Partnership Leader reports Partner Annual Monitoring Report	TNE Ops 01.01.18 TNE Ops 01.01.18 TNE Ops 01.01.18	S/Drive
	Programme Specification	Changes required Yes/No Date approved by PSB: 22.11.17	Please provide Programme Specification with changes made if applicable

Issues to be considered by Faculty/University

Issue	To be considered by
None	

Good Practice

Keith Schofield EE 2016/7 Annual Report MDIS 24.1.17 EE did not report any major issues. Students perform as expected for an M-level programme. There is a fair distribution of marks and, in most cases, staff are willing (and enabled) to mark across the full spectrum of marks. PGBM04 commented on excellent feedback
Chris Prince EE 2016/7 Annual Report 24.1.17 Reported no issues with the programmes. The programmes are well managed. There is clear and explicit internal moderation of centres – with fewer and fewer amendments being made each year. The assessment strategy adopted on the whole works well. There is a strong culture of developing the centres through staff development. There are good relationships / communication between the centres and the course team.
Enhanced induction format received positive feedback from students
Added Value activities are integrated into the programme – Critical Skills and employability sessions in collaboration with CES. Continue to encourage our students' engagement in their learning at Masters' level and provision of support is a continued focus with dedicated sessions scheduled in 'learning and development' week.
Critical skills development sessions have also recently been delivered at our partner site in Singapore during a Centre Leader visit and the tools and resources for these sessions have been shared.
English language support will continue to be offered to students and the opportunities for this will be incorporated in the induction process.
MBA Study Visit continues to receive positive feedback from students.
MAB Challenge continues to go from strength to strength, this year the event was sponsored by CMI.

Development Grid

Source – document or process (those listed must be commented on)	Good practice identified	Concerns / areas for development / advice needed	Actions to be taken / by whom / by when	Update(s) on actions during the year	Status *	Topic that issue is related to : Widening Participation Assessment Research Active Curriculum Use of VLE/Learning Technologies Personal Tutoring Other (please state)
Module Evaluation. EE Reports. Programme Leader Response to EE.	Programme team complimented – professional nature and commitments to development. Identification of good practice regarding; the content of assessments, improvement to feedback, alignment of marking and grades supportive collaboration between the two institutions is visible.	Suggested assessment support to support students to achieve higher grade bands. Programme leader response letters to EE - Appendix 1.	**Issues to be raised at PSB 14.3.18** Summary of the work sampled, appropriacy of grades and relevance of feedback. Development of collaborative approaches to marking to eliminate discrepancies at moderation stage with particular focus on PGBM73 MBA Dissertation. The Programme Leader at London Campus has already contacted the relevant Module Leader at Sunderland and discussion is underway. Provision and accessibility of scripts prior to the Postgraduate Board to ensure a 10% sample,		O	**Assessment** **T & L**

Student satisfaction – NSS, UKES, PTES	Very strong results majority of sub questions within each section were rated 80-100% Quality of T & L 96% Engagement 89% Assessment & feedback 81% Dissertation 83% Organisation and Management 80% (the score for timetabling fits with other commitments has dragged the % down Resources %& services 85% Skills Development 92% Course quality 96% Information provision 96% Valuable Student Experience 93%			Addressed at PT 1 in future. Timetabling score 57% - question on timetable alignment and other commitments.	C	
Student feedback – SSLC etc.	Students have complimented the programme at SSLC meetings.	Timetabling issues. Students are explained re the timetabling constraints.				
Retention				PL support and Personal Tutor Support students are directed to UoS student support services.		

Progression & Achievement	Achievement and progression good. Ref Def students liaise with relevant MLs. MLs provide assessment support. Personal Tutor system in place.					**Assessment** **Use of VLE/Learning Technologies**
Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) reports and developments (if applicable)	Adherence to regulations – very consistent and strong					
Module questionnaire feedback	Workshops are interactive and practical Interesting module, the majority of students on the programme have no previous experience of marketing Students like case studies and practical examples provided by the tutor Good discussions Understand the wider role of business modules within organisations and inter-functional coordination	Students should have utilised support sessions for assessments. Students should be more prepared for seminars and engage with wider reading				**Assessment** **Research Active Curriculum** **Use of VLE/Learning Technologies**

Other please specify

Source – document or process (those listed must be commented on)	Good practice identified	Concerns / areas for development / advice needed	Actions to be taken / by whom / by when	Update(s) on actions during the year	Status	Topic that issue is related to : Widening Participation Assessment Research Active Curriculum Use of VLE/Learning Technologies Personal Tutoring Other (please state)
MBA Overall Programme Review						
PGPSB		MBA PL queried Running order of modules and routes / economies of scale required to offer options and routes. Modules approved for existing PG programmes.		TBC	O	
Company Visit 21.11.17	Newcastle racecourse. Positive feedback from students.				C	
Development of Cybersecurity Route						

26.10.17	Email from Acting Deputy Dean re new route MBA Cyber Security.		Programme Leader to arrange meeting with Alistair Irons			
MBA New Programme Development 13.11.17 Sub Group 7.11.17 Meeting to Acting Dean Deputy dean Programme Team Email from acting Deputy Dean re new format for MBA - decision was expected from MBA Team Friday 27th Oct. 26.10.17 12.10.17 Meeting Team Leader MBA Programme Teaching Team			Programme Leader to present new MBA format. Positive feedback from Acting Dean Deputy Programme Team	New format approved. Quality documents to be completed for 10th January 2018. Awaiting approval. Meet with Team Leader for update. Team Leader to confirm date. Update - informed MBA format is undecided. Optional formats submitted to team leader then to Exec. A 4 x 30 model was presented together with disadvantages which included amongst other issues, the omission of 30 credits of key business knowledge if 30 credit routes were attached to this format. A hybrid including 2 x 15 credit modules was also presented offering opportunity for a slight	O	

				enhancement of the key knowledge coverage and more flexibility for routes. It was also suggested that this may also be appropriate for TNE as we may offer a different format for TNE to that delivered on campus. Informed that the DVC would make the decision.		
5.10.17 PG programme Leaders meeting.				Report and MBA development discussed at PG programme Leaders meeting. Requested to summarise report and submit optional formats to Exec for consideration. Summary submitted.		
11.9.17 MBA Development / Market Report			As a result of discussions with Team Leader following the faculty conference MBA Programme Leader to prepare a report on MBA to present at FAC 28.9.17	Report not required for meeting as MBA refresh is not on the agenda. Required for 5.10.17 Submission of report to Executive.4.10.17		
PGPSB 27.6.17			Extraordinary meeting focus will be on the new PG programmes to ensure these are ready for market Oct 2017/8. MBA to be re-visited following summer break.			

27.6.17 **Meeting CMI** **Helen Watts CMI Representative**				Once new MBA format has been agreed the LO's for CMI will be re mapped.		
7/6/17 **PG PSB**		*Update on MBA Development*		MBA Programme Team meetings have taken place to open discussion on the transition to a 30 credit module structure on the programme for 2017/8. Programme Leader to present a proposed new structure at the next PSB 27.10.17	*C*	
2.6.17 & 6.6.17 **MBA Programme Meeting**	Consultation with MBA teaching Team re 30 Credit Module Programme Review			PL presented proposal. All those in attendance approved. To be presented at PGPSB 8th June 2017	*C*	
28.2.17 **Panel – PG Product Review**	Approval MBA Route MBA Creative and Cultural Industries		TBC PSB 15th March	All requirements re Periodic review are now completed.	*C*	
20.2.17 **CMI Meeting**		MBA to be re-mapped to CMI Diploma rather than Extended Diploma. Learning Outcomes to be considered with regard to leadership	To be considered at PSB 15.3.17 Claire Hoy John Dixon Dawson Karen Wharton	Meeting with Sarah Cheetham 20th March. Follow up meeting 29th June to present updates to PGBM16 and PGBM02	*O*	

20.2.17 **Programme Team meeting**		Agenda MBA calendar MBA product refresh Learning and teaching support & added value activities Module teaching subject overlap Cohorts PALS MDIS & TNE PTES Personal tutoring		Programme Leader to ascertain feedback on specific items raised.	*C*	
24.1.17 **Superboard Meeting**		PG product review of programmes.	Programme Leader to complete final paperwork for minor modifications - new route Creative & Cultural Industries		*C*	
7/10/16 **Programme Team meeting**		Discussed proposals for the forthcoming product refresh.	In line with meetings schedule	Ideas to be considered for forthcoming meetings. See summary Appendix 2,3 and AMR 15.16	*C*	
On Campus Sunderland						
15-19.5.17	MAIM Programme Leader organised		Black Swan cancelled at short notice. Unable to reschedule	**PGPSB 14.3.18** Discuss future of Black Swan		

Company Visits & development week. Raised at PGPSB	company visits – all feedback from MBA students was very positive – Newcastle Racecourse and Handlesbanken. MSCHRM & MBA programme Leaders organised a 2-day Creativity Workshop in response to suggestion from Executive. In place of Black swan - ML PGBM108 supported by MBA Programme Leader ran an innovation case study activity		due to teaching and assessments. Caterpillar cancelled company visit again at short notice. Students were accommodated at Newcastle Race Course. Attendance at extra curricula week is low. Suggest we discuss this at PGPSB. Company visits for March starts and remainder of October starts were scheduled for this week and Creativity session was mover to Monday 15^{th} preventing uptake from MBA as clashed with company visit	Learning and Development Week attendance.	*O*	
11.5.17 **Filming MBA Programme Video**	Programme Leader initiative.		Programme leader to review first edit June 2017. Ongoing following initial edit.		*O*	
8.5.17	Work Package for the Student			PL to attend meetings to explore role and input to review.	*C*	

Email Work Package for the Student Success Strategy 3	Success Strategy Personal Tutor System introduced for MBA by PL to be considered in the university wide PT review.					
24-28.4.17 **MBA Study Visit Barcelona**	Excellent feedback from students. See appendix 2		Will continue to be a focus in proposals for new MBA.	Submitted budget for 2017/8 and approved.	*C*	
11.04.17 **External Examiner Annual Report On Campus 15/16 Received** **Milo Crummie**	Commended PGBM02 and PGBM73	PGBM03 – 40% pass marks PG levelness. Generic feedback PGBM15 – poorer work affected by English Language ability. Report formats to be consistent across the programme, this will engender good practice. Greater use of formative assessment.		Response letter supplied to PG admin. To circulate to programme team. English language support has been implemented. Milo Crummie is now retired. Keith Schofield is in role (as reported in 15/16 development grid).	*C*	

20.03.17 **Critical thinking sessions**	March starts - 11 students attended. Full cohort at this time.				*C*	
15.3.17 **Personal Tutor Meeting 1** **March Cohort** **English language support** **Critical thinking sessions**	Invited Lee Fairclough to speak about English language support. Review key elements – programme handbook. Generic Criteria Study Visit Critical skills support CMI Training		Study visit follow up. Session on Critical thinking is arranged for 20th March 2-3.30. Study skills will deliver. Share opportunities re English language support sessions with other PG PL's – aim to achieve a group of sufficient number to merit delivery of a bespoke programme for march cohorts	Classes commenced 16th May Now incorporate guest speaker from English Language Support in induction for all PG students.	*C*	
W/C 13 & 20.3.17 Personal Tutor Meeting 2	Schedule of appointments emailed to students. Attendance monitored and followed up.		MBA PG personal tutor document to be shared with PG programme leaders	85% engagement.	*C*	
7.3.17	Excellent set of results.		Response rate 65%.	Final response rate 64%	*C*	

PTES briefing source PSB 31.1.17	PTES briefing in DG computer cell.		Follow up at personal tutor sessions.	See summary of responses above.		
W/C 27.2.17 **Learning & Development Week MBA**	Activities arranged to cover a range of development areas. CES Critical skills – two sessions one generic session and another bespoke for MBA's who had attended previous session – aiming to build on skills. (8) attended. Library – searching for information session to support research methods and dissertation.	Caterpillar Company visit cancelled.	Programme Leader to report on attendance.	Good attendance following programme Leader encouragement.	*C*	
W/C 27.2.17 **Induction**	Enhanced induction as per last year. Good feedback from				*C*	

	students following this event, particularly as a bonding activity between students and familiarisation with the programme team.					
6.2.17 **Email** **Student Mobility**			Proposal for March starts MBA Study Visit w/c 31st July	Programme Leader to organise	*C*	
11.1.16 **MBA Study Visit** **Meeting**	Visa instructions and visa letters distributed Visit itinerary		Follow up students re Visa appointments	Chasing emails sent Due to shortage of appointments Programme Leader had to liaise with embassy and apply in bulk for Visas.	*C*	
Personal Tutor Meeting 1 **Oct Cohort** **CMI Training Session**	Review key elements – programme handbook. Generic Criteria Study Visit Critical skills support CMI Training		Follow up – study visit		*C*	

24 & 25.11.16 MBA Challenge	Students have rated this event as excellent – feedback collected via formal questionnaire		CMI to sponsor the event in 2016/7. Programme Leader to arrange meeting with CMI Representative.		*C*	
23.11.16 **Critical Skills** Source PSB 31.1.17		Visit could only accommodate 50% of the students	To be discussed at PSB 15.3.17	Oct visit re-scheduled to w/c 27th Feb – cancelled by Caterpillar Oct Visit rescheduled to 15th May. March visit awaiting confirmation Virgin 15th May. Arranged - Newcastle Racecourse	*C*	
17.10.16 **PG Induction** **Oct Starts**	Enhanced induction as per last year. Good feedback from students following this event, particularly as a bonding activity between students and familiarisation with the programme team.				*C*	Induction schedule Appendix 2.
MBA London Campus						
MBA TNE						

MDIS Centre Leader Visit December 2018	Positive feedback new MBA format MBA SCM MBA HRM			Centre Leader to liaise with MDIS re implementation. Approved by CPE< MDIS to deliver January 2018 Under query with CPE. CL and IO supporting MDIS queries.		

Learning and Development Week
February 27th – March 3rd 2017

Learning and Development week is planned to support your learning, to ensure you achieve your personal best during your MBA study. You should take time throughout this week to reflect on your first term and review module materials for Term 2, familiarising yourself with core texts and recommended reading. To support your personal development and ensure you maximise your potential, the following programme of activities has been organised by the MBA Programme Team, in collaboration with Central Employment Services and the university's Study Skills Team.

Date	Activity	Time & Room
Tuesday 28th Feb 2017	**Sunderland Futures Workshop** The session will cover job search strategies and marketing your skills on LinkedIn / online. The session will also incorporate a talk from interns on their personal career journeys.	**1 - 2.30pm** **RV414** **Marion Wilkes** **Careers Advisor CES**

Wednesday 1st March 2017	**<u>Cancellation Company Visit - Caterpillar</u>** This is rescheduled for 15th May.	
Wednesday 1st March 2017	**MBA Improving Academic Writing - with focus on <u>'critical' writing / skills</u>.** **This session is designed to build on your Term 1 assessment work,** with focus on incorporating a range of sources and structuring paragraphs to ensure an improved critical stance to your work.	**2pm – 3pm RV104 Boardroom Victoria Rafferty Study Skills Advisor Andrew McFadyen Study Skills Advisor**
Thursday 2nd March	**Critical Skills** Postgraduate session, critical skills development. For those who were unable to attend the session in Term 1 or would like to recap.	**2pm – 3pm RV408 Victoria Rafferty Study Skills Advisor Andrew McFadyen Study Skills Advisor**
Friday 3rd March	**MBA Searching and Evaluating Information** This session will kick start your thoughts and approach to your research methods module and final dissertation, with particular focus on approaching the literature review. This is an interactive ‘hands on’ session in a computer room designed to develop skills and teach you new techniques in searching for specific information. The session will introduce and familiarise you with the information data bases available to you via the university library system.	**10-11.30am DG208 Becky McClen Liaison Librarian for Business St. Peter’s Library**

Appendix.

24th April 2017 Depart Newcastle 15:50 Arrive Barcelona 19:20

Check in – Urbany Meridiana Hostel

25th April

11.00 - 12.30 Company Visit : Barcelona Olympic Stadium
One of Spain's major venues for sports, musical events, and corporate events. You will gain an insight into operations and events management on a large scale (seating capacity 77.000 people), understand the importance of the stadium's new infrastructure and high-tech equipment.

15.00 -17.00 Walking tour : Business District

Evening - free time to sightsee and explore the city

26th April
9.00 - Coach transfer to Torres winery

10.00-12.00 Company visit Torres Winery
An independent family company with over 100 years of heritage and an international presence. Market leader in the premium quality wine and spirit sector with differentiated products; the visit will enable you to understand the integration of technology in production processes and gain insight into strategic marketing management.

13.00 - Back in Barcelona

Afternoon and Evening - free time to sightsee and explore the city

27th April

09.00 - Coach transfer to Circuit de Catalunya

10.00 -12.00 Company Visit: Grand Prix Circuit: Circuit de Catalunya.
You will have the chance visit all the functional departments, learn how races are organised, resourced and controlled, where the mechanics work and have access to all private areas including; the briefing room, prepodium-podium, the press room, the race control lounge, the boxes and paddock.

13.00 Back in Barcelona

Afternoon and Evening - free time to sightsee and explore the city

28th April
Free time to sightsee and explore the city

Return: Depart Barcelona 21.35 Arr. Newcastle 23.20

Hi

Please find my feedback below,

* As a learning experience / contribution to MBA learning - please provide detail and particular examples or other relevant feedback?

The Barcelona trip was interesting to be able to apply theory to practice, understanding how a business operates and how that also translates to production. I especially enjoyed the Grand Prix and the Torres Winery, understanding how the Grand Prix is operational all year and for more events than just the Grand Prix. Also understanding Torres Winery and how this is a global business.

* As a cultural experience - if relevant please provide detail?

Yes, it was interesting to see how a different country is operating their business, but also to see how their organisation within the operation is conducted - this could be understood from the Barcelona match and how organised the movement of people was throughout.

*   As an opportunity for personal development - if relevant please provide detail?

Yes, it was an insightful visit in terms of finding our way around the city and also to experience a new location.

*   As a bonding experience - have you made new or deeper friendships during the visit? If so how / why has this taken place?

Yes, the benefit of sharing a room was encouraging of this and also with having spare time around the visits, there was an ability to spend time with each other socially.

*   Would you change the visit in any way?

N/A

*   Would you recommend the study visit to other MBA students?

Yes.

Please see my feedback below:

*   As a learning experience / contribution to MBA learning - please provide detail and particular examples or other relevant feedback ?

As a learning experience it was educational in a practical way such as the Torres winery in which the tour explained the process as well as the relation to business. This contributed to the MBA learning because modules such as global strategy are related to expansion and the tour shows how the company had grown through organic growth by targeting their local market first and expanding once they had specialized and performed well in their own geographical region.

*   As a cultural experience - if relevant please provide detail?

We had a local tour guide who gave us an authentic feel for the tour, option to stop and eat at local cultural places were offered as well as lots of information.

*	As an opportunity for personal development - if relevant please provide detail?

Yes, in terms of expanding knowledge and working together with fellow colleges.

*	As a bonding experience - have you made new or deeper friendships during the visit? If so how / why has this taken place?

Absolutely, with colleagues and teachers. We plan on meeting colleagues again outside of uni, in terms of the team classwork (we have a team work exercise on our return Tuesday in Global Strategy) the team dynamics were a lot friendlier and constructive. Usual quite members would be a lot more interactive due to the friendlier environment.

*	Would you change the visit in any way?

Maybe have less people in one room, however the hotel was clean in a great location - close by the metro and was just used for sleeping and showering , if the offer was to have less people in one room but be located further afield from the city centre I would prefer the original. If the price increased I would still prefer the original.

*	Would you recommend the study visit to other MBA students?

Yes, it was valuable in terms of building better relationships which colleagues which complements class time, and in terms of expanding practical knowledge.

Appendix 14

The Curriculum Design (i-design) Framework

University of Sunderland Integrated Curriculum Design Framework

Background

The University of Sunderland Integrated Curriculum Design Framework (i-design) brings together, for the first time, various key policy drivers such as embedding graduate attributes, promoting employability and developing an inclusive curriculum which enhances the student experience. The i- design framework consists of a model of curriculum development (consisting of six stages) and a set of curriculum elements which are embedded in the model.

Models of curriculum design enable us to articulate *what* students will learn but also describe *how* they will learn, be taught and assessed. A new curriculum design model will help drive pedagogical innovation and ensure that key principles, such as Universal Design for Learning, are embedded into programmes.

Many universities adopt 'product'-based curriculum design models with a focus on the end point of the graduate (O'Neil, 2010). Such a model is most often used when education focusses on graduates' contribution to society, either through work or by shaping the future of communities.

This document sets out how the Integrated Curriculum Design Framework aims to:

- **Ensure that our programmes are aligned to Graduate Attributes and actively promote employability.**
- **Promote innovation in teaching delivery and assessment, to ensure that our learners are engaged through a multiplicity of approaches to engaged active learning.**
- **Integrated programme design with the University Strategic Plan.**
- **Enhance the integration of research and teaching through the development of research- active curricula.**
- **Ensure that our programmes are inclusive through the adoption of Universal Design for learning principles.**

The Framework is not about making every programme the same but it is more about ensuring that our programmes are designed against a set of key principles. Many programmes already address many of the key principles outlined in this framework and there are numerous excellent examples of outstanding practice in teaching, learning and assessment across the University. The Integrated Curriculum Design Framework is about making sure all of our provision reaches the highest standards to facilitate student engagement and success.

The Framework

The Curriculum Design (i-design) Framework consists of six phases with five integrated elements (see Figure 01 page eight. It is important to note that the phases are not meant to be linear and that each phase may overlap or be run concurrently with other development activities.

The Framework phases are:

Phase One: Curriculum Vision

This stage involves visioning the future curriculum. Programme teams should consider feedback from current and past students as well as actively talking to key stakeholders such as Professional Bodies and employers. The programme team will consider the skills, knowledge and attributes a graduate will need in the next 5-10 years. For many of our programmes this stage will require academic staff to 'horizon scan' within their own profession, identifying changes in the way in which graduates will be expected to work in the future. In addition, courses requiring Professional Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) approval will need to ensure the programme aligns to these requirements.

The Graduate Attributes element, of the framework, will be engaged during this phase as it is important that the curriculum vision has a clear idea of how the programme will produce graduates who are not only able to meet the professional requirements but demonstrate achievement of the University's graduate attributes. This phase links to Future Shapers and Life Changers in the University's strategy as it aims to ensure that our graduates lives are transformed and that they are equipped with the skills, knowledge and ability to shaper with own and societies future.

Future Shapers

Life Changers

Phase Two: Participation

The participation stage relates to the basic premise that programme teams should not develop curricula without actively involving students, employers, other key stakeholders and where relevant professional bodies. Participation can be achieved through a number of means including having advisory and stakeholder groups or involving individuals at various points in global café events.

Phase Three: Mapping the Curriculum

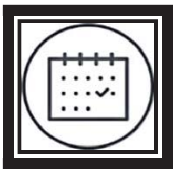
This stage involves writing programme learning outcomes and mapping where these are addressed and assessed. The programme learning outcomes should be developed with the graduate attributes in mind thereby engaging the graduate attributes element in this phase of curriculum design.

Some programmes will also identify how and where competencies are assessed alongside other educational outcomes.

Programme teams are asked to consider how the programme will prepare the student for employment. In some disciplines this may be focused on a module which eases the student's transition into a new graduate role. Other programmes may need to consider wider employment related skills much as applying for jobs, preparing curriculum vitae etc. By focusing on employability the curricula will describe how we will prepare students for the future and the world of work ensuring our curricula respond to the University's strategy as part of the element related to Tomorrow Makers.

The curriculum map will also examine the structure of each stage of the programme in terms of number and size of modules and whether these are delivered on a semesterised or year-long basis. When considering programme structure teams should be mindful of assessment schedules from the student's point of view and the need to provide feedback on assessed work to meet Universal Design for Learning Principles.

Tomorrow Makers



Phase Four: Design

In terms of curriculum development, the design phase is critical to a successful programme. During this phase teams develop modules, identify the programmes learning and teaching and assessment strategies. Four key elements are embedded into this phase, Universal Design for Learning, Engaged Learning, Employability and, incorporating Research Active elements into the curriculum.

Universal Design for Learning and Engaged Learning relate principally to the programmes learning and teaching strategy and the variety and nature of assessment within the programme. Programme teams should think carefully how they have embedded support for students making the transition into higher education and those transitioning from one academic stage to another. This together with building a sense of belonging and developing the student's assessment literacy are key components of a curricula which supports student success, attainment and student retention.

Employability can be promoted in a number of different ways from work placements, study abroad to support within modules related to applying for jobs and preparation for interviews. The University has developed a number of modules which are designed to help support programmes with meeting these needs alongside providing opportunities for students to learn new skills unrelated to their undergraduate programme.

Finally, the Research Active curriculum will seek to develop critical thinking, research and problem-solving skills amongst students. The approach taken will differ between disciplines but at a fundamental level staff would be able to incorporate their and colleagues research into teaching and students should have an opportunity to experience the research vibrant community by attending seminars and events where researchers showcase their work.

Knowledge Creators

Learning Engagers

Phase Five: Align and Plan Delivery

Phase five involves checking the constructive alignment of the outcomes, learning and teaching plan and assessment (Biggs, 1996). In addition, programme teams should ensure that the planned curriculum can be delivered in the resource envelope available. This involves working up the overall workload for programme delivery based on the Notional Student Workload. In addition, the programme team should think about the resource requirements in terms of specialist teaching staff, facilities and consumables. Where necessary programme teams should seek guidance from Faculty Management and Team Leaders about the resource requirements associated with programme delivery.

Boundary Breakers

Phase Six: Review and Revise

In order to ensure programmes are contemporary and leading the field programme teams should seek every opportunity to review delivery. This includes established mechanisms such as student feedback, Staff Student Liaison Committees and Programme Studies Boards. In addition, Annual Programme Monitoring provides an annual check on programme issues. As necessary programme teams should seek amendments to programmes to address concerns identified or to enhance programmes further.

The continued review and revision of programmes is an important element of both quality assurance and enhancement but it also helps the University to stay at the forefront of programme design and delivery ensuring we continue to break new ground and push the boundaries.

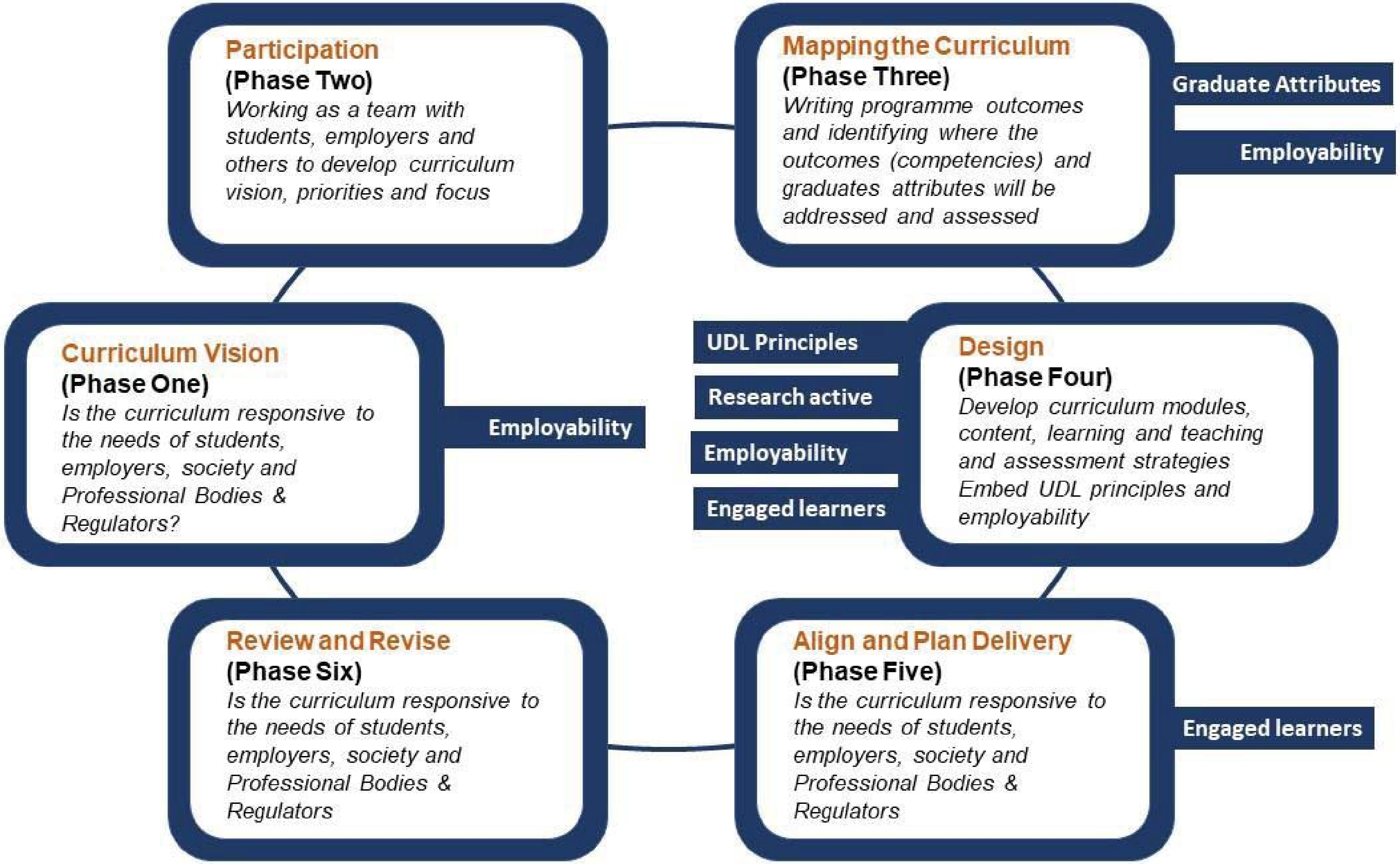


Figure 01: University of Sunderland Curriculum Design Framework Stages and their relationship to the elements

The Framework Elements

The University's Curriculum Design model is built around a framework of complementary elements which bring together, for the first time, a number of key priority areas associated with the University Strategy. The stands are shown diagrammatically below (Figure 02).

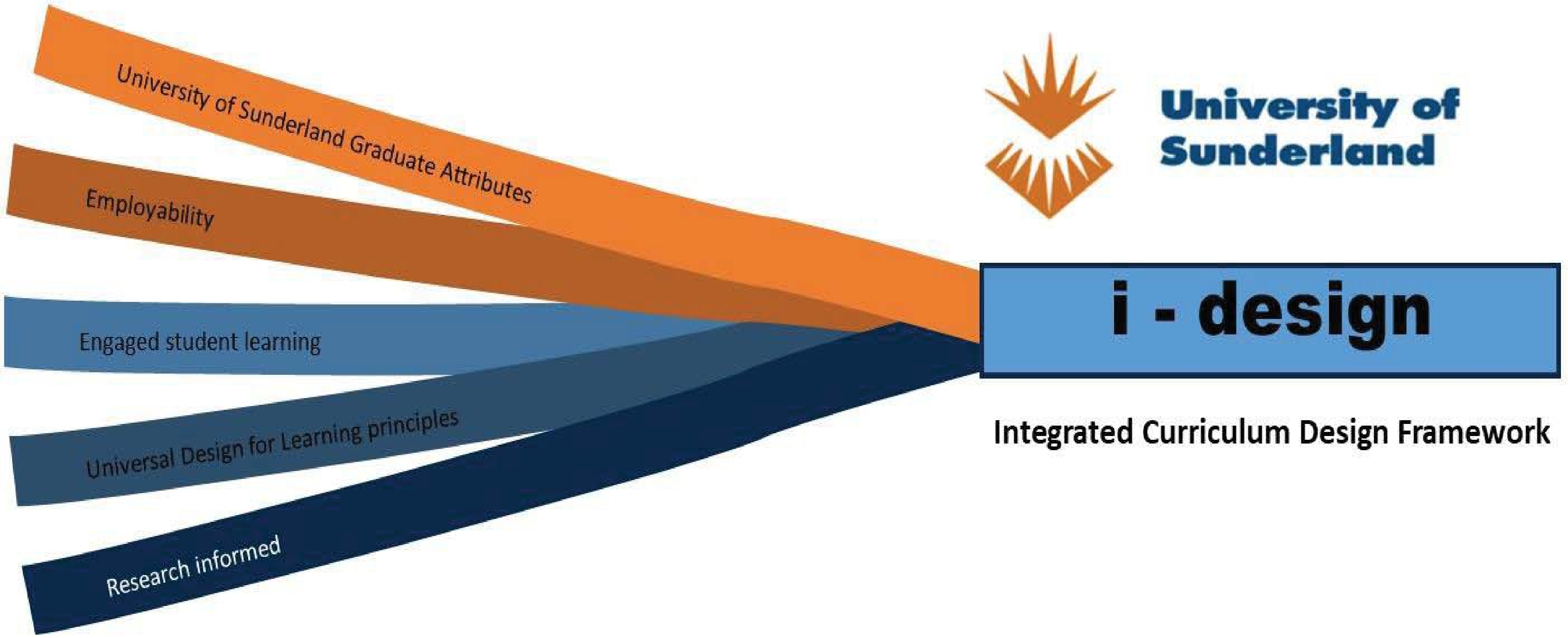


Figure 02: Framework Elements

Each of the elements are designed to ensure that programmes are developed which promote inclusion, student engagement and enable our graduates to make a positive contribution to local communities and the wider world through work, enterprise and engagement. Each of the element are described in detail in the remainder of this document.

Framework Element - One

Graduate Attributes

Graduate attributes are the skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviours which all graduates leave
University with irrespective of the course or subject they have studied. Graduate attributes are a key component of developing students for employment and they should be embedded throughout the curricula. Such embedding should ensure that programme learning outcomes are developed with graduate attributes in mind and the development of such attributes in students should be assessed within a programme.

As part of developing the curriculum design framework work has been undertaken to review the existing University graduate attributes. First developed in 1996 the existing seven attributes were,
on the whole, not well integrated into curriculum design and somewhat unachievable. The existing attributes were:

- **Active and agile thinks, decision makers and implementers**
- **Collaborators across subject areas and domains**
- **Leaders in communities**
- **Supporters of cultural diversity**
- **Active global citizens**
- **Digitally literate**
- **Confident professionals**

It is clear that some attributes were multi-faceted with several attributes in one while other
attributes were unachievable e.g. everyone who graduates from the University will be a leader in communities.

University Graduate Attributes

Following widespread consultation including a three-month social media crowd sourcing campaign with students, staff, alumni and employers three new graduate attributes have been developed.

Attribute	Links to University value	University of Sunderland graduates…
Professional	Inspired	display a professional attitude and the behaviours, skills and knowledge to make a positive contribution to society through work, research and community engagement
Adaptable	Innovative	are adaptable to change have resilience and are personally capable of problem solving and innovation
Engaged	Collaborative	are united by a desire to give something back to society and to develop communities locally, regionally and globally.

In revising the graduate attributes, we wanted to create a smaller number of attributes which were in keeping with the values of the University.

How do the Graduate Attributes fit the Curriculum Design?

The graduate attributes should be incorporated into the curriculum at all levels. Programme learning outcomes should clearly demonstrate that the student will leave with the attributes which are generic to all graduates alongside those which are discipline specific. This in turn will require the graduate attributes to be addressed in modules via teaching, learning and assessment strategies.
The graduate attributes should exist as a "golden" thread which runs through the curriculum.

Framework Element - Two

Promoting employability

Employability in higher education is often regarded as meaning one of three things, these are:

1. **Employability in terms of a graduate getting a job**
2. **Employability in terms of the student being developed by his / her experience of higher education (through both curricula and extra curricula processes)**
3. **Employability in terms of the possession of relevant achievements and / or potential**

The Higher Education Academy (2006) defined employability as “a set of achievements – skills, understandings and practical attributes – that makes a graduate more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupation, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy”.

While higher education, as a sector, often measures graduate employment it is widely acknowledged that employability, in terms of the curricula and extra curricula focus, should be more about a graduate being able to function in a job rather than find a graduate role within a given timescale
(Linke, 1991). Dacre Pool and Sewell (2007) describe how employability encompasses employability assets e.g. knowledge, skills and other attributes, deployment career management skills and presentation or job getting skills. As such the promoting employability element is linked to graduate attributes and discipline specific outcomes from programmes all of which should aim to develop a graduate’s employability.

Whilst, recognising that a curriculum should promote employability it is important to acknowledge that single interventions within a curriculum may not be sufficient to develop the social, cognitive and practical skills necessary for work. Therefore, employability must be embedded through the curriculum with linked stages and activities designed to build the core and transferable skills necessary for future work.

The Dearing Report (1997) identified the core graduate skills necessary to promote employability, these are:

- **Communication skills;**
- **Numeracy skills;**
- **Digital skills and;**
- **Learning how to learn.**

Alongside these core skills sits a set of transferable skills often related to disciplines but which can be applied in a variety of different situations, these include:

- **Problem solving;**
- **Critical thinking and reasoning;**
- **Project management;**
- **Analytical skills and the;**
- **Ability to cope with change.**

When embedding employability into a curriculum the Career EDGE model provides a useful framework to consider the various aspects of the approach (See Figure 03). Career EDGE is a clear framework for employability development that is useful for academic staff, career staff and others involved in employability activities (Dacre, pool and Sewell (2007).

The Career EDGE model has several layers. The EDGE elements are in the bottom layer and these represent subject and generic skills, experiences and individual abilities which are essential for future employment.

Career Development Learning: this involves helping student to acquire the knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes which will equipment them to manage their careers.

Experience (Work and Life): this involves providing work experience and identifying the life

experiences which may make the individual more employable. This may include, but is not limited to, team working, organisational skills, communication skills etc. in a volunteer or paid work context.

Degree subject knowledge, skills and understanding: this is the discipline specific knowledge, skills and experience provided as part of the University course.

Generic skills (including enterprise): this includes skills related to problem solving, team working, digital literacy and enterprise skills such as creativity and innovation.

Emotional intelligence: emotional Intelligence ability is concerned with how people perceive, understand and manage emotion; a graduate who is unable to pay attention to their own and others feelings, understand those feelings and manage them effectively is likely to experience difficulties in their personal relationships and their professional relationships with colleagues, managers and customers.

The next layer of the model concerns building **self-efficacy, self-esteem** and **confidence** through a process of **reflection and evaluation**.

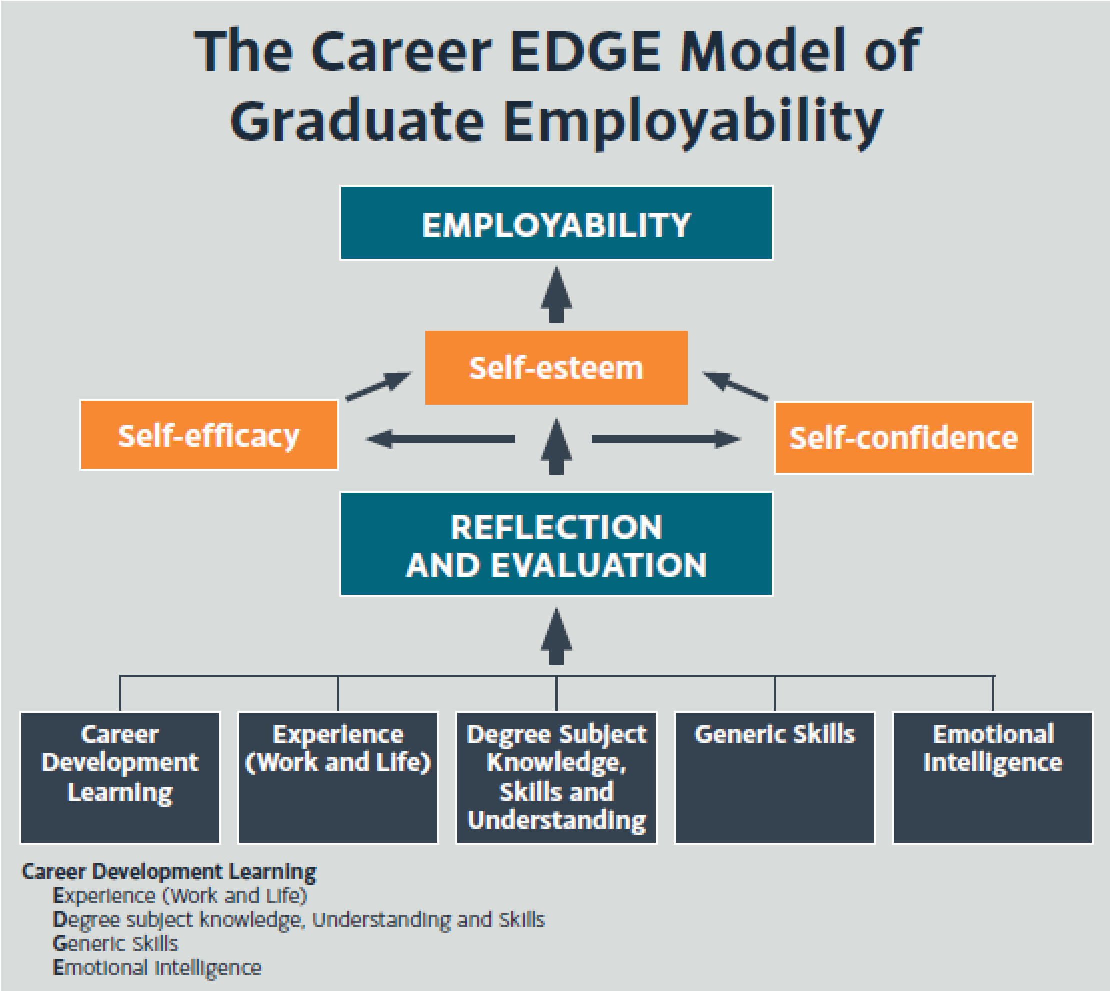


Figure 03: The Career EDGE Model

Engaged student learning

Student engagement is widely recognised as an important influence on achievement and learning in higher education (Kahu, 2013). Engaged student learning is defined as the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion that students show when they are learning or being taught, which extends to the level of motivation they have to learn and progress in their education (Glossary of Education Reform, 2016).

The engaged student learning element of the framework relates to how programmes are delivered in terms of learning, teaching and assessment. Student engagement in learning requires learning to be active rather than students sitting passively in lectures receiving information. Active learning enables students to deepen their learning of a topic than they would by listening to a lecture of reading a book or other materials. Active learning has benefits for staff as well as it allows them opportunities to interact with students, receive feedback and check levels of understanding.

Active learning is an approach rather than a fixed set of activities. At a basic level, teachers should aim to mix activities to ensure that students are actively engaged in learning at various points in a lesson. This does not mean that there is no place for traditional lectures but rather that such approaches should be mixed with other activities where students interact with the material, each other and the teacher.

Active learning can be used within traditional methods of teaching by incorporating the use of technology. Audience response systems or online polling / quizzes can make lectures more interactive. While flipped approaches can be used to deliver lecture material via video which students watch at their leisure prior to a related interactive seminar or workshop.

Different disciplines use different signature pedagogies including problem, case and team-based learning, simulation, creative approaches, object-based learning etc. Ideally, these approaches should be supported by other methods of learning to ensure that student's experience a variety of different approaches to teaching and learning. This approach would be in keeping with the principle of multiple means of representation highlighted in the section on Universal Design for Learning.

How does Engaged Student Learning fit with Curriculum Design?

Programme teams are required to consider how they will engage students in learning and describe the approach in the programme specification under the learning and teaching strategy and the assessment strategy respectively.

Framework Element - Four

Universal Design for Learning Principles

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Principles will be embedded into all of our curricula. UDL Principles aim to help all student learn by recognising that each personal has their own learning needs and styles. UDL Principles in Higher Education originate from Universal Design thinking. Such an approach recognises that when a designer designs a product if it often created for the "average user". Universal design is a process by which products are designed to be usable by all people to the greatest extent possible without the need for adaption (The Centre for Universal Design, 1996).

What does this mean for our courses?

Well simply substitute the work product for course. Our courses need to be designed to make them usable by everyone, to the greatest possible extent. Adoption of UDL principles recognises that people learn in different ways and express what they have learnt in different ways. Therefore, some students may like to revise for and complete an examination, while others may prefer presentations.

UDL principles strive to make educational products and surroundings welcoming, accessible and usable by everyone. As such UDL principles put high value on both diversity and inclusiveness.

Principle 1: Multiple means of representation

This principle recognises that students differ in how they perceive and comprehend information and new knowledge. The focus is on:

- **teaching methods and techniques;**
- **making connections;**
- **presenting ideas;**
- **modelling enquiry.**

This principle acknowledges that there is no single best way to present information or transfer knowledge and that introducing variety in the way in which materials are presented is the key.

Principle 2: Multiple means of expression

This principle recognises that students differ in how they express what they know or have learnt. The focus is on:

- **multiple means of assessment within a programme;**
- **assessment choice;**
- **scaffolding and supporting students to develop assessment literacy;**
- **focused timely and forward-looking feedback.**

This principle acknowledges that some students perform better in certain types of assessment than others and that introducing choice or variety is the key to developing a course using UDL principles.

Principle 3: Multiple means of engagement

This principle recognises that people engage in learning, and therefore learn, through different means. The focus is on:

- **variety of engagement methods as part of learning;**
- **making reading and materials available in advance of taught sessions;**
- **mixing individual, group and peer learning;**
- **developing interactive elements.**

This principle acknowledges that students learn best when they are engaged. This principle fits with the engaged student learning element within the curriculum framework.

In summary, UDL is about ensuring programmes have:

- **Multiple delivery methods which motivate and engage learners in active learning**
- **Examples which appeal to students from different backgrounds, countries and cultures**
- **Regular accessible and effective interactions between the student and the teacher**
- **A firm statement about class outlines, reading and notes being available in advance of taught sessions, seminars and workshops**
- **A system where taught materials can be revisited including via lecture materials being made available on the Virtual Learning Environment and where appropriate review session recording via screencast**
- **A plan to develop assessment literacy by providing iterative feedback on work as it is developed**
- **An assessment strategy which has a variety of assessment techniques and a mix of high and low stakes assessment**

Framework Element - Five

Research Active

The University of Sunderland is committed to a curriculum that is research-active. We define this as a curriculum that:

- **Engages our learners throughout their programme of study, from first entry, as active participants in enquiry, research and knowledge utilisation relevant to their discipline(s) and/or professional practice.**

- **Equips learners to be confident thinkers and problem solvers who have an understanding of the processes by which knowledge is produced, an ability to identify the current boundaries in their subject field and are motivated to produce new knowledge and understanding through enquiry, critique and synthesis.**

- **Is informed at all levels by current and emerging developments in research and professional practice in the discipline.**

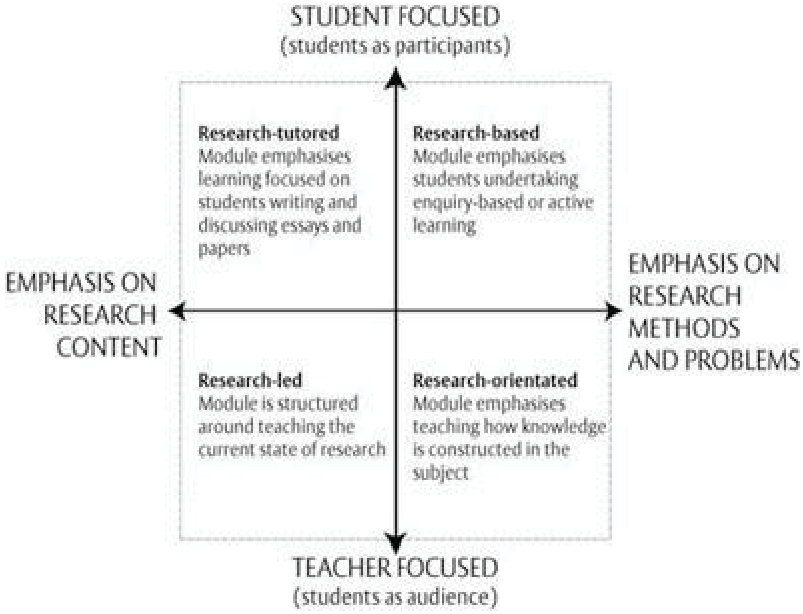
- **Is supported by the professional expertise of staff, and by the University's research and consultancy activities.**

- **Is designed to provide opportunities for students to engage in research activities and to meet University research teams during their studies.**

Curriculum Development

Ensuring that there are links between the University's research activity and its taught programmes is a key element of both the Research & Innovation Strategy and the Student Success Strategy. This element of the curriculum model is designed to ensure that our programmes make explicit links to research, utilise contemporary pedagogical research in their development and delivery and allow students to interact with University research active staff and teams.

A research-active curriculum may be based on pedagogical processes whereby students are encouraged to operate as 'junior researchers' in the way in which they approach their learning (even if they are not producing original research) or it may focus on solving problems through enquiry and using research or helping students understand issues in current research. All three elements may be engaged across the stages and modules of a programme. This dynamic was articulated by Mick Healey in 2005 as follows:



Healey, M. (2005) Linking research and teaching to benefit student learning, *Journal of Geography in Higher Education,* 29 (2), pp.183-201.

Various pedagogical approaches lend themselves to achieving a research active curriculum including problem-based learning, research methods teaching and seminars focused on the review, critique and utilisation of evidence. At the same time teaching staff are in a strong position to share contemporary research with students and all students should have an opportunity to participate in the activities of the University's Research Institutes by attending seminars and talking to researchers. Figure 03 illustrates various approaches to engaging students in the research work of a University (Tong et al, 2018). The areas inside the boxes are those approaches which are frequently used and the approaches in ovals are less commonly seen within a curriculum.

A research active curriculum may also be built on using pedagogical research to inform our approaches to student learning, teaching and assessment. The University of Sunderland has a strong track record in pedagogical research in higher education and many of the approaches which have been developed and evaluated are already embedded into our programmes.

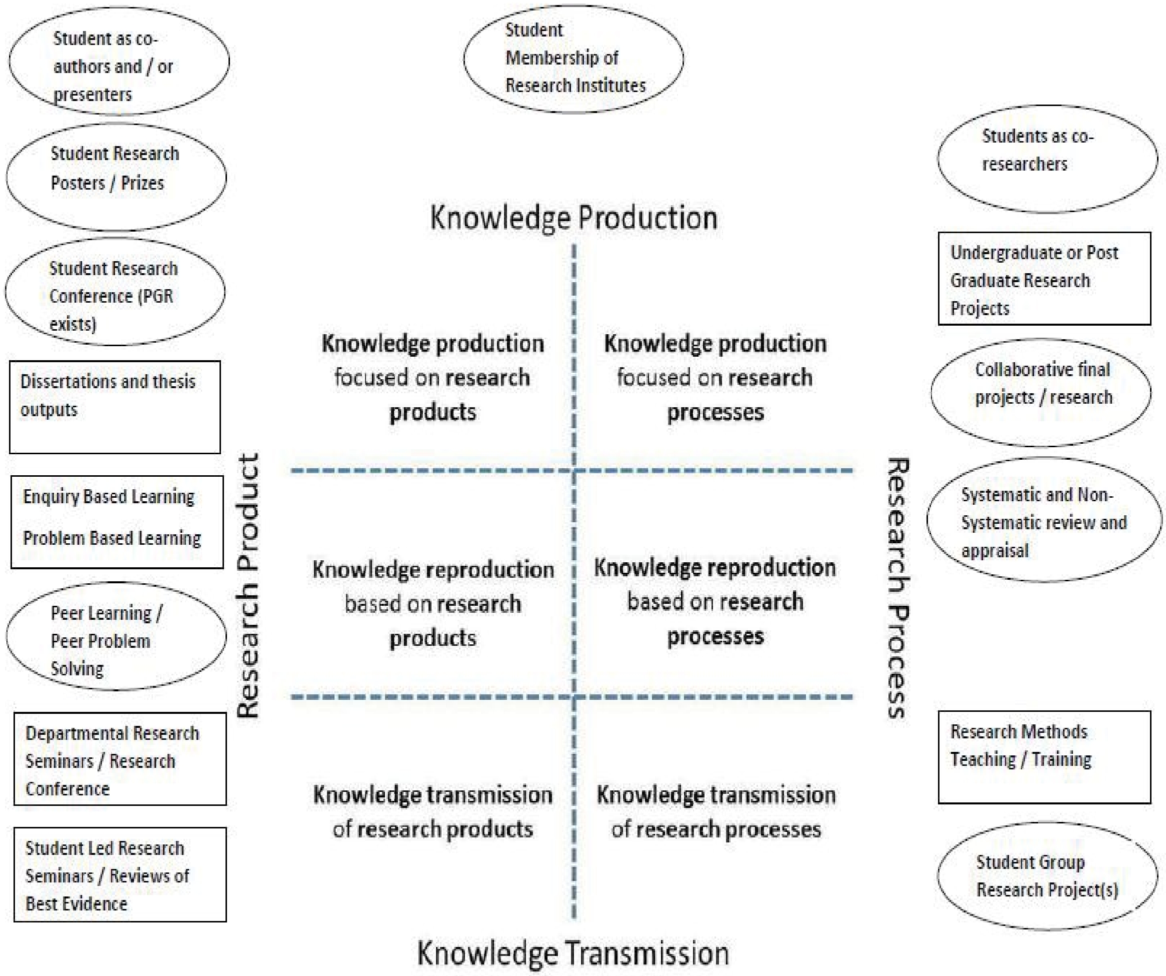


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Figure 03: Approaches to engaging students in research communities

Sources of help and advice

Academic Registry – Quality Team

The Quality Team in Academic Registry can advise on programme review and approval processes, documentation requirements and other issues related to programme approval and amendment.

The Centre for the Enhancement of Learning & Teaching (CELT)

CELT can provide individual or team-based support for curriculum design. This includes advice about meeting the requirements of each of the Framework's elements. CELT runs a range of continuing professional development sessions and team-based assessment labs to assist staff to develop innovative approaches to teaching, learning and assessment.

Teaching and Learning Support in Faculties

A number of Faculties have Principal Lecturers, Associate Professors and / or Professors of Professional Practice in Learning and Teaching who can assist teams to develop innovative approaches to teaching, student support and assessment.

Guides

A range of guides related to signature pedagogies, enhancing research opportunities for students and technology enhanced learning.

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