

**How are Academic Heads of Department
supported to undertake their diverse roles in
post-1992 English Higher Education
Institutions?**

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Abstract

There has been acceptance for some time of the importance of the role of the academic Head of Department (HoD) to the successful delivery of a Higher Education Institution's (HEI) vision and strategy. It has been argued that due to the increased pace of change in English Higher Education in the last few years, with a trebling of fees and regulatory change, a recent Higher Education and Research Act (2017), and the introduction of the Teaching Excellence Framework, that there is even more need for effective HoDs. There has also been acceptance for some time that the training and support provided for those taking on the HoD role has been limited. The focus of this research study is how academic HoDs in post-1992 English HEIs are supported to undertake their role, taking into account both how decisions are made and their academic identity.

This study adopted an interpretive approach – in line with social constructivism – exploring the perceptions, feeling, and beliefs of HoDs. 14 semi-structured interviews were undertaken with HoDs in two post-1992 English HEIs to obtain their views on how decisions are taken either in a managerial or collegial manner, how their identity forms part of the support they draw upon, and the informal and formal networks and support mechanisms they utilise. A further seven semi-structured interviews were undertaken with senior managers to triangulate the data from HoDs. The data was analysed using template analysis and the key themes were identified.

The findings suggest firstly that HoDs prefer a decision-making environment that utilises a 'soft' form of managerialism or collaborative and collegial culture in which decisions are made. This form of 'soft' managerialism, it is argued, allows for the development of informal support mechanisms. Secondly, the study found that HoDs were unable to maintain their research whilst being in the role (and this was a frustration to them), but they found their disciplinary networks and identity important in undertaking the role of HoD. Finally, the study established that the informal forms of support accessed by HoDs, either within or outside their institution, were of most value in allowing them to successfully undertake their role. The time and space to network and reflect with others on the common challenges they all faced provided the support that was of greatest value to HoDs.

Although the findings from this study cannot be generalised they could be of value to HEIs and human resources managers, as well as designers of HoD leadership programmes in taking into account how best to support the development of informal support networks for HoDs.

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Declaration

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of the University of Gloucestershire and is original except where indicated by specific reference in the text. No part of the thesis has been submitted as part of any other academic award. The thesis has not been presented to any other education institution in the United Kingdom or overseas.

Any views expressed in the thesis are those of the author and in no way represent those of the University.

Signed:

Date:

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Abbreviations

CA	– Change Academy
DBA	– Doctor of Business Administration
DVC	– Deputy Vice-Chancellor
ESRC	– Economic and Social Research Council
HoD	– Head of Department
HE	– Higher Education
HEA	– Higher Education Academy
HEI	– Higher Education Institution
KPI	– Key Performance Indicator
LFHE	– Leadership Foundation for Higher Education
MBA	– Master of Business Administration
NPM	– New Public Management
NSS	– National Student Survey
REF	– Research Excellence Framework
SSL	– Senior Strategic Leadership
TEF	– Teaching Excellence Framework
PhD	– Doctorate of Philosophy
PVC	– Pro-Vice-Chancellor
VC	– Vice-Chancellor

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Chapter One – Introduction

1. Introduction and Context

1.1 Orientation

Discussion of the role of the academic Head of Department (HoD) has been ongoing for a considerable period in the academic literature. The role of the academic HoD as a pivotal figure in managing the tensions between both academic values and academic autonomy, set against the corporate university and the delivery of institutional change, has been recognised for decades (Bryman, 2009; Clegg & McAuley, 2005; Deem & Brehony, 2005; Hancock & Hellowell, 2003; Hellowell & Hancock, 2001; Stark, 2002; Winter, 2009). For the purposes of this study, the term HoD has been used in relation to academic managers who are leading and managing groups of academic staff. The HoD term does not relate to professional Heads of Department (HoDs) who are running central professional teams, for example, admissions or registry. Included in this definition of HoDs are academic HoDs, Associate Deans and Associate Heads of School. There was one current Associate Dean in this study who, at the time of interview, had only recently taken on the role so was thus answering questions from his most recent HoD role as Head of Department Psychology.

There have been a range of studies in the last two decades that have considered the differing roles of academic middle managers in delivering institutional outcomes, along with the range of identities and diverse roles of HoDs (Bolden et al., 2012; Bryman, 2007; Clegg & McAuley, 2005; Enders, 2007; Floyd, 2012; Gentle & Forman, 2014; Hancock & Hellowell, 2003; Locke, Whitchurch, Smith, & Mazenod, 2015). There has been growing interest in the last four decades, from a HoD's perspective, in the tension between collegiality and managerialism in terms of how decisions are made in HEIs (Davis, Jansen van Rensburg, & Venter, 2016; Deem, 1998; Flinn & Mowles, 2014; Kolsaker, 2008; Trow, 1993; Trowler, 2010).

Within the last decade there has been increasing interest in the literature as to how well prepared HoDs are for the diversity of roles they undertake (Bolden et al., 2012; Bryman, 2007; Jones, Harvey, Lefoe, & Ryland, 2011; Marshall, 2012; Tourish, 2013; Tysome, 2014).

Much of this discussion has focused on the formal leadership training offered to HoDs (Gentle & Forman, 2014; Tourish, 2013; Tysome, 2014). Furthermore, the literature discusses tensions between managerialism and collegiality and ‘soft’ and ‘hard’ forms of managerialism (Bacon 2014; Davis et al., 2016; Deem, 1998; Deem & Behony, 2005; Jones, Harvey, Lefoe, & Ryland, 2014; Magalhães, Veiga, & Videira, 2017; Trow, 1993). There is much discussion in the literature regarding the many differing roles undertaken by HoDs, including operating as boundary spanners (Bolden et al., 2012; Gentle & Forman, 2014; Ramaley, 2014) as well as negotiators and facilitators who are always moving between differing identities (Bolden et al., 2012; Clegg & McAuley, 2005; Floyd, 2012; Gentle & Forman, 2014; Stark, 2002). There is also discussion in the HoD literature about the tensions which can arise when trying to keep a research profile at the same time as dealing with the administrative burden of being a HoD (Feng & Sun, 2013; Floyd & Dimmock, 2011; Floyd, 2016).

Surprisingly, few articles have been published about the support offered to HoDs in higher education (HE) (Floyd, 2016). This aspect of support for HoDs in English HE has not been given much attention. The key issues identified by Floyd in the study are that a collegial model in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and Departments is more valued by HoDs and any support needs to be focused on what he terms ‘authentic academic value systems’. The argument being put forward is that HEIs that follow a new public management (NPM) ideology should offer support and development for academic middle managers that is not based upon driving up productivity at the expense of staff motivation and academic values. Secondly, he outlines that any support for HoDs should take account of specific leadership requirements and the working context of the HoDs, while taking account of the institution as a whole. Thirdly, he argues that HoDs who take on the role need to be supported appropriately with the development of the necessary management and leadership skills. The final point made by Floyd is that generic training programmes developed by HEIs need to be purposely designed for HoDs, taking account of the cultural differences between different departments within large HEIs. There has been some discussion in recent literature about the value HoDs place on establishing networks as something they feel is important in enabling them to undertake their role (Davis et al., 2016; Floyd & Preston, 2014; Marshall, Orrell, Cameron, Bosanquet, & Thomas, 2011).

Thus, the issue of the value that HoDs place on formal and informal support networks is under-researched. Furthermore, the question of how newly appointed HoDs are encouraged and supported to develop (through formal and informal mechanisms) the skills of networking is also under-researched. In addition, there is a limited amount of research on how to build a support network both across the institution and externally. Of note is the fact that the majority of the existing studies discussed above are based on relatively small samples, and as most of the studies acknowledge, further studies are required to consider how HoDs are developed to cope with the challenges inherent in their role (Davis et al., 2016; Floyd & Preston, 2014; Floyd, 2016; Marshall et al., 2011).

Questions arising from the existing studies (Davis et al., 2016; Floyd & Preston, 2014; Marshall et al., 2011) include: (i) How are academic staff supported to become HoDs? (ii) What formal and informal support is available for HoDs to develop support networks within their faculty and HEI? (iii) What informal and formal support and training needs to be offered to the HoDs at induction and throughout their time in post? (iv) How can internal and external leadership programmes enable HoDs to develop the support systems and networks to make them effective in their role?

It could be argued that this topic ‘support systems and networks’ is vital to the effective running and sustainability of academic departments due to what Locke et al. (2015) argue is the key role of HoDs in the complex area of strategy and policy. HoDs have to ‘interpret and adopt’ this strategy and policy for local consumption. It has been suggested that HoDs have a “crucial role as ‘sounding boards’ for issues coming from the bottom up and quite possibly may be able to make a substantial contribution to the institution ‘as a critical space, in which fair and balanced judgments are seen to be made’ (Locke et al., 2015, p. 20)”. Thus, having HoDs who survive and thrive in their role and become effective HoDs is crucial to the delivery of English universities’ agendas.

1.2 Research Questions

The main research question posed by this thesis is: How are Academic Heads of Department supported to undertake their diverse roles in post-1992 English Higher Education Institutions?

In order to answer the main question, the research questions listed below were developed:

RQ1. How do HoDs see their role in decision making in their HEI?

RQ2. How do HoDs perceive and describe their diverse roles and identities as HoDs?

RQ3. What forms of support do HoDs obtain to undertake their role?

1.3 Conceptual Framework

The focus of this study is to address the issues of how academic HoDs are supported to undertake their diverse and challenging roles in the constant change that is taking place in the English HE system. The issue being addressed is how this support is provided both formally and informally throughout the lifecycle of a HoD.

This study is framed by key concepts which enable the research questions to be answered. The first key concept is that of new managerialism and collegiality, and what has been termed ‘soft’ and ‘hard’ managerialism (Deem, 1998; Magãlhaes et al., 2017; Trow, 1993). Secondly, the concept of academic identities and the diverse role of HoDs are discussed, drawing on relevant literature about both HoDs and academics (Clegg, 2008; Degn, 2015; Floyd, 2009; Floyd, 2012; Gentle & Forman 2014; Thian, Alam, & Idris; 2016). Part of this discussion on academic identity is about the challenge HoDs face in trying to conduct research at the same time as they are attempting to keep up a research profile (Feng & Sun, 2013; Floyd & Dimmock, 2011). Thirdly, the issues of formal and informal types of support will be addressed. The need for formal support and training for HoDs comes through the literature (Altbach, 2011; Marshall, 2010; Marshall, 2012; Thian et al., 2016), as does the importance of informal forms of support

(Branson, Franken & Penney, 2016; Fisher, Landry, & Naumer, 2007; Floyd & Preston, 2014; Floyd 2016; Tysome, 2014).

Finally, issues of mentoring and coaching are recognised as being critical to the development of HoDs (Gentle & Forman, 2014; Jones & Harvey, 2016; Marshall 2012; Thian et al., 2016; Tourish, 2013).

The analytical framework for this study is bound up in the connections, linkages and interrelationships between the concepts presented here of new managerialism and collegiality, the multiple identities and roles of HoDs, and the formal and informal type of support and training accessed and utilised by HoDs. It has been argued that we need HoDs who can ‘span boundaries’ and are thus internally and externally focused (Bolden et al., 2012; Gentle & Forman, 2014; Ramaley, 2014). This study is attempting to address how to develop the formal and informal support networks for HoDs to allow them to successfully navigate the multiple challenges they face.

1.4 Literature Review

This thesis will start with a review of the literature, focusing firstly on the key drivers of change in HEIs within the United Kingdom (UK), specifically those in England, and looking at the role of government policy in particular. Secondly, it will be essential to review key managerial concepts or ideologies relevant to English universities, specifically including NPM, new managerialism and collegiality. Thirdly, the review will consider the primary forms of management in English HEIs, those of top-down, bottom-up and the more recent middle-out. Fourthly, a substantive element of the discussion will follow (and focus upon) middle managers and their role in English HEIs and change management. Finally, the review will finish with the development of a conceptual framework for the study.

1.5 Methodology

To answer the three research questions this study adopts an interpretative design in line with social constructivism, examining the perceptions, beliefs and feelings of HoDs regarding decision making, their identity and the types of support they receive. The interpretive approach “means attaching significance to what is found, making sense of

findings, offering explanations, drawing conclusions...” (Patton, 2015, p. 570). This study adopts a case study design as the method for presenting data.

A qualitative research approach is taken which uses semi-structured interviews as the vehicle for data collection because they allow for open-ended questions while also giving the interviewee some flexibility as part of the data collection process (Flick, 2014). I conducted pilot interviews at a local HEI and changed the focus of some of the open questions as a result of these pilot interviews. I interviewed 14 academic HoDs at two post-1992 English, city-based HEIs each with student numbers of greater than 25,000 students. I interviewed a further seven senior leaders from the two HEIs.

The interviews with the senior leaders in both HEIs supplemented the data obtained from the interviews with HoDs about the realities regarding the types of support available for the, and offered a triangulation of the data collected from HoDs. Thematic analysis (King, 2004) was used as the method used for analysing the interview data into codes and themes and, according to Brooks, McCluskey, Turley, & King (2015), is extensively used in the management and organisational research as well as other disciplinary areas. I undertook an initial review of the interview transcripts using the questions as the starting point for the structure of the coding process. After working through five full interview transcripts, I refined the codes (Crabtree & Miller, 1999) and themes to a confirmed structure that I then used to analyse the rest of the interview transcripts. See Appendix 1 for the draft codes/themes, Appendix 2 for the final codes/themes, and Appendix 3 for an edited example of interview transcript coding.

1.6 Findings and Discussion

There have been a range of previous studies on the topic of HoDs as well as similar topics that have considered leadership styles (Davies, Hides, & Casey, 2001), the nature of the manager-academic (Deem, 2004), collegiality and managerialism (Bacon, 2014; Branson et al., 2016; ; Davis et al, 2016; Deem & Brehony, 2005; Hellowell & Hancock, 2001), excellence in learning and teaching, (Gibbs, Knapper, & Piccinin, 2009), sensemaking, (Degn, 2015), effective leadership (Bryman, 2007, Stark, 2002), and academic identity (Floyd, 2009; Floyd, 2012; Winter, 2009). Apart from Floyd and Preston (2014) and Floyd (2016), there has been little research looking at the formal and

informal support HoDs need to undertake the differing roles and identities required in the modern post-1992 university.

It has been argued in recent studies that there is limited research on the topic of middle managers in HE and that this issue has not been fully explored, either from an empirical or theoretical perspective (Branson et al., 2016; Davis et al., 2016).

It is recognised that the findings from this study cannot be extrapolated to all HoDs in post-1992 HEIs. However, a better awareness of how HoDs can be prepared for their challenging and complex role is of value on some levels and to a range of individuals and stakeholders (Tysome, 2013). In the first instance, it could be claimed that human resource managers and organisational development managers will be interested in how HoDs are identified and developed regarding succession planning, workforce planning and the development of effective internal leadership and management programmes. Secondly, the leadership of the HEI will see the retention and development of HoDs as vital and potentially see them as having a critical contribution to make to their university in ensuring that decisions are made in a fair and balanced way (Locke et al., 2015). Thirdly, at departmental, school and faculty level, it will be vital to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (PVC) Dean or Dean to have a team of HoDs who can deliver on the key performance indicators (KPIs) set by the university around recruitment, retention, student experience and income targets. In UK HEIs, KPIs are set around specific targets for outcomes such as retaining students and student satisfaction. So, the KPI for the institution and department is a measurable value that indicates how effectively an organisation is achieving its business objectives. Finally, the findings will be of interest to agencies such as the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (LFHE) and the Higher Education Academy (HEA) in the UK – who both offer a range of leadership development programmes for HoDs – regarding giving further consideration to the development of formal and informal network/support opportunities within their range of programmes.

1.7 Anchoring a Personal Journey

It is an important part of this study to locate myself within it and identify my journey as a researcher. Through this journey of discovery, I will be drawing on my professional

and academic development over the last 20 years. After my undergraduate studies at Southville University in 1986, I began a career in public service management.

During that period, I continued to be interested in developing my academic qualifications and undertook a Diploma in Management Studies in 1989–1990 at what was then Northville Polytechnic.¹ This led to me wanting to take my interest in academia further and in 1992–3, I undertook a Master of Arts by Research in Management at what had then become Northville University, the thesis for which focused on the value of the appraisal process to managers. Central to it was the dynamic of change management. Looking back, this decision was a tipping point in my career in some ways. Firstly, through undertaking a series of semi-structured interviews for my research topic it developed what would help to define my philosophical position, one which I now recognise as that of being an interpretivist. I will return to this later when I discuss my theoretical position. Secondly, the experience of being engaged in academic research and within the HE environment led me to decide that I wanted to pursue a career in HE. In 1995, I took up my first academic post at Centralville College as a senior lecturer.

It was during my first academic post that it was suggested by the Director of Research that I sign up for a Doctorate of Philosophy (PhD). This idea was now planted in my psyche and would be one to which I would return over the next decade or so. Instead of the PhD, in 1998 I enrolled on a Master of Business Administration (MBA) at Eastville University. During the process of undertaking the assessments for the MBA, again they were located on change management at Centralville College. The thesis I will pick up again later but built on the methodological approach I had taken in the Master of Arts by Research in Management and used qualitative semi-structured interviews.

It was during this period that I moved universities and joined Westville University where I stayed for four years, finished the MBA and started to become more involved in research within my subject area of Sport and Exercise as well as pedagogical research. I became active in my HEA Subject Centre. It was during the MBA that I met a senior academic, a senior lecturer at Eastville University who again encouraged enrolment on a

¹ All Higher Education Institution names are pseudonyms

PhD. I did get to the stage of conducting a pilot study before actually registering for the PhD on the topic of ‘The Sports Development Footprint of Major Sporting Facilities’. I discovered after undertaking the pilot that I was not motivated by this issue.

However, in 2004 when I moved to the University of Southtown as HoD – where the majority of the staff had PhDs – in my mind it was becoming an issue of having credibility with the staff I was managing. I was busy managing a large department and had a young family so again put off the idea of a PhD. I will revisit this later as part of the process of my professional development.

1.7.1 Engagement with the LFHE and Formal Leadership Training: 2005 to Present

It was during my appraisal in 2005 – after a particularly busy year – that it became clear that we jointly identified the need for some form of external management development. I had previously come into contact with the LFHE and my engagement with them would be significant in the identification of my broad interest in strategic change in HE, and later on, middle managers as change agents in HE. The LFHE course I identified was Preparing for Senior Strategic Leadership. This programme was my first exposure to the issues of leadership and change in the HE sector. Through engagement with colleagues from across the sector I learned a great deal about the common issues that all HEIs were dealing with. On reflection, it was through the six months of my engagement with this course that I became interested in and intrigued by the issues of leadership and strategic change in HE. I would contact a fellow course participant at a later date and we would jointly bid for funding for a change management project.

In 2005–6, I worked on a joint bid with our then Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) academic to become a Leadership Fellow of the LFHE. This effort was successful and led to a £30,000 allocation of funding for a project. On reflection, this was a pivotal moment for me in moving away from my focus on the discipline/subject area towards an interest in the strategic issues facing a university. Through this project, I became exposed to the mechanisms of how universities initiate and manage strategic change. I gained an insight into how my own university approached managing change and how they both empowered and disempowered staff as part of this process.

Towards the end of 2006, the Leadership Fellowship Project was coming to an end, and I discussed with the DVC that one of the key recommendations from the final report was the need for a much wider review of universities' student support systems. Through the LFHE Preparing for Senior Strategic Leadership course that I had just undertaken, I became aware of the opportunity to be part of a National Change Academy (CA) Programme, a jointly funded project run by the HEA and the LFHE, supporting universities managing a strategic change project in their own institutions.

An application was made in early 2007 to be part of the 2007 HEA CA Programme; a year-long programme of support for teams from HE institutions that enables them to develop the knowledge, capacity and enthusiasm for achieving complex institutional change. CA provides support for the change process through a four-day residential and through some key interventions. In particular, CA provides the space and time to think through (and plan) a major strategic project. The CA experience took place in 2007 and focused on taking away a group of four senior academics, three central managers, and one ex-student Union President. The strategic issue the team addressed was how to reform student services within universities. The discussion to follow focuses on: reflecting upon and examining the impact that the CA process and experience had upon the team; the barriers faced in implementing change and how they were overcome; and sector-wide lessons.

The outcome of the residential change experience was the establishment of 'one stop shops' for student advice and support, along with a new personal tutoring system. The process of gaining full commitment to implement these plans led to me leading a university-wide programme of change to gain buy-in and commitment to these new plans. On reflection, it was during this process that I gained a real insight into what it meant to be a middle manager trying to implement strategic change in a university. I had to be a political animal dealing with deans who tried to derail the project. Furthermore, as a team we had to overcome resistance in different parts of the university.

In November 2008 through to July 2009 I undertook the LFHE Senior Strategic Leadership (SSL) Programme. Thus, at the same time as running the CA programme, I was taking another process of reflective leadership development through the LFHE SSL

Programme. I met a further set of middle to senior managers from across the sector who were dealing with the same issues I was facing. In 2009, I was successful in my application to be part of the National CA Planning team. Through this process, I reviewed the submissions of other teams and became a critical friend to the Northtown Team in 2009. This was a very developmental time for me as middle to senior manager in HE. Through both the SSL programme and acting in the role of critical friend to the Northtown team, I spent a significant amount of time reflecting on how I managed to change and the challenges both I and other middle managers faced in managing change in HE. It was during the LFHE SSL 2008–9 programme that I met a fellow participant who was Dean of Learning Resources at Midtown University. In late 2009, I had identified an opportunity to develop further my burgeoning interest in middle management and change via the potential of submitting a bid for LFHE Small Development Grant of £10,000.

I discussed my ideas with the Director of Programmes at the LFHE, and he indicated that he felt that the area of middle managers and change was an underdeveloped one in the research literature and that a bid on this subject would be well received. I discussed my plan with my colleague from Midtown University and she indicated that they would be willing to be a part of the bid. These reflections and discussions with the Dean of Learning Resources at Midtown University led to a successful bid to the LFHE for a £10,000 Small Development Grant that focused on ‘Managing Change from the Middle Out’.

In September 2011, change up-skilling workshops were held at Midtown University and the Southtown University with over 50 delegates attending the two workshops. The workshops were facilitated by LFHE Director of Programmes and exposed delegates to a range of simple change tools that they could use in practice. The feedback from delegates on the workshops was overwhelmingly positive. As part of the study, a national survey was undertaken to try to gain the views of middle managers on what they perceived as their role in managing change, how they were supported and what barriers they faced in delivering change.

1.7.2 Personal Credibility as an Academic

During my early academic career when I was at both Centralville College and Eastville University (between 1995 and 2004), I did engage in the academic circuit by attending some national and international conferences and presenting papers both individually and in collaboration with others. This resulted in some conference published papers and led later to a small number of joint publications with one colleague in particular. This colleague, for a period, became the person I would discuss ideas with and jointly publish.

However, as I was completing the MBA during this period I never did engage in what I would call a proper apprenticeship of writing for publication. I do have one research paper for which I am the first author that came from my MBA thesis on brand management. Again, ironically it is through this process of reflection that I recollected this article by googling my name on Google Scholar where it comes up on the second page. This is not dissimilar to the experience of Bridges in 1999 in his reflective on writing a research paper that he had oddly forgotten about; a paper he had presented ten years earlier at a conference. My reflections on the development of my research journey mirror those of Bridges (1999) reflections on the development of an article over time:

The ideas that go into this article are assembled from a personal history, as part of an evolving enquiry that uncovers old thoughts as often as, perhaps more often than, it uncovers new ones – or perhaps more accurately, it re-combines old ideas in new ways that have some semblance of novelty. (Bridges, 1999 p. 223–4)

My interest in the broad subject of change management can be traced back to my engagement in the Diploma in Management Studies in the late 1980s and early 1990s. My two fellow authors on this paper were my supervisor and the colleague who would later complete his PhD. Again, on reflection, it is rather ironic that I gave my colleague his first peer-reviewed publication. He then went down the research route, completed his PhD and now has numerous peer-reviewed publications.

At the same time in 2004, as he registered for the PhD, my career path moved away from the research route as I took up a managerial role as HoD Sport and Exercise at the University of Southtown.

Thus, I do not have a series of peer-reviewed academic articles that I could draw on. I have one joint article that is a peer reviewed journal and a book chapter. There are a few practice-based articles. In 2004, I moved to a much more senior role as outlined above as HoD Sport and Exercise at the University of Southtown. It was at this stage that, as I was managing 35 academic staff, my research subject journey slowed down. I did feel that the majority of the staff who I managed with PhDs viewed me as a manager and not an academic as I did not have a doctorate. I viewed this as they felt I was 'not a proper academic' and I perceived that they perceived themselves as being superior to me.

I did discuss this with a research lead for the school who encouraged me by asking me to be a co-supervisor on two PhD projects. As part of this experience, I did undertake the university's compulsory PhD supervisor modules. However, this experience reinforced my feelings of being inferior as all the attendees had PhDs or Professional Doctorates. The experience of being part of the supervisory teams was a positive one as the two more experienced supervisors did value my contribution and were happy to see the process as one of mentoring me. One of these students completed her PhD in 2013 and I did read and comment upon drafts of chapters written.

It was during this period in early 2005 that my research partner registered for his PhD, which he completed in 2011. Rather ironically, it was this colleague who I suggested as the PhD Examiner for the PhD student I had been on the supervisory team for. This was his first PhD examination. Also, during this period many of the staff that I recruited had gone on to complete their PhDs. They are now 'in the club' and I am still an outsider.

While I was involved in the revalidation of the University of Southtown MBA I met a senior academic, the Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) Programme Manager. I had a one to one session with the DBA Programme Leader and discussed much of my personal history above. The outcome of this conversation was that I registered for the DBA in 2011. In essence, I had unfinished business that I needed to complete.

The change projects I became involved with at the University of Southtown, and my engagement with the LFHE as outlined above, led to a sparking of interest in change management in HE. In particular, it was the LFHE Small Development Grant Middle Out Project, which confirmed my decision to pursue my DBA thesis in this area.

Throughout my period as HoD Sport and Exercise at the University of Southtown (2004–2013), I was a middle manager in HE running a department with 50 academic staff and 1,500 students. I had not considered this to be a factor in my interest in middle management and change. However, I was living the role of the archetypal middle manager as an academic in HE, being HoD throughout the period when I was engaged across the university and externally in change management projects as discussed earlier.

On reflection, I had two roles as a middle manager in HE. Firstly, I was the typical middle manager as HoD dealing with the usual cyclical activity that takes place each academic year. Secondly, I was the middle manager with a role internally and externally involved in both leading and supporting the delivery of strategic change. Thus, it is through both of these roles along with all the experiences that I have outlined above, that I have arrived at where I am now.

Through the DBA thesis, I am focused on seeking an answer to the question of how middle managers perceive their role in strategic change and what support they receive from the senior managers in their institutions.

1.8 Two Post-1992 Universities

Two large city-based post-1992 universities were chosen that offered the opportunity to interview multiple academic HoDs. Both were large institutions with one having more than 25,000 and the other well over 30,000 students. Both HEIs had undergone, and were continuing to go through, transformational change. Both HEIs had had a long-term focus on learning and teaching and research had come as a secondary priority except in small areas that were deemed research institutes. However, this focus was changing and there was an increased investment and focus on raising research output and linking it to individual staff targets.

Both HEIs had a broad curriculum offer with a majority of the income coming from home undergraduate students. One of the two HEIs had some success attracting larger numbers of international students through a focus on strategic overseas partnerships. The other HEI was now prioritising trying to attract international students but with limited success.

1.9 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis is made up of five chapters. Chapter one sets out the context for the study and outlines the research questions, the methods used and a broad overview of the findings.

Chapter two provides a review of the literature and covers key areas including: managerialism and collegiality; top-down, bottom-up and middle-out approaches to leading and managing HEIs; the differing roles, challenges and identities of academic HoDs and the formal and informal training and development offered to academic HoDs.

Chapter three sets out the methodology used for this study, including the use of semi-structured interviews and the use of thematic analysis as the method for analysing the interview data. Ethical issues are also addressed in this section. Chapter four discusses the key findings from the interview data and provides an overview of the key findings. Finally, chapter five provides an outline of the conclusions, contribution to practice and recommendations for further study.

1.10 Conclusions

The English HE sector is undergoing significant change with the increased focus on Teaching Excellent, the new Office for Students, a more unregulated market, the marketisation of HE, increased national and international competition, a significant drop in the number of 18-year olds, and BREXIT. The need for all HEIs, and especially post-1992 HEIs, to have HoDs who can smoothly transition into their roles and support the delivery of these multiple agendas is more important than ever. This study sets out the context for this research in relation to the support provided to HoDs in post-1992 HEIs.

In particular, its focus is how appropriate support systems and structures are developed both formally and informally to allow HoDs to deliver consistently throughout their life-cycle as an academic middle manager.

The issues that arise from having HoDs not functioning efficiently and being overwhelmed in their role are significant for the performance of the HEI. For some HoDs their role may be considered administrative in that all the decisions are made at the centre of the HEI, and the HoD is required to deliver this to a rigid format. This can lead to conflict and initiatives not being implemented as there is no consultation or collaborative decision making. Furthermore, the HoD has multiple roles/identities and challenges including the needs of the corporate university on the one hand and fighting for academic values and the rights of academics on the other. Issues can arise for HoDs who perceive that they are not adequately supported to undertake their role at the differing stages of their time in this position. For example, HoDs need to be appropriately inducted into the role and offered ongoing training/support at different stages of their lifecycle, or the performance of both the HoDs and academic department will suffer as a result. If this lack of formal and informal support is replicated across a HEI then it will undoubtedly have an impact on the HEI meeting its key KPIs of National Student Survey (NSS), retention, good degree outcomes, and Research Excellence Framework (REF) and Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) outcomes.

The next chapter will provide a review of the literature on the key issues of new managerialism and collegiality; the multiple identities and diverse roles HoDs have to undertake; and the types of formal and informal forms of support they access at differing stage of their HoD journey.

Chapter Two – Literature Review

2.1 Introduction and Research Questions

This section will introduce the study research questions, conceptual framework and literature review.

The main research question from this thesis is: How are Academic Heads of Department supported to undertake their diverse roles in post-1992 English HEIs?

In order to answer this main question, the following research questions are submitted:

RQ1. How do HoDs see their role in decision making in their HEI?

RQ2. How do HoDs perceive and describe their diverse roles and identities as HoDs?

RQ3. What forms of support do HoDs obtain to undertake their role?

This chapter will consider the key concepts of new managerialism and collegiality, in particular ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ forms of managerialism and the similarities with a collegial or collaborative and inclusive form of decision making. Secondly, the concept of academic identities will be addressed in the context of the HoD’s role and especially the tension between being an academic manager and a manager-academic. Finally, the forms of formal and informal support and training offered to HoDs in their role will be considered.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

As outlined in chapter one the concepts of ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ managerialism and collegiality are tied up with the concept of academic identity. Both concepts are used to address the forms of support that HoDs require to undertake their role in contributing to the making of strategic decisions in post-1992 HEIs.

2.2.1 Managerialism, Collegiality and Academic Identity

This study is framed by certain key concepts which enable the set research questions to be answered. The first key concept is that of new managerialism and collegiality, and what has been termed ‘soft’ and ‘hard’ managerialism (Deem, 1998; Magalhães et al., 2017; Trow, 1993). These forms of ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ managerialism have been described as:

While hard influence of management induces the tracing of goals oriented by short-medium term objectives and measurable outputs, the soft influence of management promoted by the New Governance perspective relies on the enhancement of the collaborative networks centred on building the types of relationships directed towards mission oriented goals i.e., education, research and third mission. (Magalhães et al., 2017, p. 3)

Bacon (2014), in his stimulus paper for the LFHE on what he termed an updating of collegiality or ‘neo’ collegiality, suggests that:

Neo-collegiality promotes a more inclusive approach. First, non-academic professionals have become key staff members in today’s universities, bringing expert input across multiple functions. Neo-collegial proposals would usefully include both academics and non-academic professionals. Second, student participation in neo-collegial decision-making processes fosters a sense of institutional membership, appropriately dilutes the notion of student as customer, and meets government’s intention that the student should be at the heart of the university sector. (Bacon, 2014, p. 19)

The argument being put forward is for an inclusive collaborative form of decision making in the approach that HEIs need to adopt in order to deal with the dynamic change affecting the HE sector.

The concept of academic identity is tied up inextricably with the concepts of ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ managerialism and collegiality. As Bacon (2014) argues, the concept of academic identity is strengthened in an environment where a collegial approach to decision

making takes place. This is further supported by Gibbs et al. (2009), who found that excellence in the leadership and management of learning and teaching was characterised by staff, and students have a sense of belonging and identity with the HE environment in which they work and study. Work undertaken by academics in a study undertaken by Bolden et al. (2012) identified that HE leaders were valued as:

... people who resonate with, and reflect, their sense of academic values and identity. When encouraging and supporting people to take on a more substantial academic leadership role appeals should be to their academic values and citizenship rather than simply transactional managerial roles and responsibilities. Indeed, the term 'leadership' itself may be off-putting and may be better considered in terms of supervision, mentoring, collegiality, collaboration and/or autonomy: all activities that reinforce and reproduce a shared identity of academia. When leading academics the emphasis should be placed on identity and purpose rather than procedures or point scoring. Attention should also be given to the intellectual dimensions of academic work as distinct from the managerial concerns of the institution. (Bolden et al., 2012, p. 17)

2.2.2 Links to Formal and Informal Forms of Support

A study by Bryman (2007) identified, amongst others, two key facets of leadership at departmental level. Firstly, establishing a structure in the department to support the department's vision. Secondly, the need to establish an environment that was supportive and collaborative for staff to engage in their research and teaching. The two key facets are therefore:

- Creating a structure to support the direction
- Fostering a supportive and collaborative environment

Further support is offered for this collaborative, supportive and inclusive approach to the development of future HE leaders by Bolden et al. (2012). In their major study of leadership in HE, they suggest that those responsible for developing future HE leaders or taking on a leadership role in HE should be cognisant of the following crucial issues:

- The need to engage hearts and minds
- Nurture the next generation and take the long view on academic careers

- Create space to thrive
- Stimulate a culture of debate and enquiry
- Create and embed structures and processes that support relevant identities
- Build a sense of community and encourage citizenship
- Provide opportunities for informal participation and engagement
- Manage performance by strengthening shared identity
- Negotiate and engage with academics as professionals
- Safeguard membership of the academic community
- Create opportunities for a collective voice

Thus, what is being argued for here is a collegial form of development for future HE leaders including HoDs. Opportunities for these HoDs to develop informal connections are vital and can often be provided via engagement in formal leadership training programmes (Altbach, 2011; Marshall, 2010; Marshall, 2012; Thian et al., 2016). Thus, the provision of informal forms of support are important for HoDs (Branson et al., 2016; Fisher et al., 2007; Floyd & Preston, 2014; Floyd, 2016; Tysome, 2014).

2.3 Middle Management in HE

It has been argued by Branson et al. (2016, p. 128), in their recent study on middle academic leadership in HE, that “middle leadership remains under-explored both theoretically and empirically”. In the last three decades researchers have been taking more of an interest in the role played by academic middle managers in HE.

These studies have reviewed a range of issues in terms of the role of middle managers including: middle managers creating and implementing strategy; acting as a link between the top and bottom of the organisation; academic HoDs who have to manage different academic ‘tribes’ and deal with various forms of enquiry; identifying different behaviours of academic HoDs; middle managers and issues of academic identity; the role of HoDs as boundary spanners; and academic middle managers who require support managing poor performance as well as the general support offered to them (Bolden et al., 2012; Bryman, 2007; Clegg & McAuley, 2005; Enders, 2007; Floyd, 2016; Gentle & Forman, 2014; Hancock & Hellowell, 2003; Locke et al., 2015). A recent study on the particular issue of support offered to academic middle managers was

published by Floyd (2016). This study focused on HoDs' perceptions of how they are supported/aided in delivering strategic change.

This topic of how HoDs access differing forms of support in undertaking their role in implementing strategic change appears to be under-represented in the literature. The issue of how HoDs are encouraged and helped to develop formal and informal networks of support both inside and outside their institution is also not fully addressed. In particular, this thesis will focus on how both institutional level and formal leadership training can support how academic middle managers might introduce formal and informal support networks internally, across the institution, and externally. In reviewing the literature on middle academic managers in UK HE it is important to take into account the wider context of what challenges UK HEIs are managing. Firstly, this literature review will focus on the key drivers of change in UK HEIs looking in particular at the role of government policy.

Furthermore, it will be essential to review key managerial concepts or ideologies relevant to English universities, specifically including NPM, new managerialism, and collegiality. The review will provide a brief overview of the two dominant forms of change management operating across the sectors. The next stage will then review the main forms of management in UK HEIs; top-down, bottom-up, and the more recent middle-out.

The substantive element of the discussion will follow with a focus on middle managers and their role in UK HEIs and change management. Finally, the review will finish with the development of a conceptual framework for the study.

2.4 The Role of Government Policy

This section will start with a consideration of the modernisation of the UK public sector. It will move on to reviewing leadership development in both schools and HE. Finally, it will look at the leadership development of headteachers in schools, something which has many relevant lessons for 'what happened in HE'.

From 1997 to 2010, the New Labour policy context was dominated by the modernisation of public services. It could be argued that New Labour started in 1997 when Tony Blair became Prime Minister and ran until 2010. Tony Blair became Prime Minister after 18 years of continuous Conservative rule and 'New Labour' was a brand that the party used to communicate its modernisation agenda to the public. During the Labour years of 1997–2010 the focus was on changing the roles of headteacher or HoD into 'leaders'. The focus was on developing a particular set of behaviours, knowledge and skills that were deemed as leadership that was focused on improving standards (Gunter, 2012). The National College for Teaching and Leadership was established in 2000 and drove this reform agenda of leadership and training for headteachers. The key driver was an image of an energetic headteacher but there was also a recognition of the need for leadership at all levels, including the 'middle'.

For New Labour, the reform agenda of the public services was one of investment for results in terms of reform and modernising and meeting nationally set targets for pupil achievement with the appropriate level of accountability (Gunter, 2012). The reform agenda was being driven in parallel with a leadership programme to ensure delivery of targets and reform. It was through the establishment of, and influence it had on, the National College for Teaching and Leadership that it is being argued that New Labour drove this reform agenda through the leadership training provided to headteachers.

The leadership of HEIs can be seen as similar in some ways to the leadership in many other public sector organisations such as local authorities and the National Health Service. Lumby and Coleman (2007) argue that all these organisations are focused on managing for the 'public good', while at the same time seeking a surplus to reinvest and open to government interference. The structure of HE governance under New Labour was at arm's length from the government and was managed by the Higher Education Funding Council for England. 'Managing for the public good' might be viewed as a 'nebulous' concept and difficult to define but in relation to HE it could be argued that it is lifelong learning. Alternatively, recent governments would claim it is about economic growth and developing the future workforce.

Wallace, Deem, O'Reilly and Tomlinson (2011) argue that government interventions on educational leadership in schools and universities are an attempt to manipulate leaders

to follow government policy. The argument being made is that as the government funds the National College that provides the leadership training for headteachers, they use the leverage of the funding to influence the content of training programmes to support the delivery of educational reforms they are trying to push through. Wallace et al. (2011) argue that such interventions do not work. This government engagement in the leadership training of HE Vice-Chancellors (VCs) has not happened in UK HE. In 2004, the LFHE was set up by University UK and Guild HE to develop future HE leaders. Not all UK VCs come from the UK or attend the Leadership Foundation programmes and in recent years an increasing number are from outside HE.

Within the UK there is increasing evidence of continued government engagement with universities, including the regulatory and funding framework, as well as promoting economic growth, social justice, widening participation, and social mobility. In addition, there are immigration controls via the Tier 4 (General) student visa operated through UK Visas and Immigration. These immigration controls are standard across many sectors and not unique to HE. Increased government engagement with UK HE in recent decades has included a focus on issues such as metrics, audit, equality and diversity, and growth in internationalisation (Fearn, 2010). Government involvement in shaping the outcomes of UK HEIs in the area of research and via what was funding to the regulator, the Higher Education Funding Council for England, has had a profound impact on HEIs.

Jones et al. have indicated “the essence of academic life is changing, with increasing emphasis on what can be achieved and subsequently measured, in a very focused area within the broad swathe of academic activity” (2011, p. 284).

The current Conservative administration in the UK has introduced a significant change in UK HE with the enactment of the 2017 Higher Education and Research Act. The new Act introduced the Office for Students which is the new regulator and funding council for universities that will hold statutory responsibility for quality and standards and approval of new entrants, as well as looking after university title and degree awarding powers. It has been argued in a Wonkhe submission on Morris (23rd January 2017) that Wonkhe contributors have called the new regulatory framework ‘big, bossy and bureaucratic’, a ‘chain’, and reflective of an ‘astonishing level of resentment against the

history and autonomy of the established sector'. Although it did not require legislation, the new Bill introduced the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). The TEF is metrics driven and an attempt by the government to improve teaching and learning in universities.

It could be argued that the HE landscape is changing to create some HEIs that will focus primarily on research and others that will focus on teaching and learning. Many would argue that the sector has been this way for the last three decades and what is changing is the attempt by the recent 2015–2017 government to make it easier for private HE providers to enter the market. There is evidence that this is already the case in the diverse UK HE market, with HE in Further Education being overwhelmingly teaching and learning focused. Furthermore, it can be claimed that the focus of those so-called academic stars that bring in significant research funding can hurt academic departments where the staff that do not achieve this feel undervalued. The role of the HoD is to build a cohesive staff and deal with this issue using their leadership skills.

The claim is that managerialism is at the heart of post-1992 HEIs. Pollitt (2016) sees managerialism as an ideology that seeks, through improvement in management practice, to transform the management of public services. The argument being made is that through the introduction of managerial structures and practices such as KPIs, top-down management, appraisal systems that focus on the achievement of targets, and similar management practices will bring about improvement in the delivery of services in the public sector and the HE sector.

2.5 Managerialism, Collegiality and NPM

In this section, a discussion will take place on the following concepts: managerialism; collegiality; and NPM. In particular, the issues of 'hard' and 'soft' managerialism will be considered, followed by an exploration of how these concepts. The importance of managerialism and collegiality – and adaptations to these concepts – are examined in the context of academic middle managers.

2.5.1 Managerialism and Collegiality

This section will cover the debate in the literature about the current forms of decision-making in UK HE in relation to managerialism and collegiality.

2.5.2 Management and Managerialism

Management has been defined as “the process of planning, organising and controlling resources and people in order to produce goods or services” (Burnes, 2009, p. 598). Furthermore, it has been argued that all levels of management in HEIs have an important role to play in enabling the institution to be competitive and become more productive, efficient and sustainable into the future (Davis et al. 2016). I will now go on to define the broader concept of managerialism.

New public management has been described as a series of reforms from the 1980s onwards, introduced to improve the efficiency and performance of public sector organisations used by Hood (1991). In his seminal 1990 book ‘Managerialism and the Public Services’, Politt – the founding father of the concept of managerialism – believes that managerialism is broader than NPM and states “As I see it, managerialism is a broader concept than NPM and contains the latter within itself. Managerialism is an ideology which positions better management as transformative” (Pollitt, 2016, p. 431).

It has been argued that ‘new managerialism’ is more ideologically based than the concept of NPM (Abercrombie et al., 2000; Dunleavy & Hood, 1994; Hood, 1995; Manning, 2001; Pollitt & Summa, 1999; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2000) and that it imports private sector practices into public service organisations.

Thus, Deem and Brehony (2005, p. 291) define ‘new managerialism’ as “the ideological configuration of ideas and practices recently brought to bear on public service organisation, management and delivery, often at the behest of governments or government agencies” (Clarke & Newman, 1997; Cutler & Waine, 2000; Enteman, 1993; Exworthy & Halford, 1999; Reed, 2002).

‘New managerialism’ is therefore considered as an ideology often driven by governments to seek transformation in the running of public services. There are other

forms of managerialism that will now be considered, those of as ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ managerialism. “Hard managerialism, on the other hand, involves the imposition of discourses and techniques of reward and punishment on those employees who are considered by those in managerial positions to be fundamentally untrustworthy and thus incapable of self-reform or change” (Trow, 1993, as cited in Deem, 1998, p. 53).

This suggests that if a form of ‘hard’ managerialism was operating in UK HEIs then it would be top-down and authoritarian. This is highly unlikely to be the norm in UK HE but it has been argued that this form of managerialism is much more common in the English Further Education sector. It has been argued that there is another form of managerialism that could be described as ‘soft’ managerialism or soft management, which Trow defines as:

The recognition of inefficiency and ineffectiveness and the invention of rational mechanisms for the improvement of university performance, with the explicit agreement and consent for all those involved. Though this is not collegiality, it is not entirely incompatible with it. (Deem, 1998, p. 53, as cited in Trow, 1993)

This form of ‘soft’ managerialism, it can be argued, is much more common in UK HE where often strategy is set at the executive level and implementation is allowed in faculty and academic departments within an overall strategic framework. It is at the level of the faculty, school and department that consent is ensured. It is often in these areas that agreement is reached about how to enact strategic university change initiatives. This is a form of ‘soft’ managerialism or collegial type of decision making that is taking place.

Davis et al. (2016) argue that there has been significant research on managerialism in HE and the positive view of it is that there is an acceptance of the benefits of managerialism as an enabler for improving overall outcomes and performance (Kolsaker, 2008).

They go on to provide the counterargument and suggest that managerialism is about accountability and a drive for efficiency with a focus on performance management and target setting “which interfere with collegiality” (Davis et al., 2016, p. 1483). The

reality about the benefits of managerialism in HE is that it is somewhere in the middle between the positive views put forward by Kolsaker (2008) and the sole focus on performance management and target setting outlined by Davis et al. (2016). In particular, in post-1992 HEIs managerial structures and hierarchies are common (Hancock & Hellawell, 2003). Pre-1992 HEIs have not been immune to the development of these managerial structures either. These structures are common as they are driven by the regulatory framework that supports UK-based HE such the Quality Assurance Agency and the Higher Education Funding Council for England. Many of the key drivers of the managerial agenda have been the increase in student numbers; the changing nature of the student body with it becoming more diverse; the growth in the use of part-time contracts; the increased administration, and in particular, the marketisation of HE; and greater government regulation (Collinson, 2004; Henkel, 2002; Knight & Trowler, 2000; Nixon, 1996).

It has been argued that ‘new managerialism’ was commonplace in UK HE (Deem & Brehony, 2005, p. 231). Of particular note was the finding that ‘manager-academics’ adopted the underlying principles and language associated with ‘new managerialism’. This result was underpinned by the view that managers were keen to manage academic and non-academic staff while ‘maintaining relationships of power and domination’. This is supported by the work of Trowler (2010) who argues that new managerialism has its discourse and language, such as financial and commercial. where schools or departments are set up as business units. It has been claimed that the former culture of collegiality has not been present in HE for over two decades and managerialism became the new doctrine with which to lead and manage HEIs (Bacon, 2014; Jones et al., 2014). Jones et al. (2014) go on to suggest that most of the management research demonstrates that managerialism – with its hierarchical structures – is not the way to achieve results. Table 1 on the following page outlines the key components of the differing forms of ‘soft’ and ‘hard’ managerialism.

Managerialism has taken over as the ‘dominant ideology’ in both HE and the National Health Service (Flinn & Mowles, 2014). It could be argued that this is evidenced by the marketisation of both service areas in the last three to four decades, the managerial appointments, and the focus on targets and KPIs. Furthermore, it has been claimed that the “Robbins Report (1963) on higher education began the process of transforming

English universities from the self-managed, collegial establishments they were to the more centralised, managerial bodies they have become” (Burnes, Wend, & Todnem, 2014, p. 910). Burnes et al. (2014) go on to argue that this decline in collegiality is a global phenomenon and one which is happening in UK HE (Bryman, 2007; Kayrooz, Kinnear, & Preston, 2001; Knight & Trowler, 2000; Meyer, 2007) as well as in HE in Europe (Regini & Ballarino, 2011).

Governance	Soft influence of management	Hard influence of management
Coordination	Distributed leadership and interpersonal networks (horizontal decision making)	NPM based <i>management must manage</i> (vertical and hierarchical decision making)
Goals	Mission oriented goals	Objectives as measurable outputs
Values	Collaboration/cooperation	Performance indicators and competition
Control mechanisms	Negotiation and persuasion (e.g. <i>light touch</i> systems, <i>hands off</i> style)	Command and control (e.g. financial control, efficiency and value for money, and commodification of activities)
Processes	Enablement skills (activation skills, modulation skills and orchestration skills)	Management skills

Table 1: Influence of Management on Governance (Magalhães et al., 2017)

In HE in the UK there are some shared views of how new managerialism is perceived, as outlined by Clarke, Gewirtz and McLaughlin (Eds) (2000), Deem and Brehony (2005), Kirkpatrick and Lucio (1995), Le Grand and Bartlett (1993), Power (1997), Trowler (2001), and Trowler (2010), including:

There is a focus on the market and the individual as king; budgets and KPIs are devolved; strategic change is central and dominant; accountability and auditing performance is commonplace; management of performance is prioritised, and knowledge and learning are commoditized. (Trowler, 2010, p. 198)

Trowler's (2010) research was based on two Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) funded projects on managerialism and 137 interviews with HoDs as part of a three-year evaluation of the Scottish Quality Enhancement Framework. Furthermore, Davis et al. (2016) demonstrate in their study that rather than enabling it, 'managerialism' limits the ability of middle managers to work at a strategic level rather. In effect, what they found was that the middle managers in this study felt disempowered and "merely implementers at the mercy of large bureaucratic structures plagued with red-tape and minute-detail reporting, command-and-control attitudes, authoritarian leadership and adherence to rules within a culture of conformance" (Davis et al., 2016, p. 490).

There was no collaboration or partnership in the decision-making process or achievement of university strategic objectives. In contrast, it has been argued that academics are high performing, self-motivated individuals who reject the corporatisation of their universities (Goffee & Jones, 2007). This suggests that there is still ongoing support from the academic community for a collegial form of decision making in HEIs in the UK. The next section will define collegiality and consider its current status in UK HE.

2.5.3 Collegiality

Gibbs et al. (2009), in their study of the leadership of learning and teaching in 22 departments in research-intensive HEIs, found that the predominant culture was collegial and bureaucratic and corporate cultures were not standard. The definition of collegiality used in this study by Gibbs et al. is taken from the work of McNay (1995):

Collegial cultures are characterised by the freedom to pursue university and personal goals unaffected by external control. Standards are set by the international disciplinary scholarly community and evaluation is by peer review. Decision-making is consensual, and management style is permissive. Students are seen as academic partners. (Gibbs et al., 2009, p. 5)

A different perspective on collegiality is put forward by Bryman (2007, p. 702), arguing that collegiality can be viewed in two distinct ways; first as a system of governance driven by consensual decision making, and second, as mutual supportiveness among staff. Cipriano and Buller (2012, p. 324) highlight six common aspects of collegial behaviour including “collaborating with other faculty and the administration; stepping up to serve the common good; being responsible for work duties; respecting the university's decision-making processes; respecting others; and being supportive and helpful.”

It could be argued that missing from Miles, Shepherd, Rose and Dibben's (2015) characteristics of collegiality is the crucial issue of how academic decisions are made. Again, as with managerialism, the current reality for collegiality in UK HE is dependent upon whether the HEI is considered to be a research-intensive university such as the Russell Group. McNay's definition of collegiality refers to research intensives but would not be fully applicable to post-1992 HEIs where you will find a combination – in different stages of development – of the three other cultures outlined by McNay (1995, as cited in Gibbs et al., 2009). These three other cultures are bureaucratic, corporate, and entrepreneurial. In effect, what is being proposed is that within different sized HEIs and individual faculties and schools/departments, differing forms of cultures will operate depending on both the type of change and the speed with which strategic change is being implemented.

2.5.4 Collegiality and Academic Middle Managers

Moving on to consider research on academic middle managers, Winter (2009) argues that due to the role they hold, HoDs are pivotal in managing the balance between managerialism and collegiality in the workplace, where “Walking this tightrope may minimise values incongruence provided that heads of department can handle the stress and strain of trying to be an efficient administrator while protecting the academic autonomy and independence of academic staff and duties” (Winter, 2009 p. 128).

Furthermore, the importance of collegiality for the role of the academic middle manager was recognised by researchers such as Bacon who stated that “Collegiality was identified by respondents as the most appropriate form of academic decision making” (Bacon, 2014, p. 128).

In support of Bacon’s (2014) study, Ambrose, Huston and Norman (2005) noted that the critical issue for academic staff regarding their relationship with their HoDs was the contribution they made to ensuring decisions made in the department were made in a collegial manner. Clott and Fjortoft (2000) argue that a HoD who creates a clan or collegial culture will be more useful than one creating a culture which is focused on hierarchy or market. It is being argued that this culture of collegiality and collaboration is most highly valued by the academic staff managed by HoDs.

This emphasis on a more collegial approach is further supported by a recent study on middle management by Branson et al. (2016) where they demonstrate that academic middle managers want a more collective approach to decision making. It could be argued that what HoDs have to achieve to keep both the senior university managers content and their academic staff on board, is a balance between delivering on HEI KPIs whilst showing some meaningful engagement with academic staff in decision making using what Trow (1993) terms the ‘soft’ form of managerialism. It might be argued that this soft managerialism is akin to what Bacon refers to as ‘neo-collegiality’:

Neo-collegiality asserts that a restoration of more collegial decision-making processes can work alongside the essential features of NPM to restore some of the virtues of collegiality while maintaining a professional and efficient

management structure appropriate to the needs of the 21st century. (Bacon, 2014, p. 6)

Furthermore, Bacon (2014) argues that other researchers also suggest that collegiality needs to be updated. Rowland (2008, p. 357) talks of a “renewed collegiality” while Tapper and Palfreyman (2010, p. 158) speak of a “collegial rejuvenation”. Middlehurst (2013, p. 291) is supportive of HEIs desire to “update collegiality” and Spiller (2010, p.689) suggests that collegiality is “too tired, too muddled and misused.”

2.5.5 NPM and Governance

The concept of NPM will now be considered in the context of HE. The supporters of NPM propose that it defines new types of administrative orthodoxy about how public services are operated and regulated (Deem & Brehony, 2005). Deem and Brehony (2005, p.219) propose that NPM is concerned less with streamlining of the management of public services via the use of ‘quasi-markets’ (Bailey, 1993; Frederickson, 1991; Hood & Scott, 1996; Hughes, 1994) and more (by those who support it) as “defining new forms of administrative orthodoxy about how public services are run and regulated”. Furthermore, it is seen by theorists as the “the process of management reform as the implementation of particular forms of regulatory governance of public services by state agencies” (Hood & Scott, 1996) rather than as an “ideological phenomenon” (Deem & Brehony 2005, p. 219).

More recent studies have considered the issue of NPM to be about the management of HEIs at Board level or what has been termed ‘Boardism’ (Ferlie, Musselin, & Andresani, 2009).

Magalhães et al. capture the essence of the NPM approach:

The NPM narrative is visible in discourses stimulating competition for students; in the hardening of budgetary constraints; in the vertical steering based research funding; in the development of a ‘management must manage’ perspective; in the emphasis on stronger managerial roles of Rectors, Deans, Heads of Departments; in the focus on efficiency and value for money; in the

development of strong central administrations and in the weakening of the representation of academics in higher education management (Magalhães et al., 2017, p. 3) .

It can be strongly argued that the UK post-1992 HEIs have, in the last two decades, operated in the domain outlined by Magalhães et al. above. For academic HoDs, as middle managers they are managing the tension of managerial directives from the top-down and dealing with concerns from academics regarding their loss of academic autonomy.

Furthermore, the loss of academic autonomy is part of the bigger issue impacting on UK academics for the last two decades relating to the loss of collegiality in decision making. Salamon (2002) argues for what he calls a new governance approach which has elements of a collegiality approach. A more collaborative approach to governance was proposed in which there is a working together between the academic community, managers and governors to deliver the university agenda. The recognised challenges in this method is firstly a move from the public against private to a merging and integration of the benefits of both approaches Secondly, there has been a move away from hierarchical structures and a recognition of the value of networks. These networks exist horizontally and vertically within the organisation to deliver jointly agreed outcomes. Thirdly, a move from a top-down approach towards decision making to one of influence and negotiation. This links in to the importance of networks in decision making across the organisation. Finally, there is a move away from a managerial skill set to an enabling set of competencies. The argument being made is that HoDs are the new ‘enablers’ who empower their staff to achieve university strategic objectives by creating a collaborative culture of decision making. The approach being suggested here is one of empowering all staff with the authority and responsibility to deliver outcomes and make decisions.

2.6 Change Management

This section will consider some of the major issues arising from fundamental reviews of the change literature over the last 50 years and recognises that two distinct forms of change management approaches have dominated, namely planned, and emergent

change. Furthermore, it will review the differing forms of managing strategic change in HE, namely top-down, bottom-up and the more recently explored middle-out.

2.6.1 Key Issues in Change Management

Although there are many different approaches to change it is evident from a review of the literature that there are two prime methods, those of planned change and emergent change (Bamford & Forrester, 2003; Burnes, 2009; Elrod & Tippett, 2002, Todnem, 2005). These are the two dominant schools of change management discussed in the literature over the last 50 years.

Probably the most commonly known approach to change that still has traction and has been added to and adapted by other researchers is Kurt Lewin's (1952) 3 phase approach to change as shown in Figure 1 below. As can be seen the three phases are unfreezing, change and refreezing.

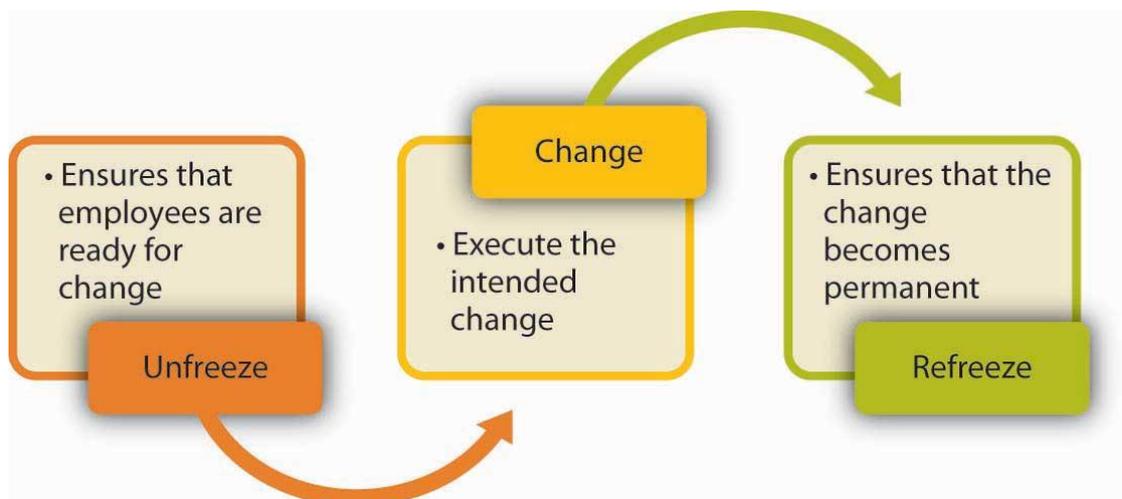


Figure 1: Kurt Lewin's (1952) 3 Phase Model of Change Management

2.6.2 Top-down Management

Tsai and Beverton (2007) argue that top-down management is of value in HE where there is a culture of shared beliefs and values between academics and management about what has to be achieved. They argue that top-down management can deliver change but that the key factor is the creation of a positive culture that is best developed through a benevolent use of power. There are commonalities here with the earlier discussion of 'soft' managerialism (Trow, 1993) in that there is recognition that there are strategic challenges to address in the university which need to be acted on by getting

buy-in to the future direction from all involved. The top leadership teams in HEIs have a crucial role to play in leading strategic change from its inception to it becoming embedded in the organisation. There is evidence that some change initiatives in the public sector are not entirely integrated as senior leaders are not fully aware of the significance of particular change initiatives and the need to be visible in supporting the change (Soltani, Lai, & Mahmoudi, 2007).

The importance of communication in bringing about successful strategic change will now be considered. In public sector change, there is support for the argument that effective communication is central to successful strategic change initiatives as many change initiatives fail due to weak vertical and horizontal communication across the organisation (Soltani et al., 2007). In essence, what appears to be missing from the changes being discussed is the use of tried and tested change management tools which should include the development of a communications strategy.

The change management tools are the strategic approaches to delivering change in organisations (including HEIs) such as the use of differing project management training programmes or approaches, for example, PRINCE2.

2.6.3 Sensemaking – Sense giving

One of the prevailing ideas about how organisational activities are used by top-down management in delivering change is that of sensemaking/sense giving (Kezar, 2012). Weick, Sutcliffe and Obstfeld (2005) argue that sensemaking has a significant amount of use in organisational studies. In support of Weick et al.'s work, a study by Maitlis and Sonenshein (2010, pp. 551–552) argues that “Sensemaking is the process of social construction that occurs when discrepant cues interrupt individuals’ on-going activity and involve the retrospective development of plausible meanings that rationalise what people are doing” (Weick, 1995; Weick et al., 2005).

Central to the development of plausible meanings is the bracketing of cues from the environment and the interpretation of those cues based on salient frames. Sensemaking is thus about connecting cues and frames to create an account of what is going on.

To consider the use of sensemaking in HE, a recent study by Degn (2015) defined “Sensemaking and sense giving as theoretical concepts for looking at how disruptions of existing practice, uncertainty and ambiguity lead people to rethink and reorganise how they perceive themselves and their role within the organisation” (Degn, 2015, p. 903). In her study into sensemaking and giving with senior managers in Danish HEIs, Degn found that existing academic values were still important. However, there were new issues arising that were important which included openness and a focus on strategy and accountability which are now commonplace when academic managers are setting targets.

In their major study of change in HE, Eckel and Kezar (2003, p. 267) identified that to bring about deeply embedded change in HE, staff in the university are required to undertake a ‘meaning construction process’ and reconsider current conceptions – a process called ‘organisational sensemaking’. Eckel and Kezar identify five key issues which facilitate sensemaking/sense giving and deeper change in HE as being; support from senior administrators, a collaborative form of leadership, gaining staff support, moving forward with action, and a clear design for the change. Not all these issues are sensemaking but support the idea of being able to achieve profound and lasting strategic change in staff behaviour and to embrace the new reality. If these strategies were in place it allowed for the major parties in the change process to generate a new focus and set of priorities for the HEI. Additionally, there were a further set of activities which assisted in sensemaking, namely; including open cross-institutions conversations, cross-school teams, public presentations, and the use of guest speakers.

It could be argued that these processes – which may be led from the top – are collegial in nature. Thus, it could be suggested that both a form of ‘soft’ managerialism, discussed earlier in this review, is in use along with collegiality as part of the decision-making process. This is what Bacon (2014) called a kind of neo-collegiality or what Trow (1993) has termed ‘soft’ managerialism.

2.6.4 Bottom-up and Employee Participation

This section will consider the importance of bottom-up issues and employee participation in achieving organisational change. Tsai and Beverton (2007) report that a

bottom-up approach to change appears to offer some value due to the flexibility and a decentralised approach which allows all parties to have a voice in any proposed changes (Davies & Dodd, 2002). This is supported by the work of Ward and Selvester (2012) who argued that a faculty learning community approach, that is a bottom-up approach to delivering cross-institutional change, works for staff due to an overriding sense that it was a collaborative endeavour.

Ward and Selvester (2012) demonstrate that Faculty Learning Communities provide a concrete example of the bottom-up change in learning and teaching. The suggestion is that academics buy into them due to the voluntary nature of the engagement, and there is a significant literature base to support the argument that they bring about bottom-up change in learning and teaching (Cox, 2001, 2004, 2013). Two studies into Faculty Learning Communities by Vaughan and Garrison (2006), and Wicks, Craft, Mason, Gritter and Bolding (2015) identified that the support academic colleagues provided to each other through the experience played a major part in enabling them to complete their projects.

Soltani et al.'s (2007) HE case study showed that introducing employee participation schemes can have a real impact on the success of the change process. Sengupta (2008) found that trade unions have a positive outcome for employee share-ownership schemes. Changes in HEIs that are bottom-up are often less robust and thus need ongoing assistance (Kezar & Lester, 2011). Kezar (Kezar & Lester, 2011, p. 775) argues "that in change, which is bottom-up, sense giving is critical to having administrators provide support, to resources, and for restructuring to initiate and maintain the change. Often, these bottom-up change initiatives are not supported by institution-wide infrastructure and are constrained by hierarchical structures. Thus, there appears to be a gap in the change narrative in universities regarding infrastructure support for enabling bottom-up change to happen."

Gibbs et al. (2009) found that moving to a culture of excellence in learning and teaching often took two to three terms of office for research intensive HoDs (six to nine years in total). It further suggests that in all HEIs, HoDs need to be given one to two terms of office (typically three to five years) to implement the institutional strategy in learning and teaching that are seeking to bring about excellence in this area. It could be argued

that this will be the same for academic HoDs in post-1992 UK HEIs, but in this case, these are often permanent appointments. With the introduction of the TEF for UK HE, it will be interesting to see how it drives behaviour regarding HEIs trying to showcase excellence in learning and teaching. The TEF was introduced in June 2016 and aims to recognise and reward excellence in teaching and learning as well as helping to inform prospective students' choices for HE.

In June 2017, the TEF outcomes were announced with institutions being awarded Bronze, Silver and Gold for teaching excellence. Reflecting on the experience of the REF it could be argued that much energy and resource will go into gaming the TEF. The REF is the system for checking the quality of research in UK HEIs. The last REF was in 2014 and the next REF is scheduled for 2021. The better a UK HEI does in the REF, the greater the amount of research income they will be allocated and the total in REF 2014 was £2bn.

Kohtamäki (2013) argues that in HEIs where there is a focus on collaborating with staff and students on change processes, a more bottom-up process of bringing about change can be developed (Kezar & Eckel, 2008). The critical issue to overcome is how you develop an environment where this collaboration can take place between key stakeholders within the institution and across faculties, departments and central services that form a joined-up HEI (Antikainen, 2005; Kezar, Carducci, & Contreras-McGavin, 2006). Collegiality, it can be argued, is common to all these themes of those arguing for the benefits of collegiality – or at least some form of hybrid akin to the neo-collegiality (Bacon, 2014) or 'soft' managerialism (Deem, 1998) discussed earlier. The bottom-up approach to change is based on the arena of collaboration and, to some degree, the voluntary nature of engagement. There is no directive from the top of the organisation. Burnes et al. argue that there is a need to reinvent collegiality for 21st century HEIs "It is a collegiality which seeks to marry the need for central decision making with local involvement in and control over the change process" (Burnes et al., 2014, p. 920).

2.6.5 The Role of Middle Managers

It has been argued that little is known about the role and work undertaken by academic middle managers (Meek, Goedegebuure, & De Boer, 2010, as cited in Davis et al.,

2016). Davis et al. (2016) found that there was limited research on middle managers in HE and especially in developing countries. Trowler, Saunders and Knight (2003) argue that both the top-down and bottom-up approaches focus on only one dimension of change management theory; that of ‘distribution of power’ which they argue of itself is a very contested concept. They claim that using only a hierarchical view of power is not the most appropriate way of considering a change in trying to understand complex organisations such as HEIs and emphasised working from ‘the middle out’.

They have focused on social practice theory and considered three extensive studies on HE innovation, concluding that success depends on engagement and capacity building. To deliver successful change via this ‘middle-out’ approach it is essential that it takes an academic department and team focus. Trowler et al. (2003) argue that middle managers such as HoDs, deans and programme leaders, work from the ‘middle out’ – working both bottom-up and top-down.

In particular, they argue that middle managers are located in strategically important settings within HEIs regarding any change initiative programmes. It is not seen as important to discuss and evaluate issues and practice about change with staff; rather, the ‘middle-out’ approach focuses on building ‘tools’ that incorporate the innovation in useful ways. For example, in the introduction of a university-wide Teaching Observations scheme this could be middle managers giving differing disciplinary groups some flexibility over how they interpret the model being proposed by the university. Finally, Trowler et al. (2003) recognise the importance of time as an essential feature of the change process in relation to ensuring that enough time is allowed for the change to become embedded before moving onto the next initiative.

2.7 Middle Management: A Contested Concept?

The middle manager – from the perspective of the private sector – includes being perceived as someone at the mid-level in an organisation who is responsible for a particular business function. Middle managers are seen as being below the small top executive function, but above the bottom operational service (Dopson, Risk, & Stewart, 1996; Mintzberg, 1989; Uytterhoeven, 1972). Clegg and McAuley (2005, p. 21) argue

that “In the management literature, the middle manager has a particular role ‘local knowledge’ of front-line managers and employees.”

The definition of what is a middle manager is a contested term within universities (Hellowell & Hancock, 2003). In their internationally edited work on HE middle managers, Meek et al. (2010) highlight a number of features in their attempt to define middle managers. They suggest that the term middle manager delineates those at the top of the hierarchy such as VCs, and those at the bottom such as lecturers. Secondly, they accept that to take account of its use in different countries it has to be used to incorporate a broad range of posts. However, there are some common titles used for the role of the middle manager and in this they include HoDs and research directors.

In the UK context a dean in more substantial HEIs is seen as a senior management role, especially if the role is that of PVC Dean. However, in many smaller specialist institutions it is a middle management position. In contrast, Floyd (2016) (in his recent study on middle managers) uses the definition highlighted by Bryman (2009) in his extensive study and defines academic middle managers as being those staff leading a department where most of the daily decision making is focused on teaching and learning. Hancock and Hellowell (2003) suggest that HoDs are expected to both create a strategy and interpret it, to take strategic decisions, and also to work internally and externally often with a job description to match. So, there are some challenges in getting a concise and neat definition of an academic middle manager as the context in which the manager operates is all-important.

2.7.1 The Diverse Roles of Academic Middle Managers in HE

Next, the range of difficulties an academic middle manager faces and the skills required to undertake these tasks and roles will be discussed. One of the key significant aspects reported by middle managers relates to taking a disproportionate amount of their time dealing with staff that were resistant to change, something which often required addressing via performance management systems (Hellowell & Hancock, 2001). The standard response from most academics to the rapid response to change going on in HEIs is to resist this change and focus on their research. This is not an option for the HoD who has to confront and deal with the rapidly changing external environment. In

many cases survival often depends on an appropriate leadership response to the changing environment (Jones et al., 2011). In essence, HoDs are walking a tightrope between responding to the multitude of external and internal drivers and acting on the top priorities around research, teaching and curricula that will ensure the department thrives into the future.

HoDs in universities with large student numbers are often managing large units which in a small HEI might be considered a faculty, often containing differing disciplinary areas whose academic staff come from different academic tribes and have various forms of inquiry (Enders, 2007). In essence, the argument being made is that the academic middle manager role is not homogeneous across UK HE but is influenced by a multitude of factors. Included within this are the following: is the HEI research intensive or teaching focused; the size and scale of the HEI; the size and scale of the department/school; is the department/school single or multidisciplinary; is the HEI a specialist institution; is the HEI an alternative provider; along with other factors.

2.7.2 Academic Middle Managers as ‘Boundary Spanners’

This section will briefly consider academic middle managers as boundary spanners – namely working across the institution as well as externally. It has been argued that boundary spanners in the academy are:

Administrators, faculty members, staff, students, and community to design solutions to the problems we face as a society and as a global community. These people who can help create new opportunities for different disciplines to work together and for all parts of a campus community and members of the broader society to form new working relationships are boundary spanners. (Ramaley, 2014, p. 7–8)

Many of these issues were also picked up by Bolden et al. (2012), who also identified three key features of leadership demonstrated by HoDs that are responsible for motivating staff. Bolden included: establishing and defending a working culture and environment that allows academics to work effectively; building jointly owned

academic values and identity; and achieving ‘boundary spanning’ for both individuals and work teams.

All academic departments have ‘representational needs’ that span boundaries including: at the faculty level – key committees and university working groups/committees such as Academic Boards, Senate or Quality Committees. Now, there are considerably more opportunities to work collaboratively – both inside and outside the institution – and a vital part of the HoD’s toolkit is to become good at spanning boundaries (Gentle & Forman, 2014). This need for the role of HoDs to be ‘boundary spanners’ is seen as crucial by HoDs themselves in a post-1992 HEI (Hellowell & Hancock, 2001). This issue of boundary spanning as a skill that HoDs require has not been addressed in the established training programmes that are available for academic middle managers through organisations such as the LFHE.

This raises the question of what networks and forms of support academic middle managers might utilise to enable them to operate across boundaries. Is it a skill that can be gained through informal networks and via a mentor? It could be argued that HEIs have a responsibility to create these boundary-spanning opportunities via an appropriate induction/leadership training programme and via encouragement of academic HoDs to work on cross-university projects, as well as externally.

2.7.3 Leadership Roles and Challenges for Academic Middle Managers

In establishing a culture of success as an academic middle manager, Bryman (2007) identified seven key behaviours of academic HoDs that were problematic and likely to lead to a poorly functioning department. He included in this list the following: lack of consultation; no regard for existing values; behaviour that goes against collegiality; not representing the views of academic staff; not engaging in department activity; reducing academic autonomy; and being responsible for the department not moving forward. Furthermore, Bryman (2007) outlines that it is quite difficult to analyse what is meant by an effective HoD as it has been argued that as an academic, it is about the organisation and monitoring of teaching and research.

This is supported by Stark (2002, p. 352), who identified the key leadership roles of academic HoDs that they are broadly concerned with; sensing the possible need for change, with supporting faculty members who have good ideas, and with setting agendas, facilitating, or initiating.

This again is arguing for a hybrid role for HoDs as supported by Stark's (2002) work on Heads of Curriculum areas where HoDs provided contextual leadership to support the change being put forward by academics, Floyd's 2012 work, and Whitchurch's (2015) work on third space. Whitchurch describes the third space working environment as a place where:

Individuals may, therefore, be characterised as Third Space professionals, whatever their employment category, specialist function, or (in the case of academics) discipline. They are likely to work in a multi-disciplinary or multi-professional environment or team, either for a time-limited period or on a permanent basis. They may also build up new forms of expertise, such as tutoring in academic literacy or the conversion of teaching programmes to online platforms, which represent new space and require a blend of academic and professional inputs. (Whitchurch, 2015, p. 16)

Stark (2002, p. 352) identified seven leadership roles. Heads “are concerned with sensing the possible need for change, with supporting faculty members who have good ideas, and with setting agendas, facilitating, or initiating – but less frequently directing – curriculum renewal”. In terms of creating the productive and enabling environment Gentle and Forman (2014), while discussing and interpreting the outcome of the work by Bolden et al. (2012), suggest that the HoD's role is one where at different times there will have to be regular ‘trade-offs’ in terms of the decisions made as academics will not be free to pursue any interest they wish. Gentle and Forman (2014, p.17) state “The negotiating, brokering capabilities of the Head will be crucial in reaching mutually beneficial outcomes. The leadership lessons that can be learnt as a Head of Department act as a crucible for developing greater education.”

However, it is the HoDs who adopt a consensus view to taking decisions that will take academic staff with them in delivering organisational goals and selling the benefits to

all from following a particular path (Jones et al., 2011). Furthermore, in reality getting complete consensus is almost always impossible and the majority viewpoint will be followed.

In effect, HoDs are being asked to be collegial in how they get their teams onboard but managerial in ensuring they deliver the university KPIs. Studies by Bryman (2007) and Jones et al. (2011) identified what could be described as the continuum between managerialism and collegiality that HoDs have to walk. Also, Bolden et al. (2012) reported that HoDs needed the skills of negotiating and brokering to manage the trade-offs required to manage academics. Thus, to the best of the author's knowledge, there are only a few references in the literature that systematically address the informal and formal forms of support and networks that academic HoDs use in managing change. The major recent study that considers the lack of support offered to academic middle managers is that of Floyd (2016). This gap in the literature was the motivation behind the present study.

In addition, Hellowell and Hancock (2001, p.189) argue that HoDs have to have “subject credibility” in the eyes of their staff if they are to “offer academic leadership as well as exert managerial control”. Academic leadership is setting the vision and strategic direction for the department and both achieving corporate KPIs and respecting academic autonomy and values in the process. For Gentle and Forman (2014), the critical issue in leadership terms is developing systems and processes which embed ways of staff engagement that are ‘authentic’, take place in the HEI and academic department, and crucially build a climate of trust. The key to achieving this trust is establishing “leadership identity that is profoundly social and has at its heart a sense of the interdependence of each member of a community with all others” (Gentle & Forman, 2014, p. 25).

Authentic leadership is a highly contested term in the literature but deemed to focus on the following: self-awareness regarding being aware of one's preferences; self-consistency, behaving in a manner that supports these preferences; and relational transparency, acting about others while having an awareness of yourself (Caza & Jackson, 2011). Taking account of the ideas put forward by Gentle and Forman (2014), being authentic as a HEI means establishing systems and processes that academic

leaders such as HoDs believe both support the overall student learning experience and have been developed in consultation with academic staff.

Regarding strategic change, one mechanism for achieving this might be a form of consultation and discussion on the main change issues where the outcome has not already been pre-determined by senior leaders in the organisation. The time and effort academics put into the consultation process can result in the planned changes being amended and adapted to take into account their views. Whether a HoD comes from a research intensive, dual intensive or teaching intensive HEI, they will be expected to undertake leadership roles which should take clear priority over management functions (Jones et al., 2011). For this to happen it is essential that HoDs have the appropriate administrative support to take away the large administrative burden that now comes with the role – especially around issues of staff performance (Locke et al., 2015). It has been suggested that academics are, in the main, vehemently opposed to the idea of taking up the role of academic HoD as it takes them away from their central *raison d'etre* of adding to the knowledge economy or research output. The role of HoDs is perceived by some academics as taking them into an “administrative wasteland” (Jones et al., 2011, p. 279).

It could be argued that the identification of what an effective HoD is depends significantly on who is asked to judge this, and against what criteria. In particular, in the UK context it depends on whether the HEI is research intensive or is a post-1992 institution that focusses upon teaching and learning which is research informed. Floyd (2012) identified that the departmental cultures often differ in the same HEI (Becher, 1989; Becher & Trowler, 2001; McAleer & McHugh, 1994; Smith, 2005). By their very nature differing disciplines have their own distinct cultures and ways of operating. There is often a mismatch between what HoDs as middle managers think they are doing in terms of working on strategic issues, changing cultures and presenting a vision for the future, whilst in reality the focus was often on the more mundane operational, administrative and technical aspects of work (Alvesson, 2012). Often, the issue for HoDs is one where they are happy to challenge decisions in their academic discipline but do not do so regarding administration. This leads to the management and administrative aspects of their role being dominant while the leadership aspect becomes secondary (Jones et al., 2011).

According to Gentle and Forman (2014), much of what HEIs judge as success is currently based on league tables, student satisfaction, research output and employability rates. Command and control here is akin to what Trow (1993) views as ‘hard’ management where employees are not trusted and not able to change, and managers use reward and punishment to bring about change. There are real tensions for HoDs as middle managers in HE that arises from the realisation that they have a responsibility that operates both upwards and downwards in the organisation (Gentle & Forman, 2014).

This tension has been described by Bryman (2007, p. 5) as being “hemmed in by a pincer movement of senior management and academic staff”. This view is supported by Branson et al. (2016, p. 142) who state that middle managers are “the meat in the sandwich”. They note that it is hard for the HoDs to bring these two activities into a single role. Branson et al. suggest that due to these tensions “the lived experience of the middle leader in higher education is associated with feelings of discomfort and uncertainty, at best, but often with tensions or stress caused by frustration, insecurity, and disappointment” (Branson et al., 2016, p. 142).

There are difficulties in coming up with a list of the roles HoDs are supposed to undertake. This is due to the differences in HEIs that are research intensive and those that are not as well as the size and scale of particular departments. Some departments may be multi-disciplinary while others are single discipline departments (Benoit & Graham, 2005; Carroll & Gmelch, 1994; Smith, 2005). Bryman (2007) argues that the key is the need for studies that consider the roles and activities of HoDs. Bryman is suggesting that roles and activities need to be considered in the context of what effective leadership is for a HoD. Locke et al. (2015) argue that in the complex area of policy and strategy in HE, the role of middle managers has been to ‘interpret and adapt’ senior management policy and strategy at a local level.

It can be argued that this is a crucial part of the strategic change management implementation process and links to the earlier discussions on sense giving and sensemaking articulated by Kezar and Lester (2011). Kohtamäki (2013) identified that middle managers in HE viewed the institutional leadership of their HEIs quite critically.

2.8 Summary

In summary, this section has outlined that there is no such thing as a common role for an academic HoD due to the diversity of size and scale of UK HE. Furthermore, it is clear that HoDs are operating on what might be termed a 'tightrope' between managerialism and collegiality regarding leading their departments. Alternatively, this might be described as moving from a top-down and bottom-up approach to the management/leadership of change and the need to operate as 'boundary spanners'. The role of the HoD is therefore one of brokerage and negotiation. HoDs are not getting the support needed formally to undertake their role and thus this raises the question as to what type of support is coming from informal forms of support or formal and informal networks. This lack of support is especially evident in managing poor performance.

2.9 The Importance of Academic Discipline and Professional Identity

Floyd (2012) argues that agency and structure are important issues to consider in the formation of academic identity. According to Barker (2005), and as partly outlined on Wikipedia, structure is the recurrent patterned arrangements which can and do influence or even limit the opportunities and choices available, whereas agency is concerned with the capacity of people to act independently and make their own free choices.

An academic's identity does not exist in its system but is impacted by an individual's commitment and discipline. Furthermore, the individual's identities are constantly changing (Clegg, 2008; Jenkins, 2004). In effect, as academics change job roles their identities are undergoing constant change and reformation so old identities may be deleted and new ones formed (Henkel, 2002; Parker, 2004). Winter (2009) argues that managerialism has led to an 'identity schism' in the academy between two groups; those who manage, and those who are managed, in relation to organisational and personal values.

However, Deem and Lucas (2006) identified that in four out of five education departments in their study, academics indicated that they felt, as did their departments, that research was more highly valued than teaching. Research is still dominant even though the TEF has been introduced in 2016–17 to raise the importance of learning and teaching in UK HEIs.

Degn's (2015) study on senior academic managers found that being from an academic background was an important frame of reference and identity regarding credibility. It is this background that allowed managers to use this 'academic identity' – and the associated values and beliefs that go with this – as a clear frame of reference when communicating the 'new reality' of the change journey for the institution. In a recent study by Robinson and Hilli (2016), for research-oriented academics there was a strong sense that their research was at the centre of their academic identity. They found, not that surprisingly, that this was not the case for academics with a teaching only focus.

2.9.1 Academic Identity and Academic HoDs

There is some support for this argument from Floyd (2009) in his PhD thesis on HE middle managers, where he argued that HE HoDs needed to adopt multiple personal and professional identities and frequently move between them. In particular, the key to how successful HoDs felt in their role was the skill and ability they had to be able to juggle between these differing identities successfully. Floyd (2012) discusses the forming of middle managers' identities and suggests that it can be argued that there is a match between the organisation's and an individual's identity. Floyd (2012) is claiming that agency and structure are important in the formation of professional identities. He claims that by taking on the role of HoDs, the middle managers were acting as:

...agents are exerting or at least attempting to exert, control to overcome structures, with individuals experiencing their own 'turning points' when they realized that by undertaking the HoD role, they might start to change the organizational structures within which they worked. (Floyd, 2012, p. 281)

Floyd's conclusion is that there are implications for the academic identity of middle managers in post-1992 HEIs. One issue is that they are now asked to take on multiple roles and have identities that are in constant flux. He links this to what Clegg (2008, p. 340) terms the 'hybrid' identities. Here he is referring to identities which have to bridge between the academic role supporting disciplinary staff and the administrator supporting the achievement of corporate objectives. Academic identity and its associated culture of academic autonomy have been cited as the reason for resistance to managerialism in HEIs (Bolden et al., 2012).

Gentle and Forman (2014) argue that the role of HoD can often be one that no one wants as it is caught literally in the ‘middle’ between discipline-based academic activity linked to research and teaching at one end, and at the other end of the spectrum the management elements of achieving corporate goals. However, interestingly this is contrary to a study conducted by McRoy and Gibbs (2009) in which academic middle managers perceive their role as change agents and play down their academic identity. It could be argued that the HoD has two opposing roles or what may be termed ‘showing two different faces’. Firstly, the HoDs defending academics in the department against the impositions of the corporatist university. Secondly, and conversely, being perceived as members of the corporate face of the university doing the bidding of senior management in opposition to the views of academics (Gentle & Forman, 2014).

This finding is consistent with recent findings of Thian et al. (2016). They highlight the key issue for middle academic managers as being the management of the balancing act between valuing the importance of academic values whilst at the same time meeting the targets associated with the managerial aspect of the role (Bryman & Lilley, 2009; De Boer & Goedegebuure, 2009; Mercer & Pogolian, 2013; Montez, Wolverton, & Gmelch, 2002).

2.9.2 Academic HoDs: Research and Teaching Tension

Bland, Center, Finstad, Risbey and Staples (2005) reported that for an academic department to have a strong research record that delivers quality output, you need a leader with “clear coordinating goals, research, emphasis, communication, and assertive-participative governance” (Bland et al., 2005, p. 236).

In the United States, academics are more productive regarding the delivery of research outputs if they had been mentored on their doctorates or as young researchers (Tschannan-Moran, Firestone, Hoy, & Johnson, 2000). In support of these findings, Stark (2002) suggests it is essential for HoDs to both act as research mentors and establish research mentoring programmes in their departments. A number of previous studies have examined the relationship between a HoD’s role as an academic and manager and this has been supported by Floyd and Dimmock (2011), who argue that many of the HoDs felt that their careers had suffered as a result of not being able to

pursue their academic research due to the demands of being an academic HoD. Some HoDs felt research was more important for their career identity than the role of HoD. They discuss the concepts of internal and external academic career capital based on the work of Bourdieu (1984, 1988, 1998) and suggest that due to undertaking the role of academic HoD, a lack of research output has an impact on career trajectory and internal career capital is enhanced the more managerial tasks are taken on. Overall, the issue appears to be one of the HoDs who want to progress being able to juggle all the administrative, teaching, and research demands of the role but with research still being perceived as paramount in pre-1992 HEIs but not in post-1992 HEIs.

In the Floyd and Dimmock (2011) study, loyalty to the HEI was proving to be problematic with the HoDs being frustrated that their commitment to the HEI and the managerial agenda was not being recognised in any way. In effect, some HoDs were clear that they were going to be selfish and focus back on their research as this was the mechanism for moving onto the next stage of their career, especially if they were not already professors and wanted to become professors. On the flip side, some academics felt that they were able to progress their management career or internal academic capital on the back of being a HoD, supporting the work of Henkel (2002) regarding developing their academic identity. A small number of HoDs in the Floyd and Dimmock research were able to undertake sabbaticals either during their tenure or after and were able to either keep up their academic output or get back to the level they were at before taking on the role of HoD. It may be that this is a key feature of the development of all HoD roles going forward and is healthy for the HEI as well as the individual. The question is, how do you cover their role and do you trial deputies who are also being mentored? The view that there is a conflict with the position of being an academic middle manager and the impact this has on one's ability to continue with a research career is shared by Feng and Sun (2013) in their study of Chinese middle managers. In a recent study by Floyd (2016), academic HoDs overwhelmingly indicated that they were expected to both do research and teach within their departments. Kohtamäki (2013) identified that senior managers placed a greater focus on research than did middle HE managers regarding their identity. Bland et al. (1999) highlighted at the department level that in bringing about curricula change, a high level of both communication and staff engagement in decision making were seen as key.

In summary, there is a fundamental identity issue that has been dominant in the research on academic HoDs, namely between identity as a researcher and managing an academic department. This has been variously reported in the literature as ‘the manager-academic’ (Deem & Brehony, 2005); ‘identity schism’ (Winter, 2009); and the ‘multiple identities’ (Floyd, 2012). Furthermore, there is common agreement in the recent literature that managing this tension between academic values and academic autonomy is a key issue that HoDs have to juggle (Hilli, 2016; Thian et al., 2016).

2.10 Formal and Informal Support Networks and Leadership Training for Academic Middle Managers

This section will look at the literature on the formal and informal academic support academic middle managers have used to undertake their differing roles, along with the forms of training they have taken part in.

As part of a research project looking at the key characteristics of HEIs that are well led, one of the key factors identified by Tysome (2013, pp. 18–19) was to “Develop good, highly motivated middle managers, particularly Heads of Department and Deans, and an effective process for selecting staff with strong leadership and management qualities to fill these positions”. This view is supported by the work of Thian et al. (2016), who identified the importance of the selection process of both the middle manager (in this case a dean) and the academic middle manager having credibility with both the academic and senior managers within the university.

In relation to academic middle managers and formal and informal support networks, in their study into UK associate deans, Floyd and Preston (2014) argue that support networks are essential:

One of the most powerful forms of support and development cited by associate deans in this study is that of other associate deans within their institutions and also from other universities. In terms of the advice they would give to others taking up the role, nearly all respondents mentioned the importance of finding others in the same position, to get moral support but also to be able to compare experiences, share problems and find out what they have done or do in similar situations. (Floyd & Preston, 2014, p. 24)

This perspective of support from peers within the same institution is supported by Branson et al. (2016) in their study that introduces Fisher et al.'s (2007) concept of 'information grounds'; "in an information ground, people may initially be motivated by the need for social engagement or mutual support, but that they come to experience significant information sharing from which they can benefit along physical, social, affective and cognitive dimensions" (Branson et al., 2016, pp. 139–140).

In another recent study by Floyd (2016), it is argued that this concept of peer support is 'valued' by HoDs. "It appeared that this process allowed for reflection, gave the respondents a sense that they were not alone in their experiences, and allowed them to meet new people and improve their social networks" (Floyd, 2016, pp. 17–18). Floyd refers to what he calls 'accidental' forms of leadership development activity taking place which provides support for academic middle managers such as 'shadowing schemes' set up in one faculty. For academic middle managers in this study, these opportunities to meet as a group in 'professional learning communities' allowed for the sharing of knowledge and the challenging of existing ways of doing things.

It can be argued that the same could be said for other academic middle managers such as HoDs. Furthermore, Davis et al. (2016) highlighted the value that academic and non-academic middle managers put on the support they gained from peer collaboration activities through the sharing of ideas and discussions about the challenges others are facing in the same position. Marshall et al. (2011) argue that academic middle managers have strong professional networks across the organisation. This raises the issue of what forms of informal support such as this exist for academic HoDs. In the absence of formal training programmes, what forms of coping strategies or forms of informal support do middle managers seek or utilise? (Floyd, 2016). In their 2011 study, Marshall et al. (2011, p. 522) identified that academic middle managers understood that in bringing about the change they needed, an "understanding of the negotiated processes and relationships that develop between leader and group in the change situation."

In essence, what is being argued for here is the equipping of academic middle managers – through any training that may be provided – with the essential processes and stages in bringing about organisational change. As has been argued, these middle managers often feel that they have had little in the way of staff development to prepare them for the role

of middle manager (Marshall et al., 2011). It appears from the studies above that there has been some investigation into the formal training (or the lack of it) for middle managers. However, there have been very few attempts to investigate the forms of informal support offered to academic middle managers, as well as the importance of all forms of networks in enabling HoDs to undertake their crucial role. This study seeks to address these gaps in the knowledge base.

For many HoDs in a post-1992 HEI the reasons for taking on the role of HoD are varied. According to Floyd (2012, p. 280), these include being able to take on a 'research leadership role' with over half being encouraged by a superior to apply for the role; in essence, a 'vote of confidence' in them and nearly half felt it "would allow them much more flexibility and control over their working environment". In addition, more than half also felt it would "allow them to make a difference."

For many HoDs, they did not know what support they needed until they were actually in the role of middle academic manager and they primarily learned by doing. Locke et al. (2015, p. 20) go on to argue "A desire for support was particularly evident about performance issues."

This is further supported in the recent research by Branson et al. (2016) who demonstrated the need for support for academic middle managers from deans. This particularly related to issues to do with performance management as well as when they had to enforce decisions that academic staff did not agree with.

Locke et al. (2015) go on to argue that these middle managers could act as a sounding board for issues coming from the bottom up and "could have the potential to make a significant contribution to the university as a critical space, in which fair and balanced judgments are seen to be made". McRoy and Gibbs (2009) introduce the concept of the stewardship of organisational change from the top of the organisation. Locke et al. argue that middle managers are central to delivering this change and act as change agents. These academic middle managers were often not trained to undertake this role.

2.10.1 Training and Development

Thian et al. (2016) identified that there was a need to take account of the training provided to middle managers as little was offered – especially in developing countries. Other studies suggest that for HoDs to be able to successfully undertake their leadership role they need to have appropriate support in place which will vary from HEI to HEI. This support will include access to some form of the following: a leadership development programme; HR support; support from the Dean; mentoring from the other HoDs or ex HoDs; and support from other senior staff within the department (Altbach, 2011, p. 7; Jones et al., 2011; Marshall, 2012, p. 519).

It has been identified that there is limited or no training for new HoDs (Deem, 2000; Gmelch, 2004). Furthermore, in a recent study by Floyd (2016, p. 10) the overwhelming majority of HoDs believed they had not been adequately “prepared or supported for taking on the role”. Floyd is arguing that this lack of support for academic middle managers at the two HEIs in his study is akin to a ‘culture of institutional neglect.’

Often, academics that are good at research are promoted to leadership positions (such as HoD) where they are not provided with sufficient support to undertake their role (Gentle & Forman, 2014). They go on to argue that even set against the current crisis that faces many HEIs, they resort to current managerial responses (commonly now criticised in the HE literature). It is argued that these academic managers do not see themselves as leaders. They are missing “Opportunities to be engaging as leaders, and to engage others in securing the discretionary effort from all in the workforce to enable universities to transform lives, win public support and thrive” (Gentle & Forman, 2014, p. 3).

A study by Burgoyne, Mackness and Williams (2009) demonstrated that a key challenge for HE and other sectors is the linkage between investment in leadership development programmes and achievement of organisational goals. It has been reported by Bryman (2007) that the most commonly used forms of leadership development in HE are as follows: development programmes and courses, internally or externally provided, usually involving attendance off-the-job; 360-degree performance feedback coaching; mentoring; networking; job assignments; and action learning.

Aziz et al. (2005) raise the question of what do we mean by leadership in HE, taking account of the other roles, networks and connections HoDs might have outside of HE. This research does not suggest that leadership is a training need of HoDs. In direct contrast to this view, Tysome (2014, p. 5) argues “There are concerns that current processes for selecting middle managers such as departmental heads fail to identify the best managers, and their crucial role in bringing about the changes necessary for institutions to secure a successful future.”

Many HoDs perceive themselves to be poorly prepared for their role especially regarding their previous experience and training and having to educate yourself into the role as an academic middle manager (Bryman, 2007). Part of the key to successful change being delivered is the development of a programme of professional development that encourages the sharing of best practice as this is seen as key to both supporting and motivating staff. In particular, it is important to encourage the development of networks both within the organisation and across HE in general (Tysome, 2014).

Securing resources and developing staff were seen as key to an effective HoD (Benoit & Graham, 2005; Carroll & Gmelch, 1994). Tysome (2014) argues that UK HE leaders believe there is a need for greater research into succession planning and career development as well as some element of scoping for the key role of HoD. He goes on to argue that there is a need to consider much further the views of HoDs on perceptions of what good leadership looks like. Furthermore, there is more work to be done in building the capacity of academics to lead strategic change.

2.10.2 Leadership Development Programmes

In the UK the key agency for over the last decade that has been providing leadership training within the UK HE sector is the LFHE, an agency established by Universities UK and Guild HE in 2005. Another organisation that runs leadership programmes which are accessed by staff in UK HE is Common Purpose, a British founded charity that runs leadership development programmes around the world.

The key issue for Tourish (2013) is the lack of evaluation of leadership development programmes. Some leadership programmes are now evaluated but he believes that what

is required is for HEIs to change how leaders are “identified, selected, developed and evaluated, and – most important – to link all stages of this chain to solving existing organizational problems and challenges” (Tourish, 2013, p. 8). He goes on to outline in detail how this can be achieved by focusing on ensuring that organisational results and outcomes are at the centre of the leadership development journey, and that there are checks along the way to ensure that delivery can take place. In the first instance, Tourish suggests that the focus needs to be on articulating the vision and direction especially due to increased competition in the marketplace. The key issue is setting short-term challenging goals that can be achieved in the next 12 months as well as having a focus on the medium and long term. The second issue for Tourish is the need to focus on leadership behaviours to achieve the challenging short-term goals. In essence, HEIs largely have devolved structures with departments/schools and faculties delegating approaches to managing staff and budgets.

It is only via an approach that allows leaders such as HoDs to reflect thoroughly on their experience that real depth of learning happens and then, in turn, this is reflected in what happens in the work environment (Tourish, 2013). Deem (2007) suggests that management of academic knowledge in HE is unique to HE and thus requires a tailored, rather than generic, training programme. Similarly, Trowler (2008) argues that any training programme developed for academic HoDs needs to be individualised about the subject area and culture within the department. These findings are supported by the recent study by Floyd (2016) where the academic HoDs found individualised programmes – where they were available – of much greater value than generic training programmes.

In essence, what is being argued is that to be able to monitor and evaluate the learning taking place there are a range of measures that can be used, including (Tourish, 2013):

- How others perceive behaviour to have changed
- How the HEI performance has improved due of the change e.g. NSS score
- The level at which the issues highlighted have been resolved
- The increased income resulting or financial return or saving

These measures allow leadership development programmes to be designed so that the HEI supporting the manager/leader is much more of a collaborative partner in the process with the manager/leader and the tutors running the programme. However, the key issue is often that in the HEI strategic issues are not discussed by the line manager with the individual HoD or manager/leader attending the programme. As a result, a major opportunity to bring about strategic change and learning in the HEI does not take place (Gentle & Forman, 2014). It is the issue of reflexivity that should be at the heart of leadership development programmes that allows leaders to become more aware of the habits of judgment that go on to have a direct impact on actions taken (Flinn & Mowles, 2014). They suggest that activities such as action learning sets and coaching conversations – which are often a key part of leadership development programmes – focus on action and this tends to limit reflexive activity enquiry which is more likely to happen if there is a need to focus on action directly. It can be argued that action learning sets could focus on a personal challenge HoDs may have and not discuss action.

The key issue for Gentle and Forman (2014) is that agencies running leadership programmes need to ensure at the application stage that a discussion takes place about the outcomes and benefits to the HEI in terms of strategic change on a particular issue the organisation is facing. Indeed, the key issue is an evaluation before attending the programme on current leadership behaviours and an ongoing discussion during the period the programme is running to discuss the deeper learning and changes taking place. The LFHE Top Management Programme attempts to put this process into practice. The focus of leadership development programmes works best when the focus is on identifying key organisational problems and trying to solve them and where leaders are reflecting upon and learning from their experiences along the way (McCall, 2004; Thomas, 2008). In their influential leadership development study, Dopson et al. (2016) identified that:

One problem we identified was that leadership development was often seen as synonymous with leader development. We suggest the need to develop a broader conceptualisation of what leadership and leadership development is in higher education settings that moves beyond individual leaders and which considers leadership processes in higher education settings in more distributed, relational and contextual terms. (Dopson et al., 2016, p. 7)

It has been argued that academic leadership programmes are more effective if formal mentoring and coaching are offered and other development activities are run alongside the formal programme to ensure continued ‘deep reflection’ and continued learning. Bargh, Boccock, Smith and Scott (2000) highlight the significant effort that VCs put in to retaining top level researchers at UK research intensive universities. Lindholm’s (2003) work supports this view that successful HoDs were seen as those who ensured staff had the time and resources to research. The work of Henkel (2000, 2002) suggested that senior managers felt HoDs – especially HoDs of pre-1992 HEIs – did not have a focus on strategic decision making. Bryman (2007) agrees with this analysis that the academic department is now at the centre of the analysis when it comes to university activity and drives the HEIs key activities of teaching and research. Academics who took on the role of HoD had greater workload pressures and worked longer hours due to the pressures of accountability (Deem, 2000). The range of the key internal factors having an impact on the career path of HoDs are; age, gender, the cultures of the organisation, academic discipline, how much income they generate in relevant departments, their perceived status, and the size of the department (Deem, 2003a; Deem, 2003b; Karp, 1985; Smith, 2005; Twombly, 1998; Ward, 2001).

Internal and external forces limit the degree to which HoDs can exhibit leadership skills (Bryson, 2004; Henkel, 2000). Other facets of what were seen as effective in leadership terms include acting as a ‘barrier’ for staff from university bureaucracy, and academic staff viewed this positively (Evans, 2001; Prichard & Wilmott, 1997). Bareham (2004) talks of staying in touch with staff values. Smith’s (2002) post-1992 HoDs saw their role as management over leadership and key traits of the successful leader were interpersonal skills, vision and communication skills.

A successfully led HEI in the future will “develop good, highly motivated middle managers, particularly departmental heads and deans, and have an effective process for selecting staff with strong leadership and management qualities to fill these positions” (Tysome 2014, p. 24).

It could be argued that VCs in universities are now required to operate as Chief Executive Officers of multi-million-pound businesses where managerialism and KPIs are the key focus, as they have been for over a decade now. There has been a debate in

the summer of 2017 about the increase in VC pay following a report commissioned by the University and College Union. Jo Johnson, the Universities Minister said in the Daily Telegraph online on 27th June 2017 that:

I think there are legitimate concerns about the rates in which VC pay has been growing. At a time when students are concerned about value for money and want to see evidence of that from their tuition fees they do have concerns about the rate of VC pay, and I would urge the sector to show leadership in this respect.

2.11 Summary

This literature review started by covering the current policy context for HE, taking into account what is happening in the HE schools sector. The chapter built on this by briefly considering change management and major ideologies, as well as concepts that are used to understand HE, including new managerialism, collegiality and NPM. The review then moved on to look at the top-down and bottom-up management. The major focus of the review was on the role, identity, and support for academic middle managers in the multitude of roles they have to undertake. As Floyd (2016) identified in his study on the support provided for new academic middle managers:

If the data is indicative of experiences across the university sector in the UK, it suggests the need for a more strategic and nuanced approach to leadership development in higher education for academic middle managers to ensure the on-going success of our institutions in these ever changing times. (Floyd, 2016, p. 21)

As discussed earlier in the conceptual framework, the key concepts used as part of the theoretical framework of this study are the interrelations between the concepts of new managerialism and collegiality; academic identity and boundary spanning; and networking.

Chapter Three – Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This section will outline the research philosophy and design of this study. It will focus on answering the set research questions and outline how data was collected and analysed.

3.2 Research Philosophy and Qualitative Research

There are a number of research philosophies within social sciences. These include pragmatism, positivism, critical realism, and interpretivism (interpretivist) (Dudovskiy, 2013). My ontological perspective is that of interpretivist. It is important to understand that interpretation “means attaching significance to what is found, making sense of findings, offering explanations, drawing conclusions, extrapolating lessons, making inferences, considering meanings, and otherwise imposing order on an unruly but surely patterned world” (Patton, 2015, p. 570).

Thus, in this study I adopted an interpretive paradigm. It has been argued by Floyd (2016) that it is based on the assumption that “social reality is constructed by the individuals who participate in it” (Gall et al., 2007, p. 21, as cited in Floyd, 2016). Floyd, in his study of support for academic middle managers – the same topic as this study – also adopted an interpretivist approach.

It has been suggested that interpretivists are seeking “explanations of human action derive from the meanings and interpretations of those conscious actors who are being studied ...the researcher has to go out and discover it by observation and data collection, in other words through induction” (Gill & Johnson, 2010, p. 60).

The reflexive interpretivist is advocated by Alvesson and Skoldberg (2001, p. 6), for whom reflexive empirical research is not about dealing with empirical material but “A consideration of the perceptual, cognitive, theoretical, linguistic, (inter) textual, political and cultural circumstances that form the backdrop to – as well as impregnate – the interpretations.”

In essence, Alvesson and Skoldberg (2001) are suggesting that reflexive empirical research is a holistic approach to the research process which takes into account all the facets outlined above. For example, in this study this could include the cultural context within which the two HEIs under consideration operate as well as the current political context. I am interpreting the meanings of individuals in public sector organisation settings.

As a manager in the public sector, I was undertaking a Diploma in Management Studies and later a Master of Arts by Research in Management. From the outset I had no formal training in management research and, in particular, my preferred use of qualitative techniques. Much of the research I undertook as a manager was survey based and undertaken by the market research unit of the local authority I worked in. Thus, I was in the position of not understanding how to make use of qualitative techniques in my career (Skinner, Furrer, Marchand, & Kindermann, 2008). My perception of qualitative research is shared by the fairly simple perspective of Skinner et al. (2008, p. 165) who state that it “focuses on people’s experiences and the meanings they place on events, processes and structures of their normal social settings”. It is recognised that surveys designed in the right way could also provide useful qualitative data. My experience of conducting qualitative interviews is with interviewees in public service organisations such as local authorities and universities. In this case qualitative research will be useful as it sets out to explore goals of those working in organisations, as well as connections, procedures and processes in organisations; to understand why certain practices and policies fail (Marshall & Rossman, 1995, as cited in Skinner et al., 2008).

Miles and Huberman, (1994) refer to qualitative data as:

The data collected may be in the form of spoken or written words, unconstrained by predetermined standardised categories. Thus qualitative data “focuses on naturally occurring, ordinary events in natural settings, so that we have a strong handle on what ‘real life’ is like”. (Miles & Huberman, 1994, as cited in Skinner et al. p. 10)

My experience of undertaking qualitative semi-structured interviews involves interviewing individuals who are working in the same field and often in similar roles. For example, during my Master of Arts by Research in Management I conducted five semi-structured interviews with senior managers in local authorities on the issue of appraisal. In my MBA thesis in 2001 I undertook semi-structured interviews with amateur golfers in the UK and the United States, while as part of this study I have interviewed both academic HoD middle managers and deans/PVCs/DVCs (senior managers).

I have held the position of HE HoD for ten years and senior manager for three years. Having held these positions gave me both credibility with interviewees in the sense that I had experienced some of the challenges and issues HoDs had to deal with. I felt during the interviews that interviewees opened up fully to me as I could empathise with the issues they were dealing with. Also, the middle managers gave what I perceived to be honest and open accounts of their experiences as they rarely get a chance to talk in this way.

In each of these processes I recognise that I could be an active participant as a researcher in the interview process by having shared experiences. I would be aware of this once I had met interviewees. Through the interview process I will be “subtly prodding participants to say more about a topic or pausing at key points in the expectation that ‘more’ could be said” (Silverman, 2010). Semi-structured interviews were used as they allowed interviewees to speak, and me as the interviewer to probe appropriately.

In undertaking qualitative research, a researcher needs to develop particular skills and knowledge; as a qualitative researcher, as the instrument (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), a bricoleur (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994), or as competent practitioner (Polkinghorne, 2010, as cited in Chenail, 2011). The instrument discussed here is myself as the researcher. Bricoleur is a metaphor for a researcher and refers to someone who makes meaning of something from whatever is available. An expression of qualitative research is where the subject is fully immersed in the behaviour that is being researched and the researcher only partially. Heron and Reason (2001) cite the work of Janesick (1994) who suggests that this form of qualitative research includes:

Ethnography and participant observation, grounded theory methodology, case studies, phenomenological studies, ethnomethodology, symbolic interactionism, interpretative practice, biographical methods and related strategies. In these forms of qualitative research, it is the researcher who controls the design and ongoing management of the research. (Janesick, 1994, as cited in Heron & Reason, 2001 p. 27)

3.3 The Study Design

This section will cover the study design, justify the use of case study as a way of presenting this data, and explain why I used semi-structured interviews as the chosen method. It will consider the strengths and weaknesses of semi-structured interviews and the key skills of the interviewee in undertaking such interviews. In their study of qualitative research design in educational leadership, Brooks and Normore (2015) suggest that:

Researchers/analysts need to determine not only the existence and accessibility of the qualitative research design and its various data collection strategies for leadership studies (e.g. interviews, observations, documents) but also its authenticity and usefulness, taking into account the original purpose, the context in which it is produced and the intended audience. (Brooks & Normore 2015, p. 804)

After careful consideration of the issues, including the potential difficulty of accessing documents and observation of meetings, I decided interviews were the best form of data collection for this study. I used semi-structured interviews to obtain the views of academic middle managers and the questions used were open-ended to allow the interviewee to speak. Semi-structured interviews “are based on a set of prepared, mostly open-ended questions, which guide the interview and interviewer. This interview guide should be applied flexibly and leave room for the interviewee's perspective and topics in addition to the questions” (Flick, 2014, p. 197).

3.4 Research Questions

The main research question from this thesis is: How are Academic Heads of Department supported to undertake their diverse roles in post-1992 English Higher Education Institutions?

In order to answer this question, the following research objectives are submitted:

RQ1. How do HoDs see their role in decision making in their HEI?

RQ2. How do HoDs perceive and describe their diverse roles and identities as HoDs?

RQ3. What forms of support do HoDs obtain to undertake their role?

3.5 Case Study

This research chose a case study approach which – according to Yin – has been used in business where “the case study methods allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events such as individual life cycles, organisational and managerial processes...” (Yin, 2003, p. 2). Case studies are used in all forms of social science research and it is acknowledged in this study that in business schools, case studies are used for teaching purposes rather than research.

Stake (2005) describes three types of case study; the intrinsic, the instrumental, and the multiple or collective. These case study types were also described by Silverman, (2010, p. 139) who states that in the intrinsic case study “this case is of interest...in all its particularity and ordinariness” and goes on to suggest that you cannot generalise beyond the individual case. In the instrumental case study “a case is examined mainly to provide insight into an issue or to revise a generalisation. Although the case is selected and studied in depth, the main focus is on something else”. It is recognised that theoretical generalisations from the case could be developed. Multiple case studies, or what Silverman calls a ‘collective case study’ “are studied to investigate some general phenomena”. This case study of middle managers in HE will closely mirror what Stake describes as an instrumental case where the “Intention seems to be not to focus on the individuals involved, but on the insights into an issue they provide, the possibilities for

generalisations but only theoretical or ‘in case’ and the identification of improved practices” (White, Drew, & Hay, 2009, p. 20).

This study focused on how HoDs are supported both formally and informally to undertake their role in the process of managing strategic change in HE. It has used an exploratory approach as outlined by Yin (1981). It is accepted that there is already a significant research base on middle managers but the focus of this study will be on the support mechanisms and networks utilised by academic middle managers in UK HE. Collis and Hussey (2003) argue that case studies are often described as exploratory research where there are few theories or a topic/issue has been under-researched. They go on to explain that it is research that is open (but it does not have to be) and which gathers a wide range of data and impressions. Thus, it does not usually provide conclusive answers to problems or issues but gives guidance for future research that may be conducted.

According to Gill and Johnson (2010), case studies are most commonly used in interviews, direct and participant observation, and documentation and archival records. However, case studies are increasingly being used in management research as well as evaluative and exploratory research (Hartley, 2004). Yin (2003) argues that using more than one case is preferable as it is likely to strengthen the research design of the study. My research questions are what Yin describes as the ‘how’ and he suggests that the case study is the most appropriate research strategy to use. In this study, two UK post-1992 teaching intensive HEIs (ex-polytechnics) are being investigated.

Gill and Johnson (2010) argue that one of the real weaknesses of case study research is that researchers have not effectively articulated clear and coherent arguments for the case studies selected. They argue that many of the difficulties are around gaining access to organisations when undertaking management research or any other social science research. They suggest, as Flyvbjerg (2006) argues, that there are a variety of rationales that could be used in the selection of case studies. This is an exploratory research study where there are limited (but increasing) other studies into the particular problem of middle managers role in strategic change and the research focus “is on gaining insights and familiarity with the subject area for more rigorous investigation at a later stage.

Typical techniques used in exploratory research include case studies...” (Collis & Hussey, 2003, p. 11).

3.6 Interviews

According to Yin (2003) the interview is an essential method of data gathering for the case study. Crucially, he goes on to argue that case study interviews are at their best when the interviewee is not merely a respondent but becomes what Yin refers to as an ‘informant’, passing on suggestions of where to obtain further information and providing their insights into a particular situation. In the case of this study, HoDs give insights into their own HEI and how those operate.

The HoDs I interviewed provided a range of insights into their role in managing change and the forms of support/networks they developed to enable them to implement change. Stake (1995) argues that in case studies, interviews are a way of generating multiple realities. One of the reasons I undertook interviews and did not undertake lots of observation, is that it is much easier to gain access to participants and for them to agree to an interview than it is to be allowed access to particular groups and meetings (Travers, 2001). A counter argument to this is that it is the time needed to undertake the observation sessions that is the limiting factor for researchers. Also, Silverman (2006) argues that the majority of qualitative researchers make use of interviews and that they are fairly economical regarding time and money. Additionally, Silverman cites the work of Byrne (2004, p. 182) in stating that interviews are a valuable tool in gaining access to “individuals' attitudes and values....”

It is clear that Silverman sees constructionism as having more value as it is concerned with what Denzin calls a ‘focused interaction’ on a particular topic or issue. Holstein and Gubrium (2016, as cited in Silverman, 2016, p. 79) work on what they term the ‘active interview’ from their book on the new language of qualitative research and state “The goal is to show how interview responses are produced in the interaction between the interviewer and respondent, without losing sight of the meanings produced or the circumstances that condition the meaning making-process”. In reality, it is difficult to imagine –unless all interviews were videoed – how you would actually capture how these ‘interviewee responses are produced’.

This study of middle managers and change in HE fits into a constructionism view. It is important to retain the meaning from the manager's comments but at the same time take note of the dynamic between interviewer and interviewee.

It has been argued by Gill and Johnson (2010) that case studies can make use of interviews, direct and participant observation, and documentation and archival records or even statistical data. The research questions in my study are all about exploring and gaining an understanding of the perception of middle managers' role in implementing change in HE. Thus, to obtain this rich data I would need to be able to explore key themes with interviewees and be able to probe further. Silverman (2006) argues that interviews are collaboratively produced, while Holstein and Gubrium (as cited in Silverman, 2006, p. 151) assert "The interviewee is not a passive 'vessel waiting to be tapped'". Byrne's assertion (as cited in Silverman, 2006, p. 182) goes on to suggest that the real value of the qualitative interview is that it allows for an individual's "attitudes and values ... views, interpretations of events, understandings, experiences and opinions". A counter-argument to this view is that interviews capture the interviewee's views at a particular moment in time and that these can change over time. In essence what is being captured is a snapshot in time.

3.7 Benefits and Drawbacks of Interviewing and Interviewer Skills

Stringer (2007) sees the interview as a 'reflective process' for the interviewee, an opportunity for them to tell their story and for their experience to gain an element of 'legitimacy'. The argument here is that this legitimacy comes from the authentic and personal nature of the comments coming from the interviewee at the particular moment in time the interview is conducted. It could be argued that the views of the interviewee are authentic as it is their lived experience that they are outlining. It is accepted that this is a challenge and may not always be the case as interviewees – for a multitude of reasons – may tell you what they think they want you to hear rather than their 'lived experience'. Furthermore, it could be argued that the 'legitimacy' element of the interviews comes from the fact that the interviewee has voluntarily agreed to be interviewed and the interviews were organised by administrators who work for the DVC in both institutions.

Thus, they were academic HoDs and senior managers from their HEI. It was easier to organise whole days of my time to spend at the university so that the administrator was able to fill these with interview slots with HoDs and senior managers.

Interviews mean that you can compare the responses provided by participants and can be face-to-face and on a one-to-one or group basis (often called focus groups). Using the semi-structured interviews as part of this study allows the interviewer to gain a depth of knowledge and understanding by being able to probe the interviewee and identify what Collis and Hussey (2003, p. 168) call “this process of open discovery”. I am exploring the views of HoDs on how they are supported in their role, the differing roles they undertake and their perceptions of their role in implementing strategic change. Collis and Hussey are arguing that interviewers can ask more challenging and fundamental questions which are not possible with questionnaires. Probing is possible in semi-structured interviews where you are exploring topics and themes with interviews which are not possible with questionnaires. This is the basis of this study where, in the 21 interviews I undertook, I often probed interviewees for more detail or insight into what they meant on a particular theme I was exploring with them.

As an interviewer you always need to be conscious of your biases, values and assumptions, and that you are focusing on looking at the world through the lens of the interviewee while also looking through your own; together it is possible to seek deeper meanings. One of the difficulties with using semi-structured or unstructured interviews is that they can be extremely time-consuming and there may be problems with the recordings, managing the focus of the interview regarding topics covered, and in the analysis of the data (Collis & Hussey, 2003). Collis and Hussey describe this as stimulus equivalence and suggest that it needs to be carefully planned and requires particular skills regarding designing questions. Stringer (2007, p. 72) suggests there are ranges of questioning skills and techniques that interviewers need to master in order to gain a real depth of knowledge from the interviewee; including a mixture of “typical, specific, tour, task, extension, encouragement and example questions” which will allow for deep examination of the issues.

Collis and Hussey (2003) also suggest that an interviewer will need to develop, or already possess, an ability to identify which 'hat' and interviewee is wearing when they respond, in terms of their role inside or outside organisation, plus if they are providing their own opinion (or not) and an ability to pick up on non-verbal communication. Thus, it is common to audio record all semi-structured interviews and in a small number of cases, to video them. In the interviews I undertook, I recorded and transcribed all the interviews and in the analysis, took careful note of the responses made by individuals including which role the interviewee held when they were responding to the question.

Problems that can arise with the use of recorded interviews include those with equipment as well as the interviewee being less willing to be honest as they know they are being recorded (Stringer, 2007). This is less the case today as it is commonplace now to have many things recorded by mobile phones. Stringer goes on to argue that an essential skill of the experienced interviewer is to be able to take full and accurate field notes of the interview to provide a complete record of what was said. In the case of the 20 plus interviews, I took note of these responses where they occurred and checked with respondents that they were happy for me to use the responses in my thesis. In all cases this was with the caveat that they remain anonymous and my respondents all said they were happy for me to use the responses recorded.

Stringer (2007) suggests that the critical skill required by the interviewer is to make the interviewee feel relaxed and thus able to tell you their innermost thoughts and what they are truly thinking. I set up the interviews to try and make interviewees feel as relaxed as possible. Firstly, I think that for the middle managers present, the fact that I have been a HoD similar to the majority of them for eight years provided me with some credibility and insight into the issues they were dealing with or had dealt with in managing change. Furthermore, I had progressed to the position of Vice-Principal and Dean in an HE in FE College with a reasonably large HE provision. In this role as Dean of the Associate College, I sat on the Academic Board of the College validating HEI. Both of these positions and roles gave me credibility with the senior managers (deans and PVC/DVCs) that I interviewed.

3.8 The Process of Data Collection

This section will cover first the process undertaken in collecting the data from interview participants at the two HEIs. The process of accessing the participants will be outlined as will the purposive sampling approach used and the need to give due consideration to data saturation. The approach to ethics will be discussed as will the issues of validity and reliability.

3.8.1 Procedure, Access, Sampling Ethics and Insider/Outsider Relationships

This study focused on two post-1992 HEIs as this is where I had received the majority of my own experience as a HoD. The two HEIs I selected both had a student population of well over 25,000 and serviced the needs of two large cities. In discussion with my supervisors, and acting on good practice from the literature, in the summer of 2013 it was decided to conduct some pilot interviews at a post-1992 HEI in the Midlands. According to Silverman (2010), undertaking pilot interviews is an aspect of good research design and I undertook three pilots, one with a senior leader and another two with academic middle managers. As a result of these interviews I made some changes to the key question areas/themes that I would use in my full interviews later in the year.

This study adopted a purposive sampling approach and it has been argued “Many qualitative researchers employ ... purposive, and not random, sampling methods. They seek out groups, settings and individuals where ... the processes being studied are most likely to occur” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 202). This study is therefore not planning to make any generalisation that would require random sampling. Palinkas et al. (2015) argue that purposive sampling is necessary in research studies that require participants who have knowledge and experience of the topic being considered, as well as being available and willing to participate and provide their views (Bernard 2002; Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Spradley, 1979). Thus, for this study the participants are in the roles of HoDs and senior managers and are responsible for delivering change management projects. They therefore had the knowledge and experience to answer questions on the topic under discussion as well as being willing to actively participate in the study.

Gentles, Charles, Ploeg, & McKibbin, (2015) argue that the number of interview participants is often justified when 'interview saturation' point is reached. They go on to state that there is no accepted method for identifying when data saturation is reached and the point at which data saturation is reached is when no new themes or concepts emerge. I reached saturation point in this study when I had undertaken seven interviews with middle managers at the first HEI and thus this set the limit for the second HEI. In terms of senior managers, I interviewed four at the first HEI and after the third interview felt that saturation was evident point; but was committed to undertaking the fourth interview. However, this allowed me to decide that the saturation point was three, hence I only interviewed three senior managers at Westlands University.

To gain access to participants/interviewees, I decided that my best strategy would be to go to the senior level in the two HEIs. I emailed the PVC/DVC Student Experience in both institutions and outlined my desire to undertake interviews with four to six academic middle managers that were academic HoD or equivalent, and two to three interviews with senior managers/leaders in the organisation that were at dean or PVC/DVC-level. I received a response from both the PVC and DVC who passed me on to their personal assistants who became pivotal in facilitating my access to interviewees across each HEI in the coming six months. Thus, during the early summer and autumn of 2014 I was in regular contact with the two personal assistants and gave them full days when I was free to undertake the interviews. They subsequently emailed out across their institutions with an initial email directed at Head of Academic Schools requesting their willingness and availability to attend a confidential interview with me for up to 90 minutes on the topic of their role in managing change in HE. I was pleasantly surprised by the very positive response I gained from academics in both institutions.

In discussion with both personal assistants, arrangements were made for me to interview staff at both institutions over a six-month period. On certain days I would have a room booked all day and would interview up to a maximum of four participants. On other days I would be working between buildings and would interview between one and two interviewees in their offices. In setting the scene for each interview with participants I followed a strict procedure of outlining key principles at the start of each interview.

I followed the five key principles of the research ethics framework developed by the ESRC in July 2005 (cited in Silverman, 2010, pp. 155–6). Table 2 below outlines the key issues that need to be considered regarding research ethics.

Research staff and subjects must be fully informed about the purpose, methods and intended possible uses of the research, what their participation in the research entails and what risks, if any, are involved.
The confidentiality of information supplied by research subjects and the anonymity of respondents must be respected.
Research participants must participate in a voluntary way, free from any coercion.
Harm to research participants must be avoided.
The independent and impartiality of researchers must be clear, and any conflicts of interest or partiality must be explicit.

Table 2: Source: Research Ethics Framework, ESRC, July 2005, pp. 23–5 (cited in Silverman, 2010, p. 156–7)

It could be argued that the issues in Table 2 above are about avoiding causing harm to research participants but it is accepted that it would be difficult to know if this had taken place or not. Appendix 5 outlines the information read to interview participants at the start of the interview. All interviewees gave their verbal approval to continue with the interview and confirmed they understood fully the information that had been read to them. My research proposal to the University of Gloucestershire contained a section on ethical approval that was fully approved by the Business School and the University Research Degrees Committee as shown in Appendix 4.

Marshall and Batten (2004) suggested that the focus of the critical issue regarding power relation and ethics is that of informed consent. It is crucial that potential participants involved in the research are told about the research and asked for their formal consent Tuckman (1999).

The key for the interviewer is to create an environment of informality and openness so that the interviewee feels safe and able to open up. For Karnieli-Miller, Strier and Pessach (2009, p. 280), “the feeling of intimacy is fueled by the informal, anti-authoritative, and nonhierarchical atmosphere in which the qualitative researcher and participants establish their relations in a climate of power equality.”

During much of the research period I occupied the role of being an academic HoD and was thus an insider (although I did not research my own institution). For a shorter period of time I was more of an outsider whilst in a senior leadership role. Corbin Dwyer and Buckle (2009, p. 55) state that:

Whether the researcher is an insider, sharing the characteristic, role, or experience under study with the participants, or an outsider to the commonality shared by participants, the personhood of the researcher, including her or his membership status in relation to those participating in the research, is an essential and ever-present aspect of the investigation. (Corbyn Dwyer & Buckle, 2009, p.55)

Thus, I learned quite early on in the first round of interviews (including the pilot interviews) that I needed to be conscious of the power relationship with participants. In the early interviews with HoDs it was clear that I was speaking a little too much and making it clear through body language that I knew the issues that the HoDs were outlining as I was operating in a similar role. I reflected on each interview after I had completed them and made a distinct change in my approach after I had recognised that I was possibly influencing the comments from interviewees by making explicit my background. So, I only introduced myself in the next round of interviews and thereafter as a doctoral researcher.

Furthermore, it was also clear there was an issue of a power relationship as I was an experienced HoD and some of the HoDs I interviewed were new in post. As these interviews came later in the study, and due to my earlier reflections, I made sure that I was not suggesting solutions to issues raised or ideas for professional development but stayed focused as the researcher to ascertain the current experience of the HoD. I share the view put forward Corbin Dwyer and Buckle (2009, p. 59) that:

...the core ingredient is not insider or outsider status but an ability to be open, authentic, honest, deeply interested in the experience of one's research participants, and committed to accurately and adequately representing their experience. (Corbyn Dwyer & Buckle, 2009, p.59)

Each interview lasted between 60 and 70 minutes on average. In University A (Newlands University) I interviewed seven HoDs and three senior leaders. In University B (Westlands University) I interviewed seven HoDs and four senior leaders. Thus, in total, I undertook 21 interviews – 14 with middle managers and seven with senior managers.

Table 3 below (and continued on the following page) outlines the roles and disciplines of the staff I interviewed and includes both the pilot interviews and interviews at two HEIs:

HEI	Middle Manager – Title – Discipline/Subject	Senior Manager – Title
Pilot HEI	Head of Section – Dr – Education	DVC – Research
Pilot HEI	Head of Section – Education	Head of Department
Pilot HEI	School of Education	Programme Lead
Newlands	Head of School – Health	PVC – International Portfolio Development (Professor)
Newlands	Head of School – Dr – Psychology	Dean – Professor – Arts
Newlands	Head of School – Dr – Architecture	PVC – Learning and Teaching and Student Experience (Professor)
Newlands	Head of School – Professor – Media	

Newlands	Head of School – Dr – English	
Oli Newlands	Head of School Professor – Health	
Newlands	Head of School – Dr – Law	
Westlands	Head of School – Dr – Arts	DVC – Student Experience
Westlands	Head of School – Dr – Computing	DVC – Academic – Professor
Westlands	Associate Head of School – Social Work	Dean – Professor – Engineering
Westlands	Head of School – Arts	Dean – Professor – Health
Westlands	Associate Dean – Dr – Health – former Head of Department Psychology	
Westlands	Head of School (recently stepped down) – Dr – IT	
Westlands	Head of School Dr – Business	

Table 3: Middle Managers and Senior Managers Interviewed – Titles and Disciplines

3.8.2 Validity and Reliability

There has been much discussion in the literature about the use of the terms validity in qualitative studies as has been outlined by Whittemore, Chase and Mandle (2001):

Numerous terms have been suggested as those working within the interpretive perspective have struggled to articulate validity criteria in qualitative research. Truth value, credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), trustworthiness (Eisner, 1991, Marshall, 1990) have all been proposed as more suitable criteria to judge the

quality of qualitative research. Yet none have been overwhelmingly supported. (Whittemore et al., 2001, p. 527)

However, Whittemore et al. go on to argue that “validity is an accurate term and does provide the opportunity for criteria to be developed that are reflective of the tenets of the interpretive perspective.”

Furthermore, Brooks and Normore (2015, p. 803) in their discussion of rigour and qualitative studies on educational leadership, state researchers should: “think beyond quantitative-bound concepts like generalizability when discussing their qualitative work and consider the possibilities of conditions under which the lessons might be applied elsewhere”. Furthermore, they go on to argue that articles should outline the following, after their findings section:

- (1) Discussion, wherein the author(s) shows readers how their work helps refine, deepen or refute ideas we read about in their literature review and theoretical perspective.
- (2) Conclusion, where the author(s) explains the implications of the work for both research and practice, broadly speaking.
- (3) Transferability, where the author(s) consider issues that would make clear whether conditions under which scholars and practitioners would expect to encounter if the initiative were undertaken in another setting: policy context, finance, curriculum history, equity dynamics, etc. Basically, would the researcher(s) encourage or discourage others to try what was described, and under what conditions might they find the most success or failure?

It is clear from the discussions on validity in relation to qualitative research that the debate and discussions will continue as Whittemore et al. (2001, p. 535) noted “further development of validity criteria requires on-going dialogue.”

Silverman (2015) argues that there is little point in undertaking qualitative research unless the wider audience can be convinced that the methods were reliable and the conclusions valid. If a study can be argued to have validity then as a consequence some authors suggest that it can also be argued to be reliable (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 2002). Furthermore, due to the challenges faced by qualitative researchers in trying to define validity, many have sought to identify their own more useful concepts including

terms such as 'quality', 'rigor' and 'trustworthiness' (Davies & Dodd, 2002; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Seale, 1999; Stenbacka, 2001).

Miles and Huberman argue that regarding validity:

Note that qualitative studies take place in a real social world, and can have real consequences in people's lives; that there is a reasonable view of "what happened" in any particular situation (e.g., including what was believed, interpreted); and that we who render accounts of it can do so well or poorly, and should not consider our work unjudgeable. (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 277)

Bryman (1988) and Silverman (2010) both refer to overcoming the issue of avoiding over-reliance on a small number of specially chosen examples – or specifically identified explanations and key phrases – used from the interviews that can be deemed 'anecdotalism'. These are often not representative of the whole data, nor generalisable. In order to protect against anecdotalism and develop what Popper (1959, as cited in Silverman, 2010) calls a 'critically rationalist' approach, I have used what Silverman refers to as the constant comparative method which focuses on examining and comparing all the data elements in a single case (Charmaz, 2006, pp. 178–80; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). I made use of a template analysis to achieve this. The other approach I have used in the data analysis is that of comprehensive data treatment (Mehan, 1979) which involves constantly going back to examine, in this case, my semi-structured interviews.

A further approach outlined by Mehan (1979) to ensure the validity of outcomes is what is termed deviant case analysis. This looks at the issues raised in a small proportion of interviews that are distinctly different from the majority in how they responded to a particular theme or sub-theme. Through the template analysis process of confirming themes and sub-themes I identified interviews or responses to certain themes or sub-themes that fitted the criteria for deviant case analysis. According to Silverman (2010), reliability of qualitative data relates to the level of regularity with which occurrences of the same issue are recorded; in this study, this is the number of times common issues are raised by the interviewee.

It has been argued by some qualitative researchers that providing full data transcripts is vital to being able to confirm reliability (Bryman, 1988; Seale, 1999). In qualitative research reliability issues can also be attended to by the use of standardised approaches to the development of transcripts and writing of field notes (Silverman, 2015). For example, this could include how the interviewer immediately reflects and captures their thoughts on paper in a structured format following each interview.

3.9 Data Analysis

This section will discuss the approach taken to the analysis of interviews. The case will be made for the template analysis method that has been used to analyse the 21 interviews.

3.9.1 Approach to Data Analysis

In writing up this methodology and methods assessment for this doctorate, I made the assumption that I would use one of the methods of coding used in interpretivist studies of Miles and Huberman (as cited in Collis & Hussey, 2003, p. 269) to develop some form of coding that can be “stored, retrieved and rearranged.”

3.9.2 Template Analysis

However, on reading further and more widely, I came across template analysis as more recently discussed by King (2004) and found the explanations both met the research questions I was asking and appealed to my desire to have some structure. In deciding how to analyse the interviews, I read the interview analysis literature and decided that template analysis – an approach put forward by Nigel King from Huddersfield University – best suited the data that I had. Waring and Wainwright (2008) argue that template analysis was first defined effectively by Crabtree and Miller (1999) who say:

...researchers can develop codes only after some initial exploration of the data has taken place, using an immersion/crystallisation or editing organising style. A standard intermediate approach is when some initial codes are refined and modified during the analysis process. (Crabtree & Miller, 1999, p. 167)

They proceed to argue that this was further developed in recent years by King (2004) about the National Health Service. Brookes et al. (2015) claim that template analysis has been used extensively in management and organisational research and other disciplinary areas. The template approach involves coding a large volume of text so that segments about an identified topic (the codes) can be assembled in one place to complete the interpretative process. It is accepted that this is what most coding of qualitative interviews or data involves. Thus, template analysis is a method of thematically analysing qualitative data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). It has been argued that it is different from the interpretative phenomenological analysis which is ‘inductive and grounded in the data’ and where the key themes emerge from the text; whereas in template analysis there are codes that are identified in advance as a method for analysing and interpreting the data. Even though the themes are set within the template analysis system, I will still be open to new themes emerging as I work through the data. The advance themes are identified through the volume and element of repetition from respondents. Thus, even though the themes are broadly set, I accept that this set of themes is a dynamic set of themes that could be added to if new themes emerge.

According to Waring and Wainwright (2008, p. 86), King (2004) advocates one of three positions when starting out on the research:

- Have pre-defined codes/a priori codes based on the theoretical position of the research.
OR
- Develop codes after some initial exploration of the data.
OR
- Take a halfway position – some initial codes (possibly from the interview questions?) and refinement after exploration of the data.

The approach taken in this study is the final position after developing some initial themes from the interview themes and refining these as a result of the emergent themes coming from the data. Brooks et al. (2015) argue that template analysis is mainly used in studies that use interview data (e.g. Goldschmidt, Schmidt, Krasnik, Christensen, & Groenvold, 2006; Slade, Haywood, & King, 2009). My research makes use of 21 interviews across two HEIs.

There are many highlighted benefits and drawbacks with template analysis; one of the main benefits articulated that it is a flexible method that can be applied to many research situations. One of the key issues to guard against in the use of template analysis is to see the template as an end in itself rather than as a method of making sense of the data (Brooks et al., 2015). It is worth noting that template analysis has been used as a method of data analysis in both large and small qualitative data sets (King, 2008).

The approach I took was to listen to the interview data at the same time I was reading it to identify the key themes that would serve as the basis for the template. I tested this template by going through five of the 20 interviews in detail to check that the template was accurate. As a result of going back through the interviews I re-adjusted the template and added to it. Once the template had been tested and adjusted I moved onto the next stage of the analysis. This stage involved grouping the statements in the interviews with the themes in the interviews; a drawn-out process for making sure that the statements in the interviews fitted firstly with the large theme and then the sub-themes of the template analysis template.

3.10 Summary

This chapter has noted that I wish to take an interpretivist approach and make use of a case study approach as a method of presenting the project data. I will use semi-structured interviews as the appropriate method for this study of academic middle managers in English post-1992 HEIs. I will code the themes and make use of King's (2004) thematic analysis to draw out the patterns and meanings coming from the data. I will, of course, be open to any other themes coming from the data as well as those specified through the thematic analysis. The next chapter will consider the findings and discussion element of this study.

Chapter Four – Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

This chapter will consider the findings from this study. It will identify the gaps in the literature that this study is aiming to fill and consider – in turn – the concepts of managerialism and collegiality, academic identity of the HoDs, and the forms of formal and informal support available for them.

4.2 Scene-setting

This study aims to explore the role of (and support for) HoDs in attempting to manage strategic change in UK HE. In particular it will focus on the forms of formal and informal support and assistance that HoDs obtain to undertake their role. For this study academic middle managers are predominately academic HoDs but it also included one Associate Dean (formerly a HoD) and one Associate Head of School. My intention is to illuminate the challenging and multi-faceted role and identity of the middle academic manager; noting in particular noting that HoDs operate as boundary-spanners often working across disciplines, the faculty, institution and sector that may take into account professional and regulatory bodies. I will highlight the pressures that HoDs face from the top and bottom of the organisation to move between a managerial and collegial approach to leading their departments. I will reveal the varied formal and informal forms of support and professional networks that HoDs access to survive and prosper in their roles. This issue of how a HoD is identified and assisted formally and informally into taking on the role has grown in importance in recent years. This is due to the volume of change taking place in UK HE and academic HoDs being recognised by their HEIs as having a pivotal role in delivering strategic change.

This study makes a contribution by highlighting that there are formal and informal gaps in the development of opportunities for HoDs in post-1992 HEIs in England. It can be argued that this gap in the development of HoDs means that not only are HoDs not operating optimally but, consequently, neither is their department nor the university as a whole. In particular, there are developmental opportunities that are being missed or underemphasised at an institutional level, faculty/departmental level and throughout the

lifecycle of the HoDs. These development opportunities could be internal and external as well as informal and take account of national leadership training programmes.

4.3 Locating the Gap

Previous work on academic middle managers has addressed issues including the many differing roles and identities of HoDs. As part of these studies, the tension between operating in a collegial versus managerial decision-making model has been highlighted with a particular focus on ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ managerialism. ‘Hard’ managerialism is where a HEI is seen as focusing on corporate goals and KPIs at the expense of academic values, and decisions are taken centrally. In contrast, a ‘soft’ form of managerialism is more closely linked to a collegial culture and a collaborative and inclusive form of decision making. So far, however, there has been little discussion in the academic literature about the informal forms of support and networks accessed by HoDs, or the perception of senior managers concerning the needs regarding training required by HoDs.

4.4 Filling the Gap

My study is designed to address a gap in the literature by identifying the formal and informal – and what might be termed hybrid – support networks accessed by HoDs. My primary focus will be on this under-researched area of informal systems/networks of support accessed by HoDs. Recommendations will be put forward that address the life cycle of the HoDs, suggest institutional level initiatives that could support them and provide recommendations for formal internal and external leadership programmes aimed at HoDs.

4.5 Orientation and What I Will Do in This Chapter

This chapter will begin by outlining the key findings of the study before considering the links to the literature. The approach this section will take is as follows:

- Using the structure of template analysis, present the results using these key themes.
- In outlining findings from the themes, I will consider the data from both sets of interviews with senior managers and middle managers. I will integrate the comments and discussion from the 14 HoDs and seven senior managers interviewed.

- Under each of these themes, after I have presented the results I will provide a discussion section where I synthesise and interpret the results in the light of the literature.
- I will outline how my results differ, confirm or contribute to the literature on particular themes.
- It is in these discussion sections that I will make knowledge claims and describe what I can claim from having undertaken this research.
- I will outline where my research is different from the literature and where it fills gaps in the existing literature.
- I will discuss conflicting results.
- I will discuss the unexpected findings and weaknesses, and limitations of the study.
- I will address the research questions and how my results affect our understanding of the research questions.
- I will revisit the conceptual framework and assess how useful it has been in addressing the problems highlighted in this study.
- I have given each of the academic middle managers pseudonyms as listed in Table 4 on the following page.
- I have numbered each of the senior managers as shown in Table 5 on page 85.
- HEI 1 I will call Newlands University and HEI 2 I will call Westlands University.

4.6 Discussion Section

The discussion of findings will systematically work through the sections of the thematic analysis section. Firstly, managerialism and collegiality will be considered along with other types of decisions taken by HoDs and the types of change they were engaged in. The focus on managerialism and collegiality will specifically consider ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ managerialism. Secondly, the identity issues faced by HoDs are discussed, considering specifically the tensions faced by HoDs trapped in the middle serving two constituencies; that of the corporate university and academics in their department. Thirdly, the formal and informal support systems and networks accessed by HoDs in undertaking their multitude of roles will be discussed; with a focus on formal leadership programmes and informal networking opportunities.

NAME AND TITLE HEI 1 Newlands University	Names	NAME AND TITLE HEI 2 Westlands University	Names
Head of School, Nursing and Midwifery	Anne	HoD, Design and Visual Arts	Arthur
Head of School, Social Sciences	Ben	Director of Art and Culture – former HoD, Performing Arts for 6 years	Bill
Head of School, Architecture	Colin	Associate Dean Academic Faculty of Health and Life Sciences – former HoD, Psychology	Christopher
Head of School, Media	David	Associate HoD, Social Work	Denise
Head of School, English	Emily	HoD, Engineering and Computing	Eric
Head of School, Allied and Public Health Professions	Frank	Formerly HoD, Economics and Finance	Fred
Head of School, Law	Grace	Former HoD, History, International Relations and Politics	Graham

Table 4: Pseudonyms Given to the HoDs Interviewed

TITLE	AT	NAME	TITLE	AT	NAME
NEWLANDS UNIVERSITY			WESTLANDS UNIVERSITY		
PVC Academic Portfolio and Market Development		Senior Manager 1	DVC Student Experience		Senior Manager 4
PVC Student Experience and Learning and Teaching		Senior Manager 2	DVC (Academic)		Senior Manager 5
Executive Dean of Art, Design and Media		Senior Manager 3	Dean of Health and Life Sciences		Senior Manager 6
			Dean of the Faculty of Engineering and Computing.		Senior Manager 7

Table 5: Senior Managers Interviewed

4.6.1 New Managerialism and Collegiality

This section will consider the types of decisions taken by HoDs and the types of change they were engaged in, as outlined in Table 6 on pages 86 and 87. It will then go on to consider the middle and senior manager's views of what has been described in the literature as 'hard' and 'soft' forms of managerialism and collegiality. Furthermore, it will consider in the differences between the two case study HEIs in terms of either being more managerialist or collegial in culture. Table 6 outlines that Newlands University operates a form of a 'soft' form of managerialism closely aligned to a more collaborative collegial culture, whereas Westlands University is operating a more 'hard' form of managerialism where decision making is centralised and top-down with HoDs having little input or flexibility regarding implementation.

It is argued that the information in Table 6 suggests that Newlands University is operating a collegial and collaborative form of decision-making culture. Newlands is

operating such a culture because HoDs are engaged fully in contributing to strategic decision making in the university and in supporting cross-university change projects. Newlands HoD are more actively engaged than staff from Westlands University in cross-university HoD forums and discipline and subject networks which they use to assist in making decisions. In contrast, Westlands University HoDs are less engaged in cross-university activity and support of networks internally and externally and a form of ‘hard’ managerialism operates.

NAME AND TITLE HEI 1 Newlands University	Types of decision making HoDs are engaged in making	Types of Change Management HoDs are engaged in
Newlands University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic and operational decisions about the future direction of the school • Structural change of school/department • Implementation of faculty and university policy and practice across the school • Supporting and developing senior managers to succeed • Moving subject area on via making decisions in professional body and subject networks • Challenging change from the centre and standing up for their 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Strategic change of school/department including structural changes * Conduit for implementing university strategic change such as restructuring, NSS action planning, new policies and procedures (x5) * Cross-university task and finish change groups * Estates moves of staff and students to new buildings

	<p>school/department</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking decisions in a collegial manner at the level of the department/school via engagement with academic colleagues (5) 	
Westlands University	Types of decision making HoDs are engaged in making	Types of Change Management HoDs are engaged in
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing decisions coming from the top of the university • Operational decision making affecting the department – how to implement university initiatives • Acting as a facilitator for university change for the department • No room for creating school/department vision as implementing decisions from top-down 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Cross institutional change projects * Department level change such as moving staff and students into new buildings * Development and implementation of key actions on NSS, retention, from university template

Table 6: Types of Decisions Made by HoDs and Types of Change Management HoDs are Engaged in

4.6.2 'Hard' Managerialism and Westlands University

The findings of the present study suggest that managerialism and a top-down approach to the management of change are the dominant culture in Westlands University. This is indicated by the responses below:

“So, certainly a top-down approach, well certainly here, anyway, it's a top-down approach.” Eric (HoD Engineering and Computing)

“What I mean is it's become too much top-down. ‘This is what I want you to do’.” Fred (HoD Economics and Finance)

Eric and Fred from Westlands University form part of this study and are reflecting that their institutional approach to strategic change is top-down. The finding is consistent with Tsai and Beverton (2007), who argue that a top-down approach to the management of HE is of value only where there is a shared view between senior management and academics in what has to be achieved.

It will be argued below that there does not appear to be an agreement between HoDs and senior managers on what has to be achieved. In relation to this study, it could be argued that this is new managerialism being defined by HoDs as ‘hard managerialism’ as discussed by Trow (1993). “Hard managerialism, on the other hand, involves the imposition of discourses and techniques of reward and punishment on those employees who are considered by those in managerial positions to be fundamentally untrustworthy and thus incapable of self-reform or change” (Trow, 1993, as cited in Deem, 1998, p. 53).

This is reflected here in some comments from HoDs and senior managers who argued that:

“Nowadays everything's cascaded down. So, you've got the top-level corporate objectives, goes to the faculty, goes to the department, and that then goes to individual members of staff, so everybody knows exactly what they're required

to do... So, I'd describe that probably as quite a brutal way of changing things.”
Christopher (Associate Dean, former HoD Psychology)

“It smacks too much of corporatism, managerialism as ruling the roost, really.”
Fred (HoD Economics and Finance)

“There is a tendency towards that, that new kind of managerialism has come in. And that's also reflected in appointments.” Fred (HoD Economics and Finance)

“We don't pretend we're anything other than a managed organisation. We do have this periodic argument with the QAA about executive and deliberative, and all that stuff. It's just complete nonsense. Any institution which isn't managed at the moment is going to be bankrupt.” Senior Manager 5 (DVC Academic)

Christopher, Fred and Senior Manager 5 are all from Westlands University, and the culture and form of ‘hard’ managerialism being outlined by them is reflected in Trow (1993, as cited in Deem, 1998). In a more recent study conducted in Portuguese universities by Magalhães et al. (2017), it was argued that ‘hard’ managerialism is based on hierarchical decision making; with specific measurable targets and key performance indicators, driven by financial metrics, and based on management decision-making processes.

It is clear from the comments of HoDs and senior managers at Westlands University that it is an example of ‘hard’ managerialism and is driven from the centre and top-down. This could be explained by a significant growth in student numbers and a significant move up the university league tables that took place in this HEI in the last decade. As one HoD put it:

“But it does feel very centre-driven and there's a lot less wiggle room, I think, a lot less expected of heads of department in terms of creating a strategy for their department, for example.” (Eric, Head of Department Engineering and Computing)

The argument being put forward is that in the current climate for post-1992 HEIs of: increased competition; the significance attached to the NSS; the TEF; a demographic decline in 18-year olds; and league tables, there is no option other than to adopt a ‘hard’ management top-down approach to the running of institutions. The stark reality being put forward to academic staff and Boards of Governors is – as Senior Manager 5 above has pointed out – that it is about ‘survival’. However, it is recognised that survival can be achieved in more ways than just adopting a top-down managerialist approach. In their seminal paper, Deem and Brehony (2005, p.25) argued that “new managerialism as a general ideology is believed by both manager-academics and other academics and support staff to have permeated UK universities”. The research of this study outlines and supports recent studies by Bacon (2014) and Jones et al. (2014), who argued that managerialism has been the dominant culture in UK HE for the past three to four decades and continues to the present day.

Some HoDs expressed frustrations with the limitations of managerialism in not allowing any room for ‘creativity’ or being able to lead your department. As some respondents said:

“...one of the keys to higher education is the ability to be creative and to think independently and to be encouraged to do so? Sometimes management-speak seems to close that down.” Emily (HoD English)

It could be argued that HoDs are seeking some form of ‘local’ control about how strategic change is implemented. They recognise that institutional strategic change needs to happen, but within a framework for change they want the ability to adapt and flex the change to meet their departmental context.

Furthermore, Jones et al. (2011) go on to argue that the management research suggests that managerialism – with its hierarchical structures – may not be the best way to achieve results. This reflects the findings of Goffee and Jones (2007) who argue that academics are high performing individuals who reject the corporatisation of their HEIs. The academic middle manager has been described as “walking the tightrope” between the administrative/management role of the job, as well as ensuring that academics have the freedom and autonomy to commonly attach with the role (Winter, 2009, p. 128).

This links to the next discussion of collegiality and ‘soft’ managerialism, and the role and perceptions of HoDs.

4.6.3 Collegiality and ‘Soft’ Managerialism and Newlands University

The findings of the present study suggest HoDs are looking for an alternative to ‘hard’ managerialism and that collegiality – or what has been termed ‘soft’ managerialism – is important in managing strategic change in UK HE. As some respondents said:

“Well personally, as I’ve said a lot this afternoon, I think collegiality is really important. I think you’ve got to take people with you; you have to do it in a collegiate way.” David (HoD Media)

“We try to make decisions collectively. They’re decisions that fundamentally affect the direction the school is going in and want everybody to have a voice in them.” Emily (HoD English)

“There are a couple of examples recently where, what I thought was the answer and what I imagined we’d end up at wasn’t, and I think people really appreciate that – that it isn’t a kangaroo court, or whatever the phrase might be. And also, delegating and giving ownership to it.” Colin (HoD Architecture)

“I think the way you do it is important because, as I said, academics question things. If they didn’t, there’d be something wrong. And getting the right balance between collaborative decision making and executive action is difficult.” Senior Manager 2 (PVC Learning and Teaching and Student Experience)

David, Colin, Emily and Senior Manager 2 are all from Newlands University. It could be argued that although their institution is undergoing a transformational change that is being directed from the top, they believe they have the flexibility to deliver the change in a way they see fit. In effect the university has outlined the overall direction of change, what might be called a framework for the change, and is allowing local decision making about how that change is implemented.

Thus, Newlands University is an example of ‘soft’ managerialism as explained above by the comments of Colin, Emily, David and the PVC. Table 6 (pp. 84–85) shows that five of the HoDs from Newlands University outlined that they took decisions in a collegial way. This focus on a ‘soft’ form of managerialism at Newlands University can be explained by the framework for change established by the recently appointed VC. This framework set a clear vision of change that the VC wanted to achieve but allowed individual faculties and schools/departments to implement the change in a manner that allowed for a collegial/collaborative form of ‘soft’ management to be the dominant culture.

This finding is consistent with that of Ambrose et al. (2005) and Bacon (2014) in that academic middle managers believed decision making should be collegial. Furthermore, in their studies of faculty learning communities, Ward and Selvester (2012) demonstrated that academics engaged in these ‘bottom-up’ learning and teaching initiatives as they were seen as ‘collaborative endeavours’ and participation was voluntary.

In a way what is being described here is what Trow (1993) would argue is ‘soft’ managerialism which he defines as:

...the recognition of inefficiency and ineffectiveness, and the invention of rational mechanisms for the improvement of university performance, with the explicit agreement and consent for all those involved. Though this is not collegiality, it is not entirely incompatible with it. (Trow, 1993, p. 53)

More recently, Magalhães, et al. (2017) outlined that ‘soft’ managerialism is seen as having the following key characteristics: horizontal line management; mission-focused goals; being collaborative; with limited regulation; and being concerned with facilitating change. Table 7 on the following page outlines what they consider to be the key characteristics of ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ managerialism.

Governance	Soft influence of management	Hard influence of Management
Coordination	Distributed leadership and interpersonal networks (horizontal decision making)	NPM based <i>Management must manage</i> (vertical and hierarchical decision making)
Goals	Mission oriented goals	Objectives as measurable outputs
Values	Collaboration/cooperation	Performance indicators and competition
Control mechanisms	Negotiation and persuasion (e.g. <i>Light touch</i> systems, <i>Hands off</i> style)	Command and control (e.g. financial control, efficiency and value for money, and commodification of activities)
Processes	Enablement skills (activation skills, modulation skills and orchestration skills).	Management skills

Table 7: Types of Characteristics of ‘Hard’ and ‘Soft’ Managerialism (Magalhães et al., 2017)

4.6.4 Summary

This study suggests that managerialism is still the dominant culture encountered by academic middle managers in the two HEIs studied (Bacon, 2014; Deem & Brehony, 2005). The findings of this study reveal that HoDs found the ‘hard’ managerialism outlined by Trow (1993) and Magalhães et al. (2017) constraining and allowing no opportunity to shape strategic change. Thus, HoDs were seeking a more collegial form

of culture, what Trow (1993) and Magalhães et al. (2017) described as ‘soft’ managerialism, and rejected the ‘hard’ form of managerialism (Goffee & Jones, 2007: Jones et al., 2011).

The reality in English post-1992 HEIs is that most are operating somewhere in the middle between ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ managerialism. There will be extremes of both in the sector and for this study – from the comments of middle and senior managers – Newlands University is operating closer to the ‘soft’ end of the managerialism continuum and Westlands closer to the ‘hard’ end. Furthermore, it can be argued that within individual HEIs, within differing faculties and even academic departments within the same faculty, differing forms of ‘soft’ and ‘hard’ managerialism are in operation. It could be argued that if an institution is going through a major crisis and struggling to survive a ‘hard’ form of managerialism may operate, while in institutions that are performing better a ‘soft’ form managerialism may operate. However, this is probably far too simplistic because as previously outlined you can get differing forms of ‘soft’ and ‘hard’ managerialism operating with the same institutions, faculty, school and department. The determining factor on whether ‘soft’ or ‘hard’ managerialism operate will be down to the leadership from the top of the HEI, faculty, school and department. Furthermore, it is important to recognise that administrators differ in their views from academics and managers in terms of the kind of managerialism that operates and works effectively in their roles.

4.7 Differing Identities of HoDs

One key finding to emerge from the data is that HoDs found it difficult to balance the demands of their role with continuing to be research active. Most HoDs continue to identify themselves, and be seen as, discipline-based academics first rather than leaders/managers. As some respondents said:

“In my experience, working here, it was almost an impossible task, and I'm quite prepared to admit that I probably did myself a big disservice by neither turning away from management and focusing on my research or dropping my research and focusing on management. To be honest, to sustain the two at the

right level within the work environment here, almost impossible.” Graham (Former HoD History and International Relations)

“I think that the demands of the management aspect can take precedence, really, so that research bit gets smaller and smaller. So, I'm trying to balance those things. That's one of the trickiest balancing acts, I think. But I think it's more fulfilling if one can keep that alive, you know?” Arthur (HoD Design and Visual Media)

“As a head of department, it's very difficult to keep up with your own discipline, despite best efforts.” Eric (HoD Engineering and Computing)

“So, I'd still like to think of myself as a psychologist, but I think my identity has become a bit more, I don't know, sophisticated or diffused.” Christopher (Associate Dean and former HoD, Psychology)

Arthur, Christopher and Graham are all from Westlands University which appears to have a ‘hard’ managerial and top-down approach to strategic change. In their studies, both Floyd and Dimmock (2011), and Feng and Sun (2013) highlighted that HoDs are frustrated by their inability to continue with their research due to the administrative burden. This suggests that these HoDs value maintaining their research and there is a great deal of support in the literature for the belief that their disciplinary and research identity are central for academics and HoDs. In Deem and Lucas’ (2006) study of academics in English and Scottish education departments, research was more highly valued than teaching.

It could be argued that as the opportunity to want to continue with their research is important to HoDs, then to attract the best candidates for these pivotal roles more needs to be done to ensure these opportunities exist upon taking on the role of HoD.

Furthermore, if HEIs want to attract younger research active staff into the HoD role then more needs to be done to protect research time. These mid-career research staff view being entered into the 2020 REF as central to their career development. These academics will not consider the currently defined HoD role as an attractive career move.

This is consistent with the finding by Floyd (2012) concerning the view that academic middle managers take on multiple roles and have identities that are in a constant state of flux. This study's finding revealed that HoDs are caught in the middle. The present findings also suggest that HoDs believe they are in an almost impossible role being 'caught in the middle' between senior management and staff in their department, and having to serve all of these constituencies. As some respondents said:

"Because we are at a level where we are the thread between the management upstairs, as we call it, and then the people we work with within the team. So often you'll get staff saying, 'I wouldn't want to be in your position,' you know, because you are, kind of, caught in the middle, really." Denise (Associate Head Social Work)

"Even at this level, I guess, the squeezed middle, aren't you?" Frank (HoD Allied and Public Health Professions)

"You're in a sandwich in the middle." Grace (HoD Law)

These findings are consistent with Gentles et al.'s (2014) view of middle managers caught between academic activity and values linked to research and corporate university goals. Thian et al. (2016) argue that managers have a balancing act to manage between academic values and managerial targets. Furthermore, Floyd (2009, 2012) and Clegg (2008) highlighted that HoDs had to adopt multiple personal and professional identities and move between them. Clegg (2008) argues HoDs have 'hybrid' identities which they have to move between to deliver the often-differing agendas of the university and academic staff. In effect, there is an acceptance that HoDs have a partial allegiance to both camps depending on what issue they are dealing with. Bryman (2007) described HoDs as being "hemmed in by a pincer movement of senior management and academic staff" (Bryman, 2007, p. 5). This view is supported by Branson et al. (2016) who state that middle managers are "the meat in the sandwich."

It could be argued that more could be done to prepare HoDs for the differing needs of the range of stakeholders they serve in their role. Gaining some agreement and

acceptance within the institution about the dual nature of the role of the HoD is important. HoDs are having to juggle and balance the delivery of KPIs as well as being the voice of the department. Both Floyd (2016), and Gentle and Forman (2014) identified that time for reflection via peer support systems or following any training is important and vital for the development of a HoD. This time for reflection will allow HoDs to consider the multiple roles and identities they have to undertake.

4.8 Forms of Support for the Academic Middle Manager – Formal and Informal

In this section, I will consider the differing forms of formal and informal support that are valued by HoDs at different stages of their journeys; in both undertaking the demands placed upon them to be corporate by the university hierarchy and the challenges from the academics they manage to support collegiality and defend academic autonomy.

4.8.1 Formal Support Mechanisms

For this discussion formal support mechanisms are deemed to be: internally or externally organised leadership development programmes; the allocation of a mentor or coach as part of an institution-wide scheme for academic middle managers; and staff development activities that are open to all academic middle managers. The findings of the study suggest that the majority (57% or eight of the 14) of academic middle managers did not have any formal training for their role as HoDs and this is typified by comments from the respondents below:

“No. I would say I’ve had very, very little support... And – this is me having a whinge – to the point where I have asked questions and felt as though I really should have known the answer by some kind of osmotic process, rather than, “Who are you? Why are you asking questions?” Emily (HoD English)

“So, I would say regarding my own induction, there probably should have been something about being a head of the department [laughter]. Simple as that.” Arthur (HoD Design and Visual Arts)

“I didn't have a heck of a lot of training, except on the job doing it and learning from experience and seeing what other people did. I think that's probably wholly wrong.” Grace (HoD Law)

“I think, in terms of formal support, there has been up until recently very little. There is a university staff development programme, but it didn't have any leadership really.” Senior Manager 2 (PVC Learning and Teaching and Student Experience)

“I do think that, in the main, again, heads of department don't get adequate induction.” Senior Manager 7 (Dean Engineering and Computing)

This finding of the lack of formal training for the role of the academic middle manager is consistent with the findings of both Marshall et al. (2011) and Thian et al. (2016). It is recognised that many organisations, both within and outside the HE sector, have fast been filling the gap in terms of the provision of appropriate training programmes for middle managers.

Furthermore, both Altbach (2011) and Marshall (2012) argue that there is a need for formal training for HoDs that should include some HR input and mentoring from other HoDs and senior staff within the faculty. It is now recognised that this form of support for new middle managers is commonplace across HEIs in the UK.

Table 9 (p. 101) discussed later, highlights that only six of 14 academic middle managers received any formal external leadership training. The patterns in terms of the two HEIs is that five of the six attending formal leadership programmes attended Newlands University – the one that adopted a more ‘soft’ form of managerialism. A formal leadership training programme that builds in opportunities to network across the institution and across the sector is important. Furthermore, the appointment of a mentor within the institution and an external coach are important factors for HoDs questioned in this study. It has to be recognised that there were some forward-thinking HEIs in the UK that for decades have had this form of support in place for middle managers, such as Lancaster University.

4.8.2 External Leadership Programmes

A minority of HoDs had attended external leadership training programmes and particularly valued the opportunity to network and speak with other HoDs or middle managers from other sectors facing similar issues. As some respondents stated:

“We had action learning sets, and we had very confidential discussions where we could say what we wanted about what was happening in our work-life, etc. That was useful. That has still been maintained.” Grace (HoD Law)

“I guess the standout thing for the Common Purpose...You are amongst others that are facing similar issues in different sectors.” Frank (HoD Allied and Public Health Professions)

“The most helpful thing about them is just meeting people from other institutions in similar situations... Those networks that you establish actually kind of stay with you.” Ben (HoD Social Sciences)

Internal or external support for formal training programmes for HoDs and the benefits and networks they offer was supported by one senior manager who said:

“I think you need a combination really of internal leadership development, but also you need a bit of that externality as well, because otherwise how do you what's happening in the sector? I found it totally invaluable to talk to people in the same boat as me from different institutions, and say, ‘How do you do it in your place then?’ Or, ‘Have you ever had this happen?’ And I'm still in contact with them years later. Those networks you develop, so I think that's an important aspect.” Senior Manager 2 (PVC Learning and Teaching and Student Experience)

These findings are consistent with that of Tysome (2014) about the need for formal training programmes for HoDs to build networks both across the university and HE in general. This is consistent with the findings of Floyd and Preston (2014) about networks being the most important form of support both internally and externally.

Table 8 below outlines forms of formal support HoDs gained from engagement in formal leadership training programmes.

Form of support	Support from Leadership Training Programmes
<p><i>Networks made from External Formal Leadership Training Programme (LFHE or Common Purpose)</i></p>	<p><u><i>Other sector links</i></u></p> <p>Anne: <i>But we kept contact. We've built some business relationships with some people, and actually helped support charities and looked at how we can feed those charities into our programmes.</i></p> <p>Frank: <i>I find it really useful because they're people from not the sector you work in, and it's able to talk through...What we did and still do is talk through issues that we have you know: managing difficult people; how you implement change; how, when you've got timelines and deadlines to meet, how there are different ways of doing it and getting people to help you and support you do that.</i></p>

Table 8: Formal Support Accessed by HoDs from Attendance at Formal Leadership Training Programmes

HoDs who did attend the formal external leadership training programmes found the main benefit of such programmes was the opportunity to mix and network with others from similar backgrounds. Thus, these formal leadership programmes were developing ongoing support systems for HoDs via activities such as learning sets and allowing time to build relationships.

The primary value for HoDs was not so much the content of the programmes but the opportunities to build relationships and networks of support that could be called upon during a HoD's tenure. It may well have been that through other experiences of leadership development, HoDs had accessed similar content to that on the programmes attended.

Thus, the need to evaluate the effectiveness of these networks is significant and reflects the findings of Tourish (2013) about the need for proper evaluation of leadership courses. This finding is further supported by Gentle and Forman (2014) who argue that reflexivity needs to be at the heart of all development programmes. The LFHE’s flagship Top Management Programme is going through a four-year longitudinal review to assess its long-term impact on the sector. Table 9 below highlights the formal training opportunities accessed by HoDs.

	External Leadership Programme	Internal Leadership Programme	Mentor – allocated by University	External Coaching
Formal Training accessed by HoDs	3 attended Leadership Foundation for HE programmes 3 attended Programmes run by Common Purpose	3 stated they accessed elements of an internally run programme	8 had no mentor 6 had an informal mentor	1 linked to LFHE programme 1 paid for by individual external to HEI

Table 9: Formal Training Opportunities Accessed by HoDs

4.8.3 Summary

The key issue coming from this section is that the majority of HoDs felt they did not get the formal training they needed. They were clear that what they needed was the time and space both to reflect and to build relationships with individuals in similar positions facing the same sort of challenges.

Furthermore, the opportunities for networking and building relationships with others in the same situation were the main benefits for those HoDs who had attended external leadership training programmes. The HoDs wanted training that included: being given a mentor who had, or was currently undertaking, their role; formal induction that covered

keys aspects of the job; and opportunities within and across the institution and externally to build networks of support.

4.9 Informal Support Mechanisms

The findings highlight that academic middle managers value – above all else – the opportunities presented by being able to share experiences with other academic middle managers. Both Newlands and Westlands University did have an opportunity where HoDs came together, but in both cases, these were not formally calendared meetings that happened on a regular basis. Newlands University introduced these meetings when they were going through a period of transformational change to get HoD’s buy-in. For senior managers in the institution this initiative did work as indicated by the respondent below:

“An unforeseen consequence for the heads, I’m not sure, I can’t speak for everybody, was a sense, particularly when we saw the VC, of greater empowerment. So, you know, you are integral in managing this change; you must take a leading role in it. You can’t just be a conduit, you’ve got to effect that change as well.” Emily (HoDs English)

At Westlands University the HoD meetings were seen as an opportunity to brief HoDs.

4.9.1 Networks for HoDs

However, this opportunity to meet with other HoDs was greatly valued by them as indicated by the comments from respondents below:

“The heads of school meetings we’ve had, we had a really good one with VC..., and it was terrific.” Colin (HoD Architecture)

“Well, I think one of the really good things that’s come out of the change is that the heads of school are now meeting. We never met. We’ve decided, as a group of heads, that actually it’s quite useful for us to meet as well as a group, just the heads.” David (HoD Media)

“The University has introduced a head of school meeting... And that's been really good over the last six months because we've come to realise that the problems that we have, as heads of school, are occurring across the university.”
Anne (HoD Nursing and Midwifery)

“I think the first thing that you're entitled to expect is a kind of regular opportunity to talk to other people over your level, a kind of heads forum. We've got something like that now – it's been a while in coming, I think because previous regimes probably didn't believe in it to the extent of this one. That's really important.” Senior Manager 1 (PVC Academic Portfolio and Market Development)

Colin, David, Anne and the DVC Senior Manager 1 are all from Newlands University. The earlier discussion on managerialism and collegiality suggested that Newlands University culture was collegial or one where a ‘soft’ form of managerialism was in operation. Thus, it could be argued that HoDs at Newlands University are engaged in delivering strategic change at a local level as they see fit, or alternatively, felt more empowered to work with their staff.

This raises the question of does where a HEI is on the continuum of ‘soft’ and ‘hard’ managerialism, as outlined by Magalhães et al. (2017), have an impact upon whether the HEI creates opportunities for HoDs to meet, network and develop supportive relationships. The findings from this study reveal that in Table 10 (page 104–5), eight HoDs from Newlands University valued the opportunities presented by the HoDs’ meeting, compared to two HoDs from Westlands University. A recent study by Floyd and Preston (2014) concluded that establishing networks with other associate deans both inside and outside the institution was "one of the most powerful forms of support and development" (Floyd & Preston, 2014, p. 24) available to them. This finding is consistent with that of Tysome (2014) that it is important in any leadership development programme to create opportunities for the development of networks both within the organisation and externally. Branson et al. (2016), in their recent study, cite the work of Fisher et al. (2007) and outline the concept of ‘information grounds’ as a mutual support network and information sharing group.

Table 10 below and on the following page, highlights the collective values placed on the informal support offered via the HoD networks.

Form of support	Forms of Informal support – HoDs’ Forum
<p><i>HoDs’ Forum or Wider Management Forum</i></p>	<p><u><i>Building relationships</i></u></p> <p>Colin: <i>until the new regime you didn’t know the other heads. So, they called these meetings and you got nineteen, twenty heads together, so that was great because all of a sudden, now we all know each other...</i></p> <p>David: <i>Well, I think one of the really good things that’s come out of the change is that the heads of school are now meeting. We never met. We’ve decided, as a group of heads, that actually it’s quite useful for us to meet as well as a group, just the heads.</i></p> <p>Emily: <i>an unforeseen consequence for the heads, I’m not sure, I can’t speak for everybody, was a sense, particularly when we saw VC, of greater empowerment. So, you know, you are integral in managing this change; you must take a leading role in it. You can’t just be a conduit, you’ve got to effect that change as well.</i></p> <p>Frank: <i>Yes, heavily involved in that. I think it’s a very good idea. I think I’ve been doing this job for three years. I can’t believe we didn’t do it before.</i></p> <p>Colin: <i>the heads of school meetings we’ve had, we had a really good one with VC...a few weeks ago, and it was terrific.</i></p> <p><u><i>Having voice heard and challenge</i></u></p> <p>Grace: <i>That’s useful, because it gives you an idea of what’s happening elsewhere and puts you in-touch with other people on your level. It’s good for communication. It’s a very open forum and it’s enabled us to say what issues we feel there are.</i></p> <p>David: <i>Well, one thing is I think we are able to offer support to each other in areas where we might have to challenge the direction of flow.</i></p>

	<p><u>Forum for advice and networking</u></p> <p>Arthur: <i>But that's been really helpful to say, 'Well, how do you do that in law? And how do you do it in geography?' And they'll say, 'Well, actually, we have a slightly different Methods of doing things.'</i></p> <p>Emily: <i>I think the best thing is those kind of support structures and I feel a lot happier having access to different people at my level that I can go to and say, "Do you know what, I'm place with this situation, I've not encountered it before, what would you do?" I think that's really important.</i></p> <p>Eric: <i>Networking opportunity. So, at a head of department level it was about actually coming together, having an opportunity to be spending time networking ... it's also an opportunity to play catch-up.</i></p> <p>David: <i>So, to have a more informal talking shop where we can exchange ideas, etc., I think is really useful.</i></p>
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Table 10: Informal Support Obtained by HoDs from the Internal HoDs' Forum

Thus, the evidence from this study suggests that the creation of some form of 'forum' – either formal or informal – for HoDs to come together to exchange ideas, build networks of support, build relationships with the faculty and across the university is crucial to being able to deliver the institution's change agendas. Furthermore, the study raises some fundamental questions regarding formal leadership development programmes and the induction of HoDs.

Firstly, how do (and how can) internal and external leadership development programmes build in opportunities for the development of networking skills and opportunities to network across the university. How can internal leadership training programmes also create opportunities for networking across the institution? This is possibly happening across some HEIs in the form of providing away days or strategic planning events. Another argument that could be made, based on the findings from this study, is that the HoDs' forum in Westlands University (which is organised by the VC's Office) is supported by senior management to use as a vehicle to deliver the university's corporate agenda. Thus, the meeting was not bottom-up and organised by the HoDs, it

was centrally organised by senior management to deliver their agenda. Therefore, this supports the view put forward in this study that Westlands University operates a more ‘hard’ form of managerialism. At Newlands University, the HoDs’ meeting was organised by the HoDs themselves and not centrally. Whilst senior managers would attend, the agenda and items for discussions were controlled by HoDs which supports the view of Newlands operating a culture that is closely aligned to a ‘soft’ form of managerialism.

4.9.2 Disciplinary and Professional Body Networks and Boundary Spanning

This study indicates that in the absence of formal mechanisms to encourage external support systems for HoDs they will source their own through disciplinary networks, outside bodies and opportunities to work across the university. Table 11 below highlights the range of disciplinary networks of ten of the 14 HoDs.

Interviewee	Subject/Discipline Network
Ben HoD Social Sciences	Heads of Department Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities
David HoD Media	Media
Emily HoD English	University English
Frank HoD Allied and Public Health Professions	Council of Deans of Health
Grace HoD Law	Law
Arthur HoD Design and Visual Arts	Design and Visual Arts
Bill Formerly HoD Performing Arts	Heads of School of Arts
Eric HoD Engineering and Computing	Engineering
Fred Formerly HoD Economics and Finance	Economics
Christopher Associate Dean, formerly HoD Psychology	Psychology

Table 11: HoDs’ Discipline/Subject Networks

This was as highlighted by some respondents:

“I’m also a member (author changed to not identify person) of something called DASSH, which is the Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities... It’s very useful in lots of ways, yes. It supports the work I do here. It informs my role here anyway as a head of school. Also, it is a useful support network, yes.” Ben (HoD Social Sciences)

“There’s the association of heads of psychology departments which I found a very useful support network... I normally come away from conversations there thinking, “Phew, I think it’s tough here, but I’m so lucky.” Christopher (Associate Dean, former Head of Department Psychology)

“University English, which is a forum for heads of departments, heads of schools of English across the UK...Regarding thinking about where the discipline is going, the kind of things that we need to be doing as a university subject, that’s a really good support network.” Emily (HoD English)

One Senior Manager argued looking externally for support was important:

“One of the things we try and encourage them to do is also to look outside for support. So, you know, we try and encourage them to go and look at what their competitors are doing, or collaborators could do, or how other people are doing it, so all of that stuff is good staff development.” Senior Manager 5 (DVC Academic)

It could be argued that this seeking of support from outside the university and from the discipline is what Ramaley (2014) refers to boundary spanning and about discipline HoDs are “people who can help create new opportunities for different disciplines to work together” (Ramaley, 2014, pp. 7–8). Jones et al. (2011), Bolden et al. (2012) and Gentle and Forman (2014) all argue that boundary spanning is a key skill required by HoDs. Working across boundaries within and across institutions, across disciplines and externally with employers, and internationally to highlight a few areas where HoDs will

operate. To provide a holding space/enabling environment as well as protecting the core essence of the academic's role.

Furthermore, Bolden et al. (2012) argue that the key skills academics are seeking in leaders – such as HoDs – are those that can “provide a holding space/enabling environment as well as protecting the core essence of the academic's role” (Bolden et al., 2012, p. 12). It could be argued that due to the magnitude of change facing HEIs, many HoDs are focused on delivering institutional KPIs and there is limited opportunity for them to focus on developing the culture outlined by the above authors. It is recognised that cultures and sub-cultures do develop in academic departments organically from the bottom-up.

In this study, a key finding was that ten out of 14 of the HoDs are actively engaged with their national disciplinary networks with some holding senior positions on executive committees. Those that did not specifically mention disciplinary networks were actively engaged with professional body networks or had confidence in other HEIs they discussed issues with. It can be argued that external engagement with disciplinary bodies and professional bodies offered HoDs a ‘support network’ with which they felt able to develop meaningful relationships where they could be honest and open about the professional issues they were dealing with.

Table 12 below (and on the following page) outlines the disciplinary and subject support networks accessed by HoDs.

Form of support	Disciplinary/Subject support networks
<i>Disciplinary/Subject</i>	<p><i>Disciplinary and other support networks</i></p> <p>Ben: <i>I'm also chair of something called DASSH, which is the Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities... It's very useful in lots of ways, yes. It supports the work I do here. It informs my role here anyway as a head of school. Also, it is a useful support network, yes.</i></p>

	<p>David: <i>I talked to a few heads of school on one of the media places.</i></p> <p>Emily: <i>University English, which is a forum for heads of departments, heads of schools of English across the UK... in terms of thinking about where the discipline is going, the kind of things that we need to be doing as a university subject, that's a really good support network.</i></p> <p>Frank: <i>I go to the Council of Deans of Health, which is particularly useful. Some of the stuff that you get you can take it or leave it, but actually the networking and people that you know...</i></p> <p>Christopher: <i>There's the association of heads of psychology departments which I found a very useful support network... I normally came away from conversations there thinking, "Phew, I think it's tough here but I'm so lucky."</i></p> <p>Fred: <i>I worked with was the HEA for economics, Higher Education subject group.</i></p>
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Table 12: Informal Support Obtained by HoDs from Disciplinary/Subject Support Networks

As both Newlands and Westlands Universities were large institutions with big academic departments, many HoDs were managing departments containing a range of disciplines. Thus, full engagement with disciplinary bodies such as Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities, along with the Council of Deans of Health and professional bodies, would allow HoDs to discover and possibly forge opportunities for differing disciplines to work together as highlighted by Ramaley (2014) to be ‘boundary spanners’.

It could be argued that this space and time to meet with external HoDs, as well as internal HoDs as discussed earlier, supports the arguments put forward (Flinn & Mowles, 2014; Gentle & Forman, 2014; Tourish, 2013) about HoDs needing time for reflection on their leadership development journey. This time for reflection is currently seen as missing from leadership development programmes.

4.10 Mentoring and Coaching

Mentoring in the workplace has been defined by Arora and Rangekar (2014) as:

Traditionally, mentoring has been defined as a relationship between an older more experienced person (mentor) who helps and enables career development of a younger less experienced person (protégé) who may or may not be employed in the same organisation or same chain of command or profession as that of the protégé. (Arora & Rangekar, 2014, p. 204)

In this study, the definition of mentoring also includes staff who have been in the position of HoD for some time and who mentor less experienced HoDs. In contrast, the definition of coaching, as outlined by Jones and Harvey (2016), is “Workplace or executive coaching is a one to one and learning development intervention that uses collaborative, reflective, goal focused relationship to achieve professional outcomes that are valued by the coachee” (2016, p. 250). It can be argued that the coaching may be supported and paid for by the workplace and is focused on enabling the individual to be more effective in their role in the workplace.

Workplace or executive coaching (hereafter referred to as ‘coaching’) is a one-to-one learning and development intervention that uses a collaborative, reflective, goal-focused relationship to achieve professional outcomes that are valued by the coachee (Smither, 2011).

Another finding from this study is that HoDs identify that often informal (but sometimes formal) mentoring they have received is a valuable source of support. As some respondents have stated:

“I have, actually, but, again, in an informal... my previous incumbent in this role I'm, sort of, in touch with and certainly... Yeah. And I would see them as a sort of, mentor, as someone who has given me a bit of advice about things. Yeah, so that's quite useful, really.” Arthur (HoD Design and Visual Arts)

“Yeah, it's informal. I've got a really good relationship with DC who's the associate dean for academic in this faculty and in the new faculty because he's actually a landscape architect, he used to work in the school. And he was my mentor for my professorship, so there's just a really good relationship there.”
Colin (HoD Architecture)

“I'm very lucky in having a dean that has done my job and so understands the needs of my school and works pretty well as a mentor for me as well, so there's regular one-to-one meetings every other week.” *Emily (HoD English)*

“I have a couple of confidantes in other institutions that I often will pick up the phone and give them a ring and just have a catch-up. I wouldn't call them ‘mentors’. I wouldn't use that title, but I guess they are. That's what they're doing. That's their function.” *Frank (HoD Allied and Public Health Professions)*

“I haven't got any formal mentor... I'm hooked-in to lots of external networks.”
Ben (HoD Social Sciences)

The results of this study highlight that 57% (8/14) of respondents had no formal mentor. Typically, in UK HE a formal mentor is someone appointed through the formal induction process to a new HoDs. The mentor will have received some formal training by the University and there will be an expectation about the number of meetings that will take place and the type of topics that will be covered. The other 43% (6/14) had some form of informal mentorship, which in the main was internal from either a dean, associate dean or the HoD who had held the position previously. One HoD had an external mentor at another HEI and two used either external networks or close colleagues from HEIs. This reflects the findings of Thian et al. (2016) that academic middle managers need mentoring as part of any training. Further support for the need for HoDs to be mentored by senior staff with a faculty or the previous post holder is offered by Marshall (2012, p.519) “mentoring from the other HofD or ex HofD; and other senior staff within the department.”

There are two HoDs from this study who have formal coaches; Arthur, as part of his attendance at the leadership foundation external leadership programme and Grace, who used the services of two external coaches, as outlined in the comments below:

“And I must say, I found the coaching really useful, actually. I was a bit – sceptical ... I wanted someone that could actually offer genuine help, rather than just being overly nice. And to be fair, my coach is very good at then actually providing input, so I find that useful.” Arthur (HoD Design and Visual Media)

“I also have two coaches to call upon if I want to. One is much more of a business style coach. The other one is somebody who was a former PVC who does one-to-one coaching. Now, those two people, if I need them, I retain them myself. I've paid for them myself. I've never asked any institution I've worked with to do that, because, for me, they are for me. They're nothing to do with the employer. I've had to go through some really tough times, and they have been great in supporting me and coaching me through those situations.” Grace (HoD Law)

For both Tourish (2013), and Gentle and Forman (2014), it is important that leadership development programmes focus on delivering strategic organisational goals and that the individuals on these programmes reflect upon and learning from their experiences (McCall, 2004; Thomas, 2008). Furthermore, it is argued that there is more likelihood of these organisational goals being met if HoDs are offered formal mentoring or coaching alongside the leadership development programme as this ensures ‘deep reflection’ and ongoing learning is taking place. However, it will depend on how well the mentors have been trained, if formal time is set aside for these meetings with HoDs, and how well the coaches understand the HEI’s strategic goals. HoDs access a range of informal forms of support mechanisms. Starting with the significant support offered within: their own department, school or faculty; HoD forum; discipline/subject networks; professional body; networks from external leadership programmes; and colleagues in other HEIs.

Table 13 on the following two pages outlines the significant value HoDs placed on the internal mainly informal support they gained from colleagues in the faculty,

school/department. In Table 14 on page 114, the informal support HoDs received from colleagues/friends in other HEIs was greatly valued.

Form of support	Internal support in Faculty, School & Department
<p><i>Internal within Faculty/School/Department</i></p>	<p><u>Support from direct line reports of HoDs</u></p> <p>Anne: <i>But my support mechanisms really have come from my senior school team, from my heads of department and my Associate Head of School</i></p> <p>Emily: <i>I also have a really good academic team, so they are a good support network as well,</i></p> <p>Emily: <i>I've got very good faculty level support in terms of our director of faculty administration and her PA, they're great; our faculty financial controller is really, really good</i></p> <p>Colin: <i>I've got a very good deputy head... she's been acting head of school on two, maybe three occasions when we've been between heads... So, between us, we're a really good team, actually</i></p> <p><u>Other HoDs in the Faculty</u></p> <p>Colin: <i>We've got a strong relationship with the association?? of heads, so that's art, jewellery, architecture, VISCON, fashion textiles. So, we have a lunch or dinner every now and again, sometimes a bit of a moaning session, obviously, but we do bounce things off each other.</i></p> <p>Fred: <i>And now we have a structure where you've got a Head, you've got a Deputy Head, you've got three associate Heads</i></p> <p><i>.... But yeah, the department's gone up, it's maybe 60 members now, it's expanded, but that's a lot of support.</i></p> <p><u>Dean and Associate Dean support</u></p> <p>Bill: <i>What I found far more useful in terms of developing as a leader and as a manager, was the informal mentoring that was given to me</i></p>

	<p><i>by my Dean.</i></p> <p><i>Bill: And in terms of Dean support, both the first Dean and the second Dean, and the associate Deans, I was very, very well-supported, and I'm very grateful for that.</i></p> <p><i>Denise: Other associate heads who we meet as a group with our associate dean, because they are doing the same activities, coming across the same issues.</i></p> <p><i>Arthur: I have, actually, but, again, in an informal... my previous incumbent in this role I'm, sort of, in touch with and certainly... Yeah. And I would see them as a, sort of, mentor, as someone who has given me a bit of advice about things. Yeah, so that's quite useful, really.</i></p> <p><i>Emily: I'm very lucky in having a dean that has done my job and so understands the needs of my school, and works pretty well as a mentor for me as well...</i></p>
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Table 13: Informal Support Obtained by HoDs from Internal Faculty, School and Department

Form of support	Support from Colleagues in other HEIs
<i>Colleagues in Other HEIs</i>	<p><i>Frank: I have a couple of confidantes in other institutions that I often will pick up the phone and give them a ring and just have a catch up.... People that I trust and people that I know have some insight, usually.</i></p> <p><i>Bill: Going to other people's universities and seeing how they were doing things; learning very positive things from that but as well, I think, a bigger lesson I learnt was how not to do things really.</i></p> <p><i>Bill: A very close friend is head of department at DMU; there was another head of department at Worcester, Bedford, and similar institutions as well ... And that was, I suppose actually thinking about it now, that was quite an informal network really, and we would all talk to each other constantly.</i></p>

Table 14: Support from Colleagues in Other HEIs

4.11 Summary

The findings of this study suggest that HoDs places great value on the informal forms of support that are offered by meetings, discipline networks, and informal mentoring engagements. The meetings provide the opportunity to establish networks within and across the university and the discipline to build networks external to the university both of which are seen as important to enabling a HoD to build the skills and knowledge to lead and bring about strategic change in HE (Floyd & Dimmock, 2012; Tourish, 2013). This achievement of organisational strategic change is further supported via the engagement of HoDs in mentoring and coaching (Gentle & Forman, 2014; Tourish, 2013).

Chapter Five – Conclusions, Implications and Policy Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will be broken down into the two sections. The first (5.2) will provide a brief overview of the study. The second (5.3) will outline the original contribution to the knowledge of this study through discussion of the linkages between the concepts of ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ managerialism and collegiality to the roles undertaken by middle managers; the differing identities and roles of HoDs; and the forms of formal and informal support and training accessed by HoDs.

5.2 Overview of the Study

This purpose of this study was to examine the support provided to university HoDs to enable them to contribute to strategic change in two post-1992 English universities. It sought to address how HoDs viewed decisions were made, how they saw their identities as HoDs, and the differing forms of support they received in their roles. The conceptual framework for the study came from the concepts of ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ managerialism and collegiality, from studies of academic identities, and the formal and informal forms of support accessed by HoDs to undertake their diverse role. Following a review of the key literature the following research questions were formed for this study:

The main research question from this thesis is: How are Academic Heads of Department supported to undertake their diverse roles in two post-1992 English HEIs?

To answer this main question, the following research questions were developed:

RQ1. How do HoDs see their role in decision making in their HEI?

RQ2. How do HoDs perceive and describe their diverse roles and identities as HoDs?

RQ3. What forms of support do HoDs obtain to undertake their role?

To answer these research questions, this study adopted an interpretive paradigm where the actors in the interaction helped construct the social reality through the use of qualitative semi-structured interviews (Flick, 2014). Thus, the use of both the interpretive paradigm and qualitative semi-structured interviews were central to answering the set research questions.

For this study, 14 semi-structured interviews were conducted with HoDs and seven semi-structured interviews with senior managers in two post-1992 large city-based English universities. The researcher had been a HoD in a post-1992 HEI for eight years but had not worked at, or had any work-related connections at, the two universities in the study.

The data analysis method used for this study was template analysis (King, 2004). Some pre-themes were identified from the semi-structured interview questions, tested with five of the interview transcripts, and changed as a result to confirm the final themes and codes used. The analysis of all the interviews using template analysis allowed the research questions to be answered in relation to the key issues in the conceptual framework.

5.3 Contribution to Knowledge

It has been argued in recent studies that middle leadership in HE is under-explored from a research point of view (Branson et al., 2016; Davis et al., 2016). Before this study, there have certainly been a limited number of studies that have focused specifically on how HoDs are supported formally and informally to undertake their role (Floyd & Preston, 2014; Floyd, 2016). This study claims to make an original contribution to knowledge by providing further insight into how we comprehend this topic. It achieves this by using two case study universities and conducting 21 semi-structured interviews with HoDs and senior leaders based on the conceptual framework that considers ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ managerialism and collegiality; academic identity; and the forms of support and training offered to HoDs. The next section will outline the original contribution to knowledge by examining the interlinkages and patterns between the three concepts outlined above. It is hoped that this discussion will support the development of motivated and effective HE HoDs (Tysome, 2014).

5.4 HoDs and Decision Making

The majority of HoDs interviewed suggested a collegial or ‘soft’ form of managerialism as their preferred approach to decision making (Trow, 1993; Winter, 2009) but felt – in the case of Westlands University – that their university operated a ‘hard’ managerialism and top-down approach to making decisions (Davis et al., 2016; Trow, 1993). HoDs overwhelmingly attempted to operate a ‘soft’ form of managerialism and collaborative form of decision making in their departments in Newlands University, but in Westlands University the feeling was that the university was top-down when it came to decision making. If HEIs are operating a top-down ‘hard’ managerialism approach to decision making and bringing about strategic change, and the overwhelming majority of HoDs are locally operating a ‘soft’ form of managerialism (Magalhães et al., 2017), there may be challenges. However, it might be at the local level in the faculty/department or through informal networks of HoDs across the institution that opportunities are created for building collaborative networking skills and the ability to take decisions in a collaborative manner. This collaborative and ‘soft’ form of managerialism establishes a culture that encourages HoDs to develop internal and external networks of support that are accessed by HoDs at key critical stages in the lifecycle of their role.

5.5 Role and Identity as a HoD

For a number of the HoDs in this study, they felt unable to juggle the demands of being a HoD at the same time as maintaining any ability to undertake research, and they continued to define themselves by their discipline (Graham, Eric, Christopher, Arthur, Denise and Bill). All 6 of these HoDs are from Westlands University that is operating a ‘hard’ form of managerialism. It could be argued that the reason for HoDs not being able to juggle the research and teaching is because these two universities are post-1992 HEIs and are teaching intensive institutions. For the majority of respondents, a need to stay in touch with their discipline – albeit not through their own research but to keep up to date with what was going on – took place through engagement with their disciplinary or subject networks, as specifically outlined by 10 of the 14 HoDs (Fred, Eric, Christopher, Bill, Arthur, Grace, Frank, Emily, David and Ben).

Thus, for these individuals, trying to maintain a connection with their subject and discipline was paramount as they expressly took time out to keep in touch. Furthermore, HoDs felt torn between meeting the needs of the corporate HEI and defending academic values/autonomy, and the needs of academic staff.

5.6 Forms of Informal and Formal Support for the Role of HoD

The overwhelming majority of the HoDs in this study (12 out of 14 specifically) stated what they valued the most, was the informal opportunity to get together with other HoDs across the institution as one of their primary sources of support (Graham, Eric, Denise, Bill, Arthur, Grace, Frank, Emily, David, Colin, Ben and Anne). In particular, the respondents really valued the forums created by themselves or by the HEI, and specifically the opportunity to share and network on common issues and shared problems. These forms of informal support systems and structures being of great value is further reinforced by the value placed on the informal networking opportunities cited by 10 of the 14 attending the discipline/subject networks (Fred, Eric, Christopher, Bill, Arthur, Grace, Frank, Emily, David and Ben). Even the 6 respondents who attended formal external leadership programmes (Anne, Ben, Frank, Grace, Arthur and Fred) indicated that by far the major benefit to them in their roles was the ongoing support network they had developed that they could call upon as and when they needed to.

Furthermore, 7 of the 14 HoDs specifically mentioned the value they gained from the informal mentoring they had been offered in their departments/faculties (Anne, Colin, Emily, Bill, Denise, Fred and Graham). This support varied from the HoDs in the faculty meeting regularly for coffee, to the Dean or a more experienced HoDs informally mentoring an academic HoD. From a formal leadership perspective, the HoDs who attended these programmes were not particularly complimentary about the content of the programmes provided and overwhelmingly identified the networking opportunities they created themselves as being of most value (Anne, Ben, Frank, Grace, Arthur and Fred).

In summary, this section has considered the original contribution to knowledge made by this study by firstly considering how HoDs make decisions in a collaborative and collegial manner against an institutional backdrop of top-down management. Secondly,

the issue of the academic identity of HoDs has been considered regarding trying to maintain a research profile while dealing with the corporate demands of delivering on KPIs. Finally, the formal and informal forms of support provided to HoDs in their role have been considered with the key finding being the value placed by HoDs on the informal support systems they are offered.

5.7 Implications and Recommendations

The findings of this study cannot be empirically generalised to a wider group of HE middle managers as it is recognised that the study of 14 HoDs and seven senior managers is only a small sample (Silverman, 2015). However, it is possible that the study could enable those supporting and developing opportunities for the current – or future – HoDs to make use of some of the recommendations for practice.

Based on the findings from the study, the recommendations for practice in further developing the support systems and mechanisms to allow current and future HoDs to operate effectively in their roles are broken down into three sections. The first (5.7.1) will consider the lifecycle of the role of HoD from identifying the HoD through induction and later into the first three years in the role, and consider what support might be offered at the differing stages of the HoD's lifecycle. The second (5.7.2) will examine what forms of institutional, faculty and departmental support could be offered to HoDs to ensure they develop the informal support systems and mechanisms this study has highlighted to enable them to undertake their role effectively. Finally, 5.7.3 will consider how institutional and external leadership development programmes can further consider, develop and provide the much-desired informal network opportunities and skills for HoDs to be effective in their role.

5.7.1 Academic Middle Manager Lifecycle: Opportunities for the Development of Informal and Formal Support Networking Skills

This outlines that there are a range of support and developmental opportunities that could take place at differing points in the HoD's lifecycle to encourage and enable them to gain the essential networking and informal support mechanisms they so desire. Included in this range of possible activities are:

- Succession planning stage – workshops on networking by existing academic middle managers – mentoring programme
- Recruitment stage – this would include consideration being given to the whole recruitment cycle
- Induction phase – mentoring programmes
- First 100 days
- First year
- Internal opportunities and support/mentoring with the faculty, across the university with other academic middle managers – formal time and space to meet and discuss – not driven by a top-down agenda
- External opportunities – in the UK and internationally – these could be developed by specific time commitment to join external forums that exist of other HoDs in their disciplinary areas
- HEIs could consider how they use technology in facilitating this form of support for academic middle managers. For example, this could include webinars, Virtual Learning Environment leadership platforms, and other forms of online leadership resources
- How can HEIs develop informal online forums for academic middle managers to interact?
- What can HEIs learn from the professional and disciplinary bodies about developing sustainable support networks for middle managers?

5.7.2 Institutional and Faculty/Departmental Development Opportunities and Learning and Support Opportunities for HoDs

This section argues that there are a range of opportunities that could be provided by the university, faculty and department which would allow HoDs to develop the informal support networks and systems that would allow them to be effective in their role. Included in this list of activities are:

- This study suggests that HEIs need to become learning organisations for their staff and learn from the experience of academic middle managers in the institution regarding what forms of support they have valued. This is supported by the research by Gentle and Forman (2014) and Tourish (2013).

- HEIs might want to develop case studies, thus learning from the experiences of academic middle managers and capture it in many differing forms, online videos, lessons from the middle. The videos could outline the methods of support that the academic middle managers most value and how they developed those forms of support.
- The findings suggest that HEIs would benefit from ensuring academic middle managers who have attended expensive external leadership programmes (such as the LFHE and Common Purpose) share their learning on return to the university. More specifically, the focus of attendance should be based on solving an institutional strategic issue.
- The findings and research suggest that creating the time across the organisation for academic middle managers to meet, in areas such as forums for HoDs, is highly valued by academic middle managers. However, to be of real value to the organisation, the challenge is not to adopt a top-down approach to this but to consider how to build in time for academic managers to reflect on their development journey. In the case of this study this would be about forms of support.
- Exploring what learning is taking place across the HEI in the differing departments and faculties about the support networks for academic middle managers.
- HEIs could develop an alumni network of staff who have attended formal internal leadership programmes and require these staff to mentor newly appointed HoDs. This currently happens for staff who gain senior or principal fellowship of the HEA they are often required to mentor other staff applying for fellowship.
- Consider devolving the responsibility for the development of HoDs to faculty level to encourage the development of the much sought after informal network skills and opportunities as desired by the 14 respondents in this study.
- Consider strategies for the development of programme leaders as future HoDs. Programme leaders have experienced some of the tensions that academic HoDs have in having to get academic colleagues to deliver to timescales set by university administration when academics are keen to focus on research outputs.
- Review the HoD to give consideration to how they can continue with their research while at the same time leading and managing their department. One option for this might be to attach a PhD studentship to the HoD role. Another example to consider

is ensuring that HoDs have a senior administrator supporting them to undertake their leadership and managerial duties.

- Consider the value of peer support groups for HoDs, such as the traditional learning sets.
- Development of opportunities for cross-university work to allow HoDs to develop the range of professional identities they need.

5.7.3 Leadership Development Programmes: Internal and External Programmes for the HoDs

This section argues that internal and external leadership development programmes could change the way they run their programmes to take into account the development of greater opportunities for HoDs to develop the desired informal forms of support and networks outlined in this study. Those developing these leadership development programmes could take account of the following key suggestions:

- For consideration by HEI organisational development units in commissioning any leadership development programmes is: how to build in opportunities for academic middle managers to develop the networking skills needed to support them in their roles.
- How to create the informal time and space for academic middle managers to be reflective.
- How internal or external leadership development programmes develop formal lasting and sustainable opportunities for academic middle managers to develop networks of supporting other academic middle managers that will sustain them in the career and lifecycle as an academic middle manager.
- How external and internal programmes manage the tension between academic values and corporate management.
- Develop HoD skills and strategies for being able to keep research active, and develop case studies from current HEIs that participants could learn from.
- Organisations such as the LFHE need to consider running a longitudinal study of alumni of their programmes aimed at academic HoDs, similar to the four-year review of the Top Management Programme.
- Will the outcome of the Bell Review that brings together in closer formation the LFHE, The HEA and the Equality Challenge Unit, create new opportunities for

developing support mechanisms for academic HoDs? The Bell Review was set up by Universities UK and Guild HE in the light of changes in policy, funding and the operating environment for UK HE and sought to review how the sector agencies, outlined above, best serve the needs of universities and other stakeholders in the future.

5.8 Recommendations for Future Research

The first recommendation for future research is that a bigger study of the support provided to HoDs in post-1992 HEIs takes place to corroborate the findings of this study. Furthermore, it would be useful to see – via future research – if the findings in these post-1992 HEIs differ in the UK research intensive HEIs. Indeed, a comparable study with HEIs and HoDs in other countries in the EU would be of interest. The second area of future research, building on the original findings of this study, is to investigate further how external and internal leadership programmes could further develop opportunities for developing informal networking skills and support mechanisms. This area of research could be further developed by looking more widely at how post-1992 HEIs go about developing opportunities for their HoDs to establish and develop a support system and survival networks internally and externally.

5.9 Reflections on Completing the DBA Research and Career Learning

From my perspective as a researcher undertaking the DBA, and looking back at the process I have gone through, a number of thoughts come to mind. Firstly, I wish I had taken the opportunity to engage more fully with the doctoral research community and opportunities presented both at the university and externally. I could have taken fuller advantage of these opportunities via attending and presenting at internal research seminars, and submitting drafts of papers to appropriate conferences to receive feedback on my work and to learn more from the experiences of others. I believe that had I engaged more fully in these opportunities, I would have become a more rounded researcher and developed my practice more effectively.

Furthermore, I could have organised my time more effectively and prioritised the DBA research thesis to get the project completed in a more timely manner. Had I adopted a more consistent approach to time management and to prioritising the thesis, I believe it

would have assisted in me becoming part of the DBA research community. I could have achieved the research ambition set out at the start of the thesis of attempting to publish papers as the project progressed. However, this clearly did not happen but I now have ambitions to move on from here and start the process of publishing a paper from the thesis in a peer-reviewed journal. I am greatly encouraged by my two supervisors and the comments from doctoral examiners that there is work to be published from this thesis.

Finally, from a career perspective I hope now to move onto engaging fully as an academic researcher as my career progresses and not only focus on the managerial aspects of HE. I hope to achieve this through publications, becoming a reviewer of papers submitted to peer reviewed journals, and through collaborating with other scholars in my research area.

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Appendix 1: Draft Codes/Themes

Template Analysis

Template

1. Multiples roles/identities of Heads of Department/School
 - 1.1 Academic identity
 - 1.2 Managerial identity

2. Institutional coping strategies or forms of support
 - 2.1 Formal e.g. Training programmes internal and external; mentors allocated; Heads of School Forum; School Department Exec teams
 - 2.2 Informal e.g. Heads of School Forum; learning sets; colleagues across the institution; individual's mentors or coaches)

3. Individual coping strategies or forms of support
 - 3.1 Formal e.g. Professional Body; Disciplinary e.g. Council of Deans for Health; Higher Education Academy Discipline Network; other formal networks
 - 3.2 Informal e.g. Colleagues in the sector; colleagues at previous institutions; colleagues met on external leadership programmes; informal networks

4. Management of change in HE
 - 4.1 Collegial or managerial
 - 4.2 Planned or incremental

- 4.3 Successful change criteria
- 4.4 Unsuccessful change
- 4.5 Students
- 4.6 Change agents

5. Bounded or cross boundary professionals?

Appendix 2: Final Interview Themes/Codes

1. Managerialism –
 - 1.1 Top-down decision making
 - 1.2 Limitations on role of HoDs
2. Collegiality –
 - 2.1 Collaborative decision making
3. Identity of HoDs –
 - 3.1 Discipline/Subject
 - 3.2 Corporate University role versus defending academic values
 - 3.3 Multiple identities of HoDs
4. Forms of Support –
 - 4.1 Formal support –
 - 4.1.1. Internal and external Leadership Training Programmes
 - 4.2 Informal support –
 - 4.2.1 Head of Department Forum/Network
 - 4.2.2 Disciplinary/Subject Networks
 - 4.2.3 Mentoring/Coaching

Appendix 3: Edited Example of Interview Transcript Coding

Appendix

Edited Example of Interview Transcript Coding

Emily HoD English

JD: Yeah, I do empathise, having been there. What about support, what about where do you find support in your role as a change manager in HE?

Emily: I'm very lucky in having a dean that has done my job and so understands the needs of my school, and works pretty well as a mentor for me as well, so there's regular one-to-one meetings every other week. I've got very good faculty level support in terms of our director of faculty administration and her PA, they're great; our faculty financial controller is really, really good. So if there are questions that I need answering really quickly about change processes, I go to the faculty. I'm less confident of getting the support that I need elsewhere in the institution. And the reason for that is quite often I'm not sure if people know the answers to the questions, and then re-sited the question and don't necessarily get back to you. And it's incredibly difficult to manage change if you don't know what's going on.

in former meeting

lack central support

JD: What about getting the view of the head of school heard? I've heard about heads of schools meetings that have started to take place.

Emily: That's a very recent innovation and it's a very welcome one, actually.

Values HoD forum

JD: Who controls the agenda for those meetings?

Emily: I guess the heads of school do, because there were various concerns that we'd raised. It's so much in its infancy, that meeting, that it's difficult to be very clear about how... we're finding our feet, I think, at the moment. But the first couple of sessions we had, I think we've had four in total so far, the first couple were really about articulating views. The first one really was a bit of a whinge-fest to be honest. [Laughter]. But that's actually important as well.

JD: Why is it?

Emily: Because first of all, I think it is important for people to say, "This bothers me and this bothers me, and we don't ever seem to get any resolution to it, despite the fact that we're waving our arms and saying, can we please have some help with it?" And also, it allows you the opportunity to find commonalities between different schools. So rather than seeing yourself as this kind of island where everybody is against that particular school but all of the other schools are getting really good treatment, you understand that actually no, you're all facing really similar problems.

Then we have the opportunity to meet with (VC and DVC), and I think that heads of school forum is more effective for us as heads of school. Because in the larger meetings that we have, the management forums – I don't know if Kevin's mentioned them to you – where senior management and across the university including all the central services plus heads of school, every one of all those basically go. It's a very big meeting, there can be 50-odd people in

Again solve HoDS

there; in heads of school there's 20-odd of us. And there's a sense of, I think, general solidarity that we do have valid concerns and that we are dealing with... we might bring up day-to-day, nitty-gritty things, but those things are important because they affect the academics, the admin staff and the students on a very acute basis sometimes. And you're more able, I think, to articulate things to senior management in those kind of meetings.

So the whinge-fest allowed us to identify certain problems, or certain areas really, I guess, that we felt needed the most immediate attention. So ~~we~~ came to speak to us about HR and ~~we~~ came to speak to us about marketing, and we await the next meeting. So it's starting to feel as though certain issues and concerns are being addressed. And it's also giving us the opportunity to say, "We understand these changes need to happen but, as a consequence of that happening, this is happening. So something needs to be done in order to manage this effectively." And I think perhaps an unforeseen consequence for the heads, I'm not sure, I can't speak for everybody, was a sense, particularly when we saw ~~we~~, of greater empowerment. So, you know, you are integral in managing this change; you must take a leading role in it. You can't just be a conduit, you've got to effect that change as well.

*Head Forum Given voice
Empowerment*

JD: That was suggested or encouraged?

Emily: That was suggested quite openly by ~~we~~ in a couple of meetings, he's been in both management forum and the heads of school meeting. He sat in front of us and said, "It's your responsibility, you're supposed to lead, you're in a leadership role, you lead." Personally, I'd like a little bit more support in order for me to be confident and certain.

*VC
VC - You are leader*

JD: What forms might that take?

Emily: The support? I guess communication, really. I'm significantly more confident after 18 months of doing this about making a decision myself and not worrying that I need to be trained to do this and that and the other, because that was not happening, so you learn it by experience. But if I need to know something in order to make a decision, I genuinely need to know it. So if I ask somebody for some information, it's because I want to know the answer so I can make a decision, not because I'm trying to create work for somebody else.

Lack of formal training

JD: Any of the more formal types of support?

Emily: Do you mean from certain services or departments?

JD: Yeah, internally or externally, in terms of possible training (unclear 0:19:09).

Emily: I've been on a couple of training courses, so I've done the in-house management, one half-day course.

JD: Is that an accredited one?

Emily: CIPR, I didn't find it particularly helpful, to be honest, I found it very basic and too generic to be helpful to particular situations. And just a bit (unclear 0:19:48). I left there feeling quite disappointed because I probably had unrealistic expectations in thinking, "This'll teach me how to be a manager."

Limited value external try.

Appendix 4: Faculty Research Degrees Committee Project Approval

-----Original Message-----

From: researchadmin@glos.ac.uk [mailto:researchadmin@glos.ac.uk]
Sent: 16 October 2014 16:00
To: Deane, John
Cc: DEEM, Rosemary (Prof); WARD, Philippa (Dr); WARD, Philippa (Dr)
Subject: RD1 Outcomes

Dear JOHN

Application for project approval

I am pleased to inform you that the Faculty Research Degrees Committee has now approved your registration as follows:

Faculty:R-BS Degree:DBADOC

Title of programme of research: 'Middle-out' strategic change in the UK post-1992 higher education sector

Supervisory arrangements

First supervisor: ROSEMARY DEEM

Second supervisor(s): Philippa Ward

Date and period of registration

The period of registration will be:

Start date: 23/Feb/2011

The maximum period of registration expires on: 22/Feb/2018

Appendix 5: Information Read to Interview Participants at the Start of the Interview

1. Hello, thank you for agreeing to be a participant in this study. My name is John Deane and I am undertaking this study as part of a DBA Thesis I am undertaking at Gloucestershire University.
2. The purpose of this study is to understand how Academic Heads of Department are supported to contribute to change in their diverse roles in post-1992 English Higher Education Institutions.
3. I am interviewing Academic Heads of Department and a smaller number of Senior Leaders in 2 post-1992 English HEIs.
4. The outcomes of the research will be submitted as part of my DBA Doctoral Thesis.
5. I hope to publish a paper or possibly two in peer reviewed journals based on the data I am collecting once the thesis has been submitted.
6. Do I have your permission to record this interview?
7. Interviews will be transcribed and analysed by me, John Deane (the researcher).
8. Direct quotations from the interviews may be used in the thesis and future publications but all names and institutions will be anonymised.
9. All transcribed interviews and recorded interviews will be kept in a safe and confidential place, locked away in a filing cabinet.
10. Your involvement in this research will remain completely confidential and all names and institutions will remain anonymous.
11. The interview will last approximately 60 to 90 minutes.
12. If you do not want to continue with this interview on the basis of the information I have just run through please let me know.
13. If at any point during the interview you wish to stop and end the interview or require a break then please do so.
14. I have no knowledge of this university or the staff who work in it so I am declaring that I have no conflicts of interest.
15. If any of the above information is not clear or you have any questions before we start the interview please let me know now.