

# Exploring the capabilities of Prevent in addressing radicalisation in cyberspace within Higher Education

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A thesis submitted to the University of Gloucestershire in accordance with the requirements of the degree of Master of Science by research in the faculty of Social Sciences



November 2017

Word Count: 28,754

## Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my supervisors, Dr Brian Frederick, Dr Jon Hobson and Pauline Dooley for the support provided, time spent and discussions had surrounding the research. In addition thank you to everyone who participated in this study – the opinions and experiences shared have helped to shape the findings of this research.

## Abstract

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015) introduced a binding duty on public sector bodies, including education, to have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism'. The Prevent duty has become widely controversial in the Higher Education sector with questions as to whether it contravenes academic freedom and freedom of speech. Arguments surrounding the premise of Prevent identify both safeguarding vulnerable people and targeting student communities, namely Muslims, as ways of a university implementing the duty. Despite this Prevent insists that the duty encompasses all forms of terrorism, including both right wing and Islamist extremism. Universities must have an IT policy outlining their approach to monitoring and filtering of web content, most of whom do not implement the methods. Increased use of cyberspace by terrorist organisations to recruit young people raises the need to implement Prevent in cyberspace.

This research identifies three objectives to assess the capabilities of a university reducing radicalisation of students in cyberspace: 1. To establish the purpose and requirements of Prevent within Higher Education as well as the importance of it being implemented in cyberspace. 2. To carry out qualitative interviews with experts in Prevent and Higher Education in order to critically evaluate what Higher Education providers are doing to carry out Prevent within cyberspace. 3. To identify barriers from the interview evaluation that Higher Education providers might face should Prevent be extended to combat radicalisation in cyberspace.

Prevent simply identifies monitoring and filtering as the methods available to implement in cyberspace but they are not assessed to analyse their capability of helping to reduce radicalisation. This research outlines the difficulties that monitoring and filtering have as methods to reduce radicalisation in cyberspace at universities.

Additional, non-technical methods of reducing radicalisation in cyberspace are explored through 16 semi-structured interviews with individuals working in Prevent and Higher Education. Consideration is given to building students' resilience to challenging information they see online through developing counter-narrative content for social media platforms that are used by young people. With students developing counter-narrative content themselves, specifically addressing vulnerability drivers to radicalisation, universities can enhance compliance with Prevent and create counter extremist content which can be used in cyberspace both in and outside of Higher Education.

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## 1 Introduction

Threat of terrorism has increased in the UK with five major attacks between March and September 2017, resulting in 36 fatalities and an increased fear among the general public (Ahmed, 2015). The UK currently has a terrorism threat level of 'severe' (Mi5, 2017), meaning that an attack is 'highly likely'. Over the duration of the present study the threat level has been raised to 'critical' twice after the attacks in Manchester and London, meaning that an attack is 'imminent'. With a sustained high alert since the 7/7 London underground bombings, legislation has adapted to combat violent extremism. In 2011, the UK Government devised a policy for countering terrorism with the CONTEST strategy (Powell, 2016), which outlines four different approaches to confronting terrorism: Prevent, Pursue, Protect and Prepare. Prevent seeks to stop young people being radicalised in the pre-criminal space to deter potential offenders committing acts of terror. The objective of Protect is to implement robust measures to reduce the likelihood of an attack occurring (CONTEST, 2011). Pursue identifies known terrorists who are plotting attacks against the UK so that they can be stopped before committing another atrocity (Government Counter Terrorism Policy Paper, 2015). Finally, Prepare increases resilience and response of the emergency services to reduce impact of a terrorist incident (CONTEST Annual Report, 2015).

This research examines the first of the initiatives, Prevent, which is mandatory for many public bodies, including UK universities (Revell and Bryan, 2016). Prevent outlines that various institutions are required to have 'due regard' to avert those using the service from becoming radicalised (Counter Terrorism and Security Act, 2015). However, in Higher Education (HE) the Prevent duty is a controversial piece of legislation (Durodie, 2016), and, according to Wragg (2016), is viewed by many as



curtailing academic freedom and freedom of speech. To varying degrees, every UK University complies with Prevent; most take the safeguarding approach (Davies, 2016). Safeguarding considers the physical and mental wellbeing of an individual to protect them from harm (Dalphinis, 2016) and is commonly used at universities for non-Prevent related issues. Universities in England and Wales are inspected by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) to ensure the duty is carried out (Counter Terrorism and Security Act, 2015). If an individual is identified as 'at risk' of being radicalised, they are presented before a countywide Channel panel. The panel can then refer the individual to Channel, whereby an action-intervention plan is created to address, and hopefully stop, the radicalisation process.

Controlling activity in a virtual space is problematic to countering radicalisation due to ease and accessibility of communications in cyberspace. Ackerman (2014) and Goodman et al (2007) discuss the increasing use of cyberspace by terrorist organisations in order to communicate and radicalise others. Methods of detecting those being radicalised have been widely discussed within universities and the suggested methods from HEFCE include monitoring and filtering of internet user content. Monitoring requires watching student activity on the university computer network (Stalla-Bourdillon, 2013); filtering blocks content so that individuals cannot access certain material (Behal et al, 2012). There are other methods that can be used as an alternative or alongside monitoring and filtering, some of which are explored within the present study. This research seeks to offer suggestions as to what universities can realistically do to reduce extremist radicalisation within cyberspace.

Prevent is a new area of research in the HE sector with most of the literature available focussed on schools. It is important that new research targets gaps in the literature

(Belanger et al, 2008) to provide new ways of thinking or opportunities for development. Three research objectives were set out:

1. To establish the purpose and requirements of Prevent within Higher Education as well as the importance of it being implemented in cyberspace.
2. To carry out qualitative interviews with experts in Prevent and Higher Education in order to critically evaluate what Higher Education providers are doing to carry out Prevent within cyberspace.
3. To identify barriers from the interview evaluation that Higher Education providers might face should Prevent be extended to combat radicalisation in cyberspace.

The first objective is important in establishing the role that Prevent has in HE, as well as determining the influence that cyberspace can have on students being radicalised. The objective is constructed by a review of existing literature on Prevent, counter radicalisation and cyberspace to provide a critical understanding of the requirements and the impact that Prevent has in HE. Consideration is given to the power shift from Al Qaida to Daesh, more commonly known as ISIS, that has developed throughout the 2000's which has led to increased terrorist activity in cyberspace (Desouza and Hensgen, 2003; Sheldon, 2014).

The second objective identifies the barriers in place that make it difficult to implement Prevent in HE. According to Durodie (2016), the main issues include maintaining freedom of speech and academic freedom whilst ensuring that perceptions of 'spying' are not a reality (Davies, 2016). Although Prevent is mandatory, it does not include compulsory elements for cyberspace. The semi-structured interviews presented

herein explore methods that are suggested by HEFCE, such as monitoring and filtering, as well as alternatives which can help to overcome barriers that participants identify.

Objective three provides an analysis of the interview data. The primary data provides an understanding of how universities are implementing Prevent and the capabilities of reducing radicalisation in cyberspace. Neumann (2013) argues that increased use of technology among young people enhances the threat of radicalisation in society. Technology itself cannot be seen as an instigator to radicalisation but it provides, through cyberspace, a platform to communicate with terrorist organisations and explore radical ideology. In connection with this research objective, the extent to which a university can realistically counter radicalisation in cyberspace is explored.

The present study is divided into five chapters which address the aims of the research, the study itself and an analysis of the data. The literature review identifies key facets to Prevent in education, as well as the role that cyberspace has to play in radicalisation methods. The methodology chapter identifies the perspectives of the research as well as details of the data collection, including influences in decisions that have been made. The analysis chapter is divided into four sections which present methods of implementation, barriers, direction for cyberspace and areas that could improve the impact of Prevent in HE. The next chapter will discuss the academic literature available on Prevent in relation to its original purpose and the compliance requirements in HE.

## 2 Literature Review

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the literature available on Prevent in relation to both cyberspace and education. Despite a sparse amount of literature on Prevent in HE, academia relating to Prevent in schools can be applied to address the research objectives. The importance of Prevent is highlighted as well as barriers to implementation in HE, with particular regard to radicalisation in cyberspace. Understanding how the 'due regard' is met is critical for any assessment of extending measures into cyberspace, as well as identifying the realistic capabilities of a university to make a difference in reducing radicalisation. The following section identifies the purpose of Prevent and the role it plays in the overall UK Government counter terrorism strategy.

### 2.2 Prevent: what is it and why was it introduced?

It is important to understand the concept of radicalisation in order to comprehend the key purpose of Prevent. Klose and Kovenock (2015) postulate that acting on aggressive political, social or religious beliefs render an individual extremist or radical. McLaughlin and Muncie (2001: 211) discuss radicalisation under 'political crime' and, much like the definition of terrorism, radicalisation is difficult to define as there are various explanations for "conviction or motivation" of extremism. The idea of radicalisation is widely contested within academia; as Lyall (2017) identifies, there is no one route to lead to what is considered a radicalised individual. Groppi (2017) postulates that an important indicator to Islamist radicalisation is the support of violence against Muslims. In addition, Estes and Sirgy (2014) discuss the view that terrorist organisations develop alongside shared hatred for the West over time and

that they promote these values to others, as well as forceful responses to attacks in order to initiate the process of radicalisation (Korstanje, 2016). Romyn and Kebbell (2014) infer that, once radicalised, the process of planning an attack begins immediately, making it critical to have measures in place to be both proactive and reactive to imminent terrorist threats (Hang et al, 2016). The term radicalisation is defined in the Prevent Duty Guidance (2015: 36) as 'a process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups' and can include those who haven't taken action as a result of their beliefs.

The jurisdiction of Prevent is predominantly on England and Wales for the HE sector. Although Scottish universities are bound by the duty their guidance is separate from that of England and Wales and their duty is overseen by the CONTEST Scotland Board as opposed to HEFCE (Prevent Duty Guidance for HE in Scotland, 2015). The Prevent duty does not apply to Northern Ireland. It is important to note that the duty is bound to the university as opposed to the individuals working at the institution. The Prevent process involves highlighting that an individual is showing signs of becoming involved in radicalism to the university Prevent lead officer, to either put safeguarding measures in place or to refer to the police.

Fischbacher-Smith (2016) discusses that Prevent seeks to stop individuals in the pre-criminal space before planning attacks and taking action. Radicalisation is the process of an individual adopting extremist or radical views toward a political or social cause (Kruglanski et al, 2014). The UK Government have not defined extremism, leaving the term open for interpretation (Dattani, 2017), therefore, applying a definition can be problematic. Rip et al (2012) identify extremism as an 'obsessive ideological passion' which leads to taking action as a result of an 'insecure sense of identity'. When an individual is being radicalised their sense of identity (Rip et al, 2012) is also being

developed in the absence of criminal action taking place (Rizq, 2016; Elshimi, 2015). For the present study the term extremism will mean a “vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs” (Prevent duty guidance, 2015: 6).

The Prevent duty requires many public bodies to have ‘due regard’ to stop young people getting involved in violent extremism (Counter Terrorism and Security Act, 2015). Organisations bound by Prevent are local government, education and child care, health and social care, criminal justice and the police (Counter Terrorism and Security Act, 2015). Education has become a central discussion point since the statutory duty came into place in 2015. According to Stanley and Guru (2015) the UK Government agenda is to pre-empt challenges of radicalisation which may occur in early year’s development. Children and young adults are informed by their education, interaction and beliefs of significant others (Geary, 2008), making schools and universities a key facet of the Prevent agenda. The responsibility in education is to engage with students on fundamental issues surrounding extremism; however, the interpretation of each establishment can be different. Cranmer (2017) highlights that Prevent implementation is one of compliance, or a ‘tick box’ exercise, as opposed to making a significant difference in reducing radicalisation and more can be done, with assistance from the government. Akbarzadeh (2013) suggests that the danger of being radicalised in current society is significant and, as a result, building resilience of students to challenge extremist narratives could be substantial to reducing radicalisation in HE. Prevent is a small part of the service that education establishments provide and Quartermaine (2016) identifies that more resources

should be made available to change implementation from one of compliance to one that makes a difference to countering extremism.

Mohamed et al (2015) argue danger of radicalisation is a prevalent threat to vulnerable individuals who can be easily befriended by those offering to provide common values. This places a significant focus on young people (Revell and Bryan, 2016), and, in particular, university students who are in a new environment away from their parents. The social freedom created by the HE environment renders certain students susceptible to being targeted by terrorist organisations (Blackwood et al, 2015; Brown and Saeed, 2015). With Prevent in place a university can refer a student into the Channel process in order to develop an intervention plan and begin a rehabilitation process (Channel Guidance, 2015). Wright (2011) argues that international interconnectivity in cyberspace increases the danger of being radicalised. It is therefore important to address threats in cyberspace as well as to identify the role that HE can play in countering extremism online.

The role of an education provider can be critical in the intervention of radicalisation by applying Cohen and Felson's (1979) routine activity theory. Routine activity theory is based on three factors that must be present for a crime to take place: an offender willing to take action, a victim, and the absence of a capable guardian to intervene a criminal act (Cohen and Felson, 1979). The awareness of communication safety in cyberspace, or lack of, presents a risk that there is not a capable guardian to divert radicalisation in cyberspace (Tennakoon, 2015). Prevent seeks to enable HE to be a capable guardian by providing services to reduce student vulnerabilities, one of which could be increasing resilience to challenge information found on the internet.

Prevent's headline within CONTEST (2011) is "to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism", and, the implementation of the mandate in 2015 has increased efforts to achieve this objective (Revell and Bryan, 2016). Carson and Suppenbach (2016) suggest that the strategy is focussed on Islamic terrorism; however, at a Prevent conference in February 2017 it was stated that "this month between 80% and 90%" of referrals from universities in the South West were related to right wing extremism (HEFCE, 2017). Conversely, Prevent referral figures released by the Home Office (2017) show that in 2015/16, 65% of all Prevent referrals were related to Islamist extremism, with 10% related to right wing extremism. Prevent aims to decrease support for terrorist organisations, to have an effective challenge to terrorist ideology and to isolate extremists using the internet (CONTEST, 2011). The CONTEST Annual Report (2015) outlined that these objectives have been met, despite a lack of support in education for implementing Prevent (Quartermaine, 2016). At the Prevent IT conference, Dattani (2017) discussed problems with lone wolf attacks from a security perspective, such as the Westminster attack in March 2017 (Dean, 2017). Although the Westminster attack was a Pursue and Protect threat, early intervention through Prevent could have reduced the likelihood of the incident occurring.

Prevent focuses on all forms of extremism including Islamist and far right extremism (Prevent duty guidance, 2015). Right wing extremism has become a primary concern for Prevent (Aherne, 2017). In a letter sent out to Prevent leads in HE (HEFCE, 2017), it was stated that the majority of Prevent cases referred to the police involved right wing extremism. Since the murder of MP Jo Cox in June 2016, there has been a rise in lone actors with far right extremist views. The UK Government have acted against right wing extremism by banning neo-Nazi groups such as National Action (UK Government, 2016). Philips (2016) argues that Brexit has impacted on the rise of far



right extremism, and, with Donald Trump as President of the United States of America, Clarke et al (2016) believe there is grave concern for national security authorities (Patrick, 2017). With varying forms of extremism prevalent in society, the capability of using cyberspace to radicalise young people is important to understand in order to develop measures to mitigate against the risk of radicalisation online.

Rizq (2016) discusses the concept of the pre-criminal space where an individual is intercepted before committing an offence. Young people being radicalised in cyberspace is a problem, as terrorist organisations are using social media platforms to target intelligent people (Jiries, 2016; Aly et al, 2017). Considering labelling theory alongside the pre-criminal space is important to ensure individuals are not labelled as criminals or terrorists without having broken the law (Cohen, 2016; Pleysier, 2015). Labelling theory refers to an individual behaving in a certain way to live up to the label that they have been given by society (Besemer et al, 2017). Van Den Broek (2017) postulates the importance of labelling theory in relation to terrorism and due to the negative connotations that are associated with extremism it can have a detrimental effect on individuals who are struggling to be accepted in society (Billett, 2014; Eggloff, 2015). It is therefore important that students, in a new environment, can get support by a university to ensure that they do not become disenfranchised, targeted by terrorist organisations and radicalised via cyberspace.

The first issue of Prevent figures and referrals were published in November 2017. Figures show that between April 2015 and March 2016, the education sector submitted the most referrals ( $n = 2539$ ), equating to 33% of all Prevent referrals in this period (Home Office, 2017). By analysing the figures further it is difficult to distinguish between referrals made by schools, Further Education (FE) and HE and identifying

the groups by age does not present clarity for the HE sector. The traditional education age figures are presented in *Table 1*:

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Number of Referrals</b>
Under 15	2127
15-20	2147
21-30	1211

Although the figures in *Table 1* show that young people are common subjects of Prevent referrals, it is worth noting that not all of these referrals have come from education – even in the ‘under 15’ group where all subjects are in compulsory education. Understanding provenance of referrals is subjective based on age groups and cannot be conclusive to understanding the type of referrals made or how many come from HE. The number of referrals in the age groups specified in *Table 1* is significant; however, the number considered by the Channel panel is much lower.

Channel is a process run by the police and is not widely examined in academia because each intervention plan is different in addressing the specific needs of an individual (Channel guidance, 2015). The panel is an exclusive group involving the police, local authorities and the party who referred the individual to Prevent. The Channel panel have two options: to dismiss the case on the grounds that the individual is not being radicalised (Prevent duty guidance, 2015); or, to devise an action plan to reduce radicalisation and build positive social bonds to reintegrate the individual back into society (Noyori-Corbett and Sharma, 2016). Home Office figures (2017) show that 560 individuals between ages 15 and 30 were discussed at a Channel panel with 230

receiving Channel support. The Channel figures are much lower than the number of referrals; however, this is equal to all age groups presented in the figures (Home Office, 2017).

Prevent enables public sector bodies to help counter extremism at the radicalisation phase (Innes et al, 2017). By referring an individual in the pre-criminal space, i.e., one who is susceptible to radicalisation, an intervention can be made through the Channel process. The concept of the pre-criminal space is important to the present study inasmuch as it presents the premise of safeguarding and mirrors the approach that most universities appear to take. In the next section the requirements that are placed on universities to meet Prevent compliance will be outlined.

### 2.3 Prevent requirements in HE

Universities present new surroundings for students and can be a place wherein impressions on a range of issues are formed (Martland, 2015). Ozdemir et al (2016) present that, at university students are making new friends, not living with their parents and are open to a wide range of opportunities, ideas and influences. Alongside these new surroundings, mental illness among university students is rising, which, according to Murphy and Baines (2015), increases the risk of interaction with radical groups. A study by Macaskill (2012) highlights that mental illness among university students increases between the first and second year of study. In addition, YouGov (2016) figures show that one in four university students suffer from 'mental health problems', highlighting enhanced vulnerability to radicalisation. Prevent guidance, which is written by the government, acknowledges that most activities likely to radicalise university students happen off-campus (Prevent duty guidance for HE, 2015), making it difficult for Prevent to be completely effective at a university.

Prevent in HE comes with many requirements, many of which are assessed by HEFCE, who decide whether the 'due regard' is met (Palfreyman, 2015). Each institution is required to have a compliance group to steer the direction of Prevent at that university (Prevent Duty Guidance for HE, 2015). Membership of the compliance group differs at each university; however, it is compulsory for chaplains to be a part of the group, as there is a concern that faith spaces are used to radicalise students due to the negative connotations surrounding Islam and terrorism (Thomas, 2016; Pelletier et al, 2016; Lister, 2016). Walther and Christopolous (2015) argue that religion is often presented by the media as an issue connected to terrorism, with a particular stigma associated to Islam (Kaplan and Costa, 2015). Media coverage is often unbalanced by presenting Islam and terrorism as a joint entity due to large profile terrorist attacks involving Muslims (Barnard-Willis, 2011). Kellner (2004) believes that media coverage is more negative than positive because it is easier to discuss bad experiences than good. Negative media coverage about Muslims (Durham, 2016) has transferred to all aspects of terrorism including Prevent. A concern in HE is that Prevent is a mechanism to 'spy' on ethnic minority student groups (Thomas, 2016; O'Donnell, 2016; Shackle, 2016). Choudhury (2017) postulates that implementing counter terrorism measures is more effective when there is confidence that the policy does not target certain groups in society. Bauhr and Grimes (2014) argue that more transparency from the media is required with success stories published as well as problem incidents with Prevent, in order to change negative perceptions.

Universities are required to have an information technology (IT) policy which relates to their approach to Prevent in cyberspace. Monitoring and filtering of web content on university servers must be considered as part of the policy (HEFCE, 2017). Monitoring is the process of observing the content individuals access online, with a purpose of

identifying who is viewing material that should not be accessed (Hare, 2017). Filtering, which is used in schools and colleges (Nantai and Cockerline, 2010), blocks websites that should not be accessed by individuals using that particular server (Wright and Breindl, 2013). Campbell (2016) holds that using monitoring and filtering at universities is problematic inasmuch as adults should not be censored and should have the right to view all content on the internet. As methods, monitoring and filtering are seen by some as contravening academic freedom, thus creating a dilemma for a university in making a decision to implement these methods (Slaughter, 2017).

Staff that feature in the everyday lives of students are required to have Prevent awareness training (Shackle, 2016). Currently, the *Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent* (WRAP) training is delivered by practitioners and university staff. Prevent is generally adopted as an extension of safeguarding (Davies, 2016; Coppock and McGovern, 2014; Thomas, 2016), which coincides with procedures for other issues students may have whilst attending university. HEFCE have provided universities with an online training resource which raises awareness of key contributors to radicalisation for young people. The training is not institution specific, though, which can be problematic in meeting local or demographic issues that are present at a university. Some institutions are looking to create specific staff training packages which can relate to the needs of their institution whilst encouraging positive engagement from academics who can be reluctant to comply with Prevent (UCU, 2015).

Engaging with students is a difficult requirement of Prevent due to the National Union of Students (NUS) contention that such a strategy targets specific segments of the student community (Padfield, 2015). The NUS has been known to promote anti-Prevent campaigns, such as 'students not suspects' and 'preventing Prevent' (NUS, 2015), both of which are based on the targeting approach that a university can take

(Miah, 2017). Materials published by the NUS can be incorporated into the Students' Union (SU), which offers a range of services to students (Day, 2012). If a student's first impression of Prevent is negative (i.e., based on publications from the NUS), it is likely to remain negative regardless of whether their institution implements targeting or safeguarding. Having negative perceptions on a subject can reduce the time students are willing to engage with it (Heffner and Antaramian, 2016), thus making Prevent a difficult task, whilst at the same time reducing the capabilities of a university engaging with its students on Prevent.

Davies (2016) argues that beliefs are challenged at university in order to develop and 'stretch' thinking. External speakers are invited to universities to engage students on a range of topics; some speakers are seen to be radical (Stachowiak, 2017). Having a broad diversity of students at a university provides an enriched culture with varying beliefs, which Hamilton et al (2016) believe can be exploited to entice a student toward a particular cause. Maksl and Schraum (2012) postulate that university students are impressionable and that the ideas they may be exposed to can lead to contact with radical groups (Softness, 2016).

Universities must have a decision making group for Prevent (Bence and Osborn, 2017; Walters, 2017). All decisions regarding policy changes, implementation of the duty and cyber techniques are decided by the compliance group and approved by the governing council. Each university has a Prevent lead officer who is responsible for the overall decisions made in order to comply with the duty. Each university Prevent lead is also a member of the County Prevent Board where they can have input and share practice with other organisations bound by the duty (Channel guidance, 2015). Having a university presence on the county board forms relationships with individuals in similar

roles (HEFCE 2017; O'Donnell, 2017), which can improve cohesion in the Prevent network.

Bodies bound by the duty are required to have a risk assessment specific to Prevent, and, the location of a university will present different issues (Prevent Duty Guidance, 2015). Winterbotham and Pearson (2016) suggest that it is expected that in major cities the risk of Islamic extremist radicalisation is higher, or that in rural areas animal rights extremism may be of high risk (Enticott, 2015). Having institution specific risk assessments allows for a localised approach to Prevent. Using a risk matrix, an institution can combine the likelihood of an incident occurring as well as the impact it could have (Veeramany et al, 2016) in order to develop appropriate measures to combat the risk of either radicalisation or terrorist activity on campus. University risk assessments for Prevent are not publicly available, making it difficult to determine the specific risks that HE providers mitigate against. Universities can easily over or underestimate the risks that face the institution which presents problems. Overestimating risks of radicalisation can lead to an institution targeting certain student groups, because it is often difficult to determine how robust safeguarding practices actually are (Baginsky et al, 2015). Alternatively, a university may devise an underestimated risk assessment simply to comply with Prevent. This alone is a risk and the expectation that a university can judge potential problems in terrorist activity is challenging because universities are not experts in the area and require direction (Quartermaine, 2016) from HEFCE on risks to be considered.

Requirements of Prevent in HE mainly refer to practices that take place outside of the academic remit of a university, although it does not come without challenges from academics. Recognising the measures a university has to comply with is important to the present study in order to understand what compliance means, as well as to be able

to assess further capabilities of Prevent in HE. In order to highlight the importance of Prevent being used in cyberspace, the next section will identify how terrorist organisations are using cyberspace to radicalise young people.

## 2.4 Terrorist activity in cyberspace

A power shift from Al Qaida to Daesh has seen a change in modus operandi (MO) for terrorist recruitment with increased use of cyberspace (Theohary and Rollins, 2011; Goodman et al, 2007; Ackerman, 2014). The MO of Al Qaida was to carry out terrorist attacks in the West with a view of creating mass panic among the general public (Bast, 2015). Since Osama Bin Laden was killed in 2011, Al Qaida have become less powerful, with a shift, as well as public fear, turned towards Daesh. Daesh have carried out a numerous attacks in Europe and rely on recruiting lone actors through social media to carry out their objectives (Cozine, 2016). The development of technology, and in particular the internet, has transformed communication across the globe in the process of *cyberisation* (Obradovic, 2014). Considine et al (2016) discuss the revolution of technology as coming with 'uses and abuses' which have benefited terrorist organisations. The interconnectedness of the world not only enhances business and social communications but also supplies a platform for Daesh to radicalise individuals in what Awan (2017) describes as the 'cyber jihad' (Greenberg, 2016). This has become dangerous and the use of social media has become a significant propaganda tool for Daesh (Mahood and Rane, 2017).

The beheading of Alan Henning, a British aid worker, by 'Jihadi John' in 2014 was a key turning point in how international terrorism has changed over time (Dattani, 2017). Henning's execution was broadcast on the internet to create a visual association with Daesh and to instil public fear (Friis, 2015). Stacey (2016) believes that, since this



event Daesh have used social media as its main platform for recruitment, targeting young individuals who can be easily influenced. Daesh use social media to radicalise individuals by posting propaganda materials in addition to direct communication (Awan, 2017; Huey, 2015). ISIS hosts extremist related websites that are available to visit on the open source web (Dattani, 2017), making it difficult to distinguish who is accessing extremist material. There is significant cause for concern that connecting with individuals online can speed up the radicalisation process due to everyday interaction with social media (Bertram, 2016). Individuals engaging with extremist organisations on social media are often vulnerable to radicalisation due to weak social bonds or tensions (Lub, 2013).

Through the use of social media and various extremist related websites, Daesh are sending out a clear message to its followers, as well as to individuals hoping to support the organisation (Greenberg, 2016). The focus in previous years has been to travel to Syria and fight against civilians; however, this is proving difficult with additional national security measures put in place by the UK Government. Daesh recommend that individuals stay in their own country and carry out smaller attacks because they are much harder for the police to stop or to reduce impact (Fischbacher-Smith, 2016; Stern, 2016). Since 2014, high-profile attacks in Brussels, Paris, Nice, Berlin, Barcelona, Manchester and London, by natives of each country demonstrates that ISIS propaganda is radicalising individuals to carry out attacks at home (Zekulin, 2016; Stern, 2016). Ahmed (2015) argues that smaller scale attacks at a higher frequency have enhanced public fear of terrorism and give the perception that being in certain locations is unsafe.

Hashtags on Twitter have become a method of sharing information on specific topics and are used in most social media posts (Zappavigna, 2015). Hashtags provide

specific information about a topic or event, including a terrorist attack (Cox, 2016). Easy access to material which has been hashtagged alongside photos is creating an online brand identity (Orzan et al, 2016) which is easily accessible on *Google Images*. In searching for extremist content on the internet it is easy to find material that can be used to radicalise an individual. Thompson (2016) discusses how Daesh are maintaining a threat by keeping up-to-date with social media trends and by employing people who can exploit social media to gain maximum reach around the world (Johnson et al, 2016). By using up-to-date trends to reach impressionable young people, Daesh can gather support in development of a caliphate (Morrell et al, 2015). Messages broadcast by Daesh are not violent or related to committing terrorist incidents, but rather focus on building a state with Sharia Law whereby everyone is seen as equal (McCarthy, 2016). Borquaye (2016) suggests that this as a concept appears reasonable, making it an attractive prospect for vulnerable individuals who are looking for a cause to which to belong. Whilst the methods which Daesh employ as a means to develop its 'State' are very much extreme, reaching out with a viable cause attracts individuals who subsequently become radicalised, leading to greater risk of terrorist attacks around the world.

Zhao et al (2016) suggest that when terrorist attacks occur the public posts its reactions on social media. Xie et al (2017) identify that, social media posting increases following a tragic world event. According to McQueeney (2014), increased social media activity from the general public is either in fear or in response to the incident. Media outlets provide extensive coverage of terrorist attacks and the videos that are produced are often shared alongside an often uneducated opinion which provides others with incorrect knowledge (Lionardi, 2017). It is in the interests of terrorist organisations for the public to share information about attacks, form an opinion and

then share those opinions with others because it instils fear amongst members of the public (Finseraas and Listhaug, 2013). Although this is a contribution to terrorism, it is not done intentionally and the influence of the media significantly impacts on the language, beliefs and stereotypes that surround terrorism (Durham, 2016). Social media has become a part of everyday life whereby people constantly share their opinions and support for causes (Salcudean and Muresan, 2017). Facebook created a 'profile picture cover' of the French flag in support of victims of the Paris terrorist attacks in 2015 (Ribeiro, 2015). Whilst this was intended to support the victims of those attacks, the opinion that such a strategy raises the profile of terrorism has not been commonly shared (Costa, 2015). The widespread of terrorist material on social media makes it difficult to control and could make using Prevent in cyberspace problematic in HE.

To reduce radicalisation and terrorist activity, Jetter (2017) argues that attacks should receive less media attention. After the Westminster attack in March 2017, a BBC journalist asked Home Secretary Amber Rudd, "Do you worry that this has been a clear intelligence failure?" (BBC, 2017). A leading question such as this causes mass panic that the intelligence system in the UK is not working due to containing misleading information (Bowles and Sharman, 2014). The attack on Westminster was not an intelligence failure; however, the basis of this question by a journalist gives the impression that it was, regardless of the response and hence supporting terrorism (Injac and Dojcinovski, 2015). Although this is not a direct cause of radicalisation, it contributes to the terrorist organisations who seek to bring down the integrity of the government and weaken the strength of Western administrations (Arsenault and Bacon, 2015). Schulze and Wansink (2012) argue that perceived risk and fear need to be managed in order to reduce 'damaging overreactions', and, for the national

counter terrorism strategy to be a success it is important for the public to have confidence that the methods implored to counter extremism are effective (Klausen, 2009). English (2015) argues that by naming perpetrators of attacks and imposing coverage domination, terrorists are supported; simply changing this may help to lessen the control that terrorism has on public fear.

Social media provides a public forum to share information and opinions on any topic, making it difficult to police (Trottier, 2012). Thorne (2015) postulates that social media posts as sources of information should be treated with an element of caution because opinions can provide people with false knowledge (O'Connor et al, 2016), and in some cases could assist the radicalisation process. There are various extremes that could be used to recognise or stop individuals being radicalised online. France has implemented a filtering system for the national internet network (Dattani, 2017) in order to stop access to extremist material on the open source web (Breindl, 2013). In contrast, the UK Government and agencies such as the Institute for Strategic Dialogue are working with Google to put more effective measures in place to take down extremist content (Institute for Strategic Dialogue, 2017). The Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit (CTIRU) works to remove extremist content online (Dattani, 2017). With approximately 8,000 URL's on the filtered list (Dattani, 2017), there is a significant influence from the Islamic State on the internet for the purpose of radicalising individuals across the world (Stacey, 2016; Pearson, 2016). Taking down content from extremists can be seen as ineffective because new content will be published in its place (Ferrara, 2017). Godley and Loretto (2013) argue that rather than remove content the capacity should be made to challenge extremist narratives and post content which could provide an individual with informed facts about extremist issues. Universities could help to make a difference in producing counter-narratives

on social media instead of, or in addition to, introducing monitoring and filtering on university servers. Prevent requires a university to document an approach to monitoring and filtering within their IT policy, but the common approach is to not use the methods (Prevent Duty Guidance for HE, 2015). Through making these methods part of the mandate, it would standardise the approach taken by all institutions and remove the element of perception and interpretation of Prevent that can become a barrier to implementation.

Understanding the extent to which terrorists are using cyberspace is important in the present study in order to outline what universities are expected (and are able) to do to counter extremism. The next section will identify what is meant by the term 'due regard' and will discuss whether the expectations by the UK Government can be realistically met in HE.

## 2.5 What is meant by 'due regard'?

HEFCE's monitoring framework covers five different areas (HEFCE Updated Monitoring Guidance, 2016). The first of these is an annual report which outlines a university's compliance for the year; it must be submitted by each institution annually in December. With no guidance given on how to construct the report it is unknown how many institutions demonstrated their first compliance. The following must be included in reports submitted by each institution: Prevent reviews from the institution, reporting of serious incidents and material changes, outcomes of these events, and the supporting of good practice (HEFCE Updated Monitoring Guidance, 2016). Since the annual reports in December 2016, HEFCE have published a letter to each institution stating whether 'due regard' for the duty was met (HEFCE, 2017). As an attachment to this letter, information regarding which institutions have good or best practice is

described (HEFCE, 2017). The institutions highlighted with best practice are setting the level of good practice above the 'satisfactory' mark that is given for complying, possibly making way for there to be a more elaborate system in place to describe how far the compliance goes within a university.

Every UK university has demonstrated compliance with Prevent by showing practices to meet the set framework (HEFCE, 2017). Despite compliance, though, there is still friction within universities whilst implementing Prevent (Wolton, 2017). Debate on whether education is the right setting for Prevent is apparent from the literature (Durodie, 2016; Kippin, 2017) due to the capacity that a university has to realistically implement successful measures to counter radicalisation. Roxea et al (2011) challenge whether Prevent fits into the ethos of universities' core business of teaching and learning. An education establishment's duty to safeguard its students is common practice, thus, to add radicalisation prevention to this area can be seen as logical (Appleton, 2013). The measures set out by HEFCE rely on engagement with staff and students (Prevent Duty Guidance, 2015). For staff to participate in Prevent it needs to be presented as safeguarding, making interpretation of the policy a key facet to acceptance within an institution (Gaskarth, 2013). By implementing Prevent as safeguarding, education is an important place for anti-radicalisation initiatives due to the development of ideas and experiences (Shin, 2012). On this basis, HE is a good setting for Prevent and if interpreted as safeguarding it can be used in an effective way. However, although HE is bound by Prevent, the difference that the sector can make to the UK Government four strand counter terrorism strategy is still not clear.

The Prevent Duty Guidance (2015: 36) states that compliance requires placing 'an appropriate amount of weight' on ensuring that radicalisation is kept to a minimum. With best practice articulated in the first set of annual reports there can be cause for

a better understanding of compliance (HEFCE, 2017) in order to give control of these measures back to the UK Government (McCluskey, 2016) and away from individual universities. Not complying with Prevent is seen as an illegal act (Counter Terrorism and Security Act, 2015); however, overall responsibility rests with the Home Office (Prevent Duty Guidance, 2015). Universities currently comply with Prevent; however, it could be argued that universities are not completely capable of making a significant difference to countering radicalisation due to the high level of terrorist activity in the UK (Heath-Kelly, 2017). Cranmer (2017) argues that the measures universities have introduced have not been significant enough to make a difference to terrorism as a whole. Whilst intervening at the radicalisation phase is critical for Prevent to effectively contribute to the UK counter terrorism strategy (Kruglanski et al, 2014), universities must balance compliance and institutional reputation with academic freedom. Durodie (2016) discusses that the securitisation of education through Prevent infringes on academic freedom. The Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015: 20) clearly states that when carrying out the duty universities 'must have particular regard to the importance of academic freedom'; however, there is still strong opposition to Prevent with arguments that academic freedom is impinged (UCU, 2015; Palfreyman, 2015). The premise of negativity is based on the ability to undertake sensitive research (Walters, 2017) and there is significant concern that some topics are not able to be discussed or researched (Qurashi, 2017). Opposition from within institutions makes it difficult for universities to implement Prevent effectively, making it difficult to go above the simple compliance.

It is difficult for small institutions to have a greater impact on countering extremism, in particular when most of the activity is out of their control (Wragg, 2016). Following terrorist attacks, the media search for an individual or group to blame (Piazza, 2015),

which can impact on the perceptions and efficiency of Prevent. The coverage of this information is out of the control of a university and can make it difficult to understand the impact that the 'due regard' has on counter extremism as a whole. When the Islamic State claim responsibility for attacks (Robinson, 2017), without evidence to suggest they were involved (such as the mass shooting in Las Vegas in October 2017), the organisation increases its power. According to Johnson (2015), additional power which is provided by a non-evidential claim is just as dangerous as direction of an attack from Daesh and can help build momentum for sustenance and recruitment. Although this makes counter extremism in HE more difficult, the building of a student's resilience to challenging information can be critical in a decision to explore an organisation after they are given mass media coverage.

Concerns around students being radicalised in cyberspace have already been addressed and the 'due regard' placed on universities to implement technology measures is the consideration of using monitoring and filtering (Prevent Duty Guidance for HE, 2015). Blocking content and watching what staff and students access on the university server is limited (Lee et al, 2005), and, with the ability to use 3G or 4G network access, monitoring and filtering can be easily averted (Aloi et al, 2014). Having technical barriers to Prevent does not mean that universities cannot make a difference to countering radicalisation in cyberspace. Organisations such as the Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) produce counter-narrative materials which can be shared on social media to provide effective information against extremist ideologies (Straw, 2016). ISD assist schools with Prevent by showing counter-narrative videos (Extreme Dialogue, 2017); a similar approach could be taken in HE. Producing counter-narratives in addition to compliance would be a difficult task for a university; however, using the student engagement requirement, students could



develop their own counter-narratives that are specific to the university environment. With additional resources from HEFCE a bigger difference can be made by a university to counter extremism (Quartermaine, 2016), making the 'due regard' a matter of more than just compliance.

CONTEST (2011: 6) outlines that commitment to 'protect the people of this country and our interests overseas' should include reflection of 'fundamental values'. Extremism, as defined by the Prevent Duty Guidance (2015: 36), involves 'vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs'. It is important to establish what is meant by 'fundamental British values' as a counter-narrative to supplementing Prevent implementation in education (Revell and Bryan, 2016). Elton-Chalcraft et al (2017) discuss that implementing British values into the curriculum makes teachers 'state instruments of surveillance', thus supporting the premise that Prevent targets Muslim students (Pal, 2015). Moreover, Busher et al (2017) suggest that the lack of understanding of what 'British values' means creates a barrier to implementing Prevent successfully. Vanderbeck and Johnson (2016) suggest that the focus should be on building tolerance and respect for cultural and religious differences, rather than on 'British values', which can have a tendency to undermine the safeguarding purpose of Prevent (Coppock and McGovern, 2014). 'Fundamental British values' as a concept does not feature in the Prevent Duty Guidance for HE (2015) and is focussed instead on schools and colleges. The phrase has unintended consequences for Muslim students (Busher et al, 2017), which is mirrored in HE with perceptions of surveillance of student communities (Durodie, 2016). With 'fundamental British values' as a focal point of implementing Prevent

(Bryan, 2012), the extent to which Prevent in education can impact UK anti-terrorism measures remains unclear.

Prevent in education has been widely controversial, and, meeting the 'due regard' has been one of successfully documenting actions taken to safeguard students from radicalisation. Consideration on whether the documentation reflects reality has not been addressed by HEFCE and therefore it is difficult to suggest whether universities are making a difference to countering radicalisation through their compliance. Barriers are in place at a university which affect implementation of Prevent. Freedom of speech and academic freedom are critical debates for the progression of Prevent in HE and informing the present study of barriers to consider for successful implementation of Prevent in cyberspace.

## 2.6 Freedom of speech and academic freedom

Prevent is controversial among UK universities (Palfreyman, 2015; Wragg, 2016; Webber, 2016) due to media coverage portraying Prevent as 'securitising education' (Durodie, 2016) or 'monitoring Muslim moves' (Pal, 2015) in order to catch terrorists. The imbalanced coverage of Prevent has created hostility towards an act that helps protect the security of the nation (Counter Terrorism and Security Act, 2015). Media debates have covered freedom of speech (Dragu, 2017) after external speakers have been denied by universities (Haynes and Passy, 2017), despite the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015) clearly stating that freedom of speech must be upheld. It could be argued that placing counter terrorism responsibilities on education establishments is problematic (Quartermaine, 2016; Thomas, 2016); however, to abide by a programme such as Prevent can lead to detecting an extremist and stopping them from committing a criminal act (Sukarieh and Tannock, 2016; Morris and Thelan,

2016). A common misconception caused by the media is that Prevent, and subsequently Channel, are criminal processes (NUS, 2015); however, working in the pre-criminal space to ensure students don't commit criminal acts is the purpose of Prevent in HE (Lincolnshire Police, 2016). If Pursue, Protect and Prepare (CONTEST, 2011) were given more media coverage, Prevent may not be seen as controversial, as the general public may understand the underlying process of having it as part of a wider strategy.

O'Donnell (2016) suggests that Prevent targets students and could make students fall silent in fear of what they can or cannot say. This concern is shared by the NUS, which represents the elected student officers at each university SU across the UK (Day, 2012). It is important to note that not every elected student officer shares the NUS view on Prevent and SU cooperation within a university depends on the views of the annually elected student officers (Turner et al, 2017). NUS has introduced a 'help line' for students to raise concerns about how a university is complying with the duty (NUS, 2017). The article released employs negative tones towards Prevent, stating that 'sharing your story' will help to lobby the Home Office against the mandate (NUS, 2017). This is a dilemma for universities and can cause problems with implementing actions to comply with Prevent due to the role the SU has in implementing new measures for students (Brooks et al, 2015).

Freedom of speech is a concern at universities due to the external speaker policies in place as a result of Prevent (Cranmer, 2017). University policies outline that a speaker should only discuss the expected topic and the form mitigates the university against the potential of an external speaker sharing radical ideas (Padfield, 2015). This provides an element of control for a university; however, freedom of expression can still be infringed in some cases. Free speech is the ability to communicate opinions

and ideas (Venkatraman et al, 2015), and, not allowing radical speakers could be seen to contravene this. Lindner and Nosek (2009) argue that freedom of speech should not be the freedom to say anything, in particular, opinions that may offend or show hatred towards others. This may cause students to be apprehensive when seeking to discuss or research sensitive subject areas (Smith, 2016).

Palfreyman (2015) argues that many academics hold negative perceptions toward Prevent with the belief that Prevent infringes on academic freedom (UCU, 2015). A common perception is that Prevent removes the ability to commit fully to one's studies (Sukarieh and Tannock, 2016), by avoiding radical exploration. For research intensive universities such as Oxford and Cambridge, Prevent could be perceived to infringe upon research practices and thus stop individuals accessing material that could enhance original research (Walters, 2017). Researching sensitive topics can be dealt with on an individual basis by a university's research and ethics committee in order to gain access to sensitive materials that may be beneficial to the research (Bence and Osborn, 2017). A valid argument is that research proposals need to go through the research and ethics committee regardless of Prevent (Walters, 2017), and therefore adding a section to access extremist material for research purposes would not significantly alter current practices. It is clear that restrictions to extremist material can cause barriers to research in HE; however, with clear process, communication and implementation academic freedom is unlikely to be breached (Walters, 2017).

Academic study involves heavy use of cyberspace for accessing up-to-date research journals (Gray and Cao, 2016) and as a resource for finding out information (Dwyer, 2016). With discussions surrounding the monitoring and filtering of computer content there is concern that the ability to casually research information on the internet (Osborne and Cox, 2015) by both staff and students will be stopped. Exploration of

information on the internet can also form the basis of assignments and the development of thinking outside of the classroom (Cornell, 2016). Realistically filtering content would not necessarily stop sensitive research taking place because academic material is still available on the internet (Terrazas-Arellanes et al, 2016), thus, the ability to find information will not be lost.

Cyberspace is not only a consideration in discussions around academic freedom but also how Prevent can be implemented in a digital environment. The capabilities of Prevent to be extended into cyberspace will be identified in the next section in relation to how the HE sector can influence counter radicalisation measures online.

## 2.7 Prevent in cyberspace

Isaacson (2016) discusses how cyberspace is a 'freeway' that cannot be controlled because once information is shared on the internet it can always be traceable. This leaves one solution for authorities: to take down extremist related content as soon as it is identified (Dattani, 2017). With Google planning to work with key players in the cyber market, including social networking companies (Institute for Strategic Dialogue, 2017), a step toward removing extremist content from the open source web can be reached. Dattani (2017) presented that the CTIRU work with cybersecurity companies to provide a service that can block a range of categories, including terrorist or extremist material, which is available to HE providers to purchase (Slaughter, 2017). The ability to block websites would stop access to the filtered content but only when staff or students are logged onto the university servers, making it undetectable to the university if staff or students use other providers (Slaughter, 2017). In the case of a university, students living in halls of residence will have internet connection but can

access extremist material by turning off Wi-Fi and using 3G or 4G bandwidth without university knowledge (Hasan et al, 2016).

Striking a balance between whether adults should be censored and protecting the reputation of the university must be considered before implementing monitoring and filtering. The University of Sunderland implemented filtering in January 2016 (Walters, 2017) and stated that it had no problems with implementation as part of its Prevent compliance. The expectation is that students would protest against the process of applying filtering; however, the majority of students assume that filtering already takes place on campus, following the standards set in schools and colleges (McNicol, 2016). This common perception is one that could benefit universities in implementing filtering. Other institutions such as the University of Bristol have filtering in place but only for malware (Bence and Osborn, 2017). Having a package that has the capability to block extremist websites is something that is being considered by other universities in preparation for a time where filtering content could become a compulsory element of Prevent (Slaughter, 2017). These universities are not blocking content but would consider themselves 'filtering ready' with the ability to implement this process if necessary.

When a university decides to implement internet filtering it also has the option of monitoring. Universities do not currently monitor as the 'big brother' effect is seen as an infringement on privacy (Ronen, 2015; Carmagnola et al, 2014; Montgomery et al, 2013). Jisc who provide 'digital infrastructure' for universities and colleges offer capability for monitoring and filtering (Jisc, 2016). This has been controversial in the HE sector and it is thought that the norm will be to not monitor internet content or emails unless called upon by the authorities, in hope of maintaining privacy and trust of those who use the network (Holland et al, 2015). Implementing monitoring would

make the perception that Prevent is spying on students a reality and could be detrimental to its implementation (Steeves and Regan, 2014). Institutions that filter, such as the University of Sunderland, have the capability to also monitor who is accessing (or trying to access) blocked content but choose not to (Walters, 2017). There is a vast spectrum of implementation strategies which tends to be as a result of the lack of direction on the matter within the Prevent duty guidance for HE (2015). At the Prevent IT conference, discussions suggested that, sector wide, institutions would prefer to have an expectation set by HEFCE on whether to monitor and filter and effectively take the decision away from the university (HEFCE, 2017).

McNicol (2016) postulates that monitoring and filtering are not a means of preventing radicalisation, but rather, that such strategies can lead individuals to access content on another server. Monitoring and filtering are methods that are used in schools and in FE (McNicol, 2016); and, it may be thought that, due to its use in under-18 education, it may also work effectively in HE. However, with the everyday use of portable devices and the ability to access the internet remotely it is easy to access extremist content away from the server (Huey, 2016). A solution to preventing access to extremist content online would be to take the approach of France and filter all extremist content nationwide (Dattani, 2017). It is thought that the use of monitoring and filtering in HE will become compulsory due to the fear that young people are being radicalised online (Heath-Kelly, 2013). A more effective use of filtering could be redirection, whereby upon accessing a website with extremist content a user is challenged about viewing the content before proceeding (Neumann, 2013). Those who choose to access the sites would be monitored and potentially referred to Prevent whilst at the same time providing those who have visited the site (e.g., by accident) a

chance to rethink their decision. This is not a method of deradicalisation, however, inasmuch as it does not block content (and thus does not censor adults).

Huey (2015) argues that media coverage of terrorist attacks alongside every day social media usage can contribute to terrorism and radicalisation. In HE this is something that cannot be directly managed as without blocking social media sites students are able to follow and access radical opinions (Smith, 2015). Student facing staff should be made more aware of risks and signs in behavioural changes that can influence a student becoming radicalised (Pal, 2015). Publicising social media mandated training could help remove some stereotypes surrounding Prevent. Prevent is perceived to be a program which infringes on the rights of Muslim students (Saeed and Johnson, 2016), and, having a focus separate from the challenges of Islamic terrorism could begin to break down this stigma (HEFCE, 2017). Stenner (2017) presented that most cases of Prevent referrals in HE are related to right wing extremism, suggesting that the perception of Prevent only addressing Islamic terrorism is false. In HE, there is a concern that right wing organisations such as National Action are looking to recruit intelligent individuals from UK universities in the hope that a leader will emerge from among them (Aherne, 2017). Aherne (2017) suggests that these groups have not been able to sustain success in the past because of the lack of a strong leader. Cyberspace not only provides a platform to explore extremism but offers an opportunity to communicate with organisations who take action.

## 2.8 Summary

Prevent has been widely controversial since its implementation with the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015), in particular, in education. The general perception of Prevent is that Muslim students are targeted and spied on to stop terrorist attacks



taking place (Saeed and Johnson, 2016; Pal, 2015). In contrast, Prevent claims that it seeks to protect vulnerable individuals from becoming radicalised and specifically deals with individuals in the pre-criminal space (Rizq, 2016). Any other actions to stop terrorism lies with Pursue, Protect and Prepare (Counter Terrorism and Security Act, 2015). In HE there are various requirements universities must meet in order to lead to the prevention of radicalisation, including having measures in place for external speakers and events, a risk assessment and an IT policy (Prevent duty guidance for HE, 2015). When meeting the 'due regard' of Prevent it has been considered whether a university is of a significant position to make a larger contribution to countering extremism, with suggestions that more can be done. Additional contributions that a university can make towards reducing radicalisation are considered in the analysis chapter.

Increased use of cyberspace by terrorist organisations has led to a higher risk of young people being radicalised on the internet, something that is very difficult to completely eradicate (Jiries, 2016; Aly et al, 2017). Terrorist use of social media to recruit individuals appears to be the latest MO of Daesh, and, understanding the latest social media trends makes Daesh a real threat to students using social media on a daily basis (Theohary and Rollins, 2011; Goodman et al, 2007; Ackerman, 2014). The use of hashtags in particular provides a platform for information to be accessible in one place. The use of Prevent in HE to help reduce radicalisation in cyberspace is difficult with the two obvious solutions being monitoring and filtering, as is in place in schools and colleges (McNicol, 2016). Implementing monitoring and filtering would be a culture shift for universities; however, with the threat that cyberspace poses to radicalisation it is likely that Prevent will include compulsory elements for cyberspace in the future. The next chapter will identify the methods that have been used in the present study.

## 3 Methodology

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methods that were used in the present study. By identifying the interpretivist stance on the research, justification for the use of semi-structured interviews will be explored. Data collected in the interviews is discussed alongside themes which emerged from participants which have formed the basis for the analysis chapter. During the period of this study there have been several terrorist incidents in the UK including the Manchester bombing, Westminster vehicle attack and the Parsons Green tube bombing, making the research extremely apt. Effects that attacks may have had on participants needed to be considered throughout the present study, alongside a range of ethical considerations which are outlined in this chapter. First, the research limitations will be outlined.

### 3.2 Research Limitations

An interpretivist epistemological position was used as the basis for the research design. Interpretivism is based on the fact that a person's knowledge is informed by social or environmental constructions (Hardy, 2016). For the expansion of terrorism research it is important to understand that methods used and circumstances are constantly changing due to social constructions and the development of society. The research therefore had to be flexible to ongoing changes in the world and could not be grounded on one issue (Pearce, 2015). An interpretivist position takes into consideration that opinions from the research participants have been constructed by society and therefore, as data cannot be taken as fact, but instead can inform a reality as opposed to theory (Dowling et al, 2016). The constructivist paradigm complements the interpretivist epistemology which as described by McLaughlin and Muncie (2001:

50), takes into account the social factors that contribute to crime and consider them a reason for the cause of criminal activity. When identifying a constructivist approach, social changes can be taken into consideration, for example the rise in threat level to critical in May and September 2017 or changes in contextual circumstance (Schrader, 2015); in this case the contextual circumstance being the participants knowledge. The constructivist approach complements the use of semi-structured interviews and ensures that different lines of inquiry can be explored as a result of what Malekian et al (2017) describe as a 'process of interaction'. Crotty (1998: 52) postulates the idea of 'social constructionism' which, in the present study, identifies opinions of Prevent and HE professionals which have been constructed by their working environment.

Through using semi-structured interviews for the present research there have been various limitations that have potentially influenced the outcomes of the study. When considering that interview data constitutes opinion rather than being able to be considered fact (Pearce, 2015) verifying interview data is not always possible when using interviews as a monomethodical approach but Lewis (1992) suggests that group interviews help to validate opinions from interview research. Qualitative research tends to generate large amounts of material which can be considered as data, and what is deemed important can vary depending on who is taking on the project, in particular where coding is done manually by one individual (Burnard, 1991). This could lead to exclusion of factors that other people may see as important things to consider. It is important to understand that research cannot answer all of the questions and instead can inform further development in certain areas (Barratt et al, 2011) making the opinions and ideas of practitioners, through interviews, a valid method to contribute to research. Anderson (2010) argues that interviews are overused and relied upon to develop qualitative research as opposed to other methods such as ethnography or

case study analysis. The next section will outline the research process taken within the present study.

### 3.3 Research Process

In the present study semi-structured interviews formed the basis of the primary data collection in order to obtain knowledge from key individuals working in HE and Prevent. As a result of working in Prevent at a UK university, a network of participants was available prior to commencing the research, proving valuable in acquiring knowledge specific to the area of study. The present study included 16 participants who were specialists in HE, Prevent and counter-narrative dialogues. Overall 26 Prevent leads of HE institutions were contacted via email to take part in the study; the information provided can be found in *Appendix 1*. The 26 universities were chosen due to available information on the internet on who the Prevent lead at the institution was. The controversial nature of Prevent in HE meant that the pool of universities willing to take part in the study was low. Of the 26, three HE institutions took part in the study, three stated that they were unable to help with the research and there was no response from the further 20. *Table 2* outlines the roles of individuals who took part in the study.

<b>Table 2 - Interview Participants</b>	
<b>Role of Participant</b>	<b>Numbers Interviewed</b>
Prevent Lead	3
Academic	3
University Support Staff	4
Trade Union Representative	1
University Senior Executive	1
SU Staff Manager	2

UK Government Department Prevent Advisor	1
Counter-narrative Project Officer	1

Although the pool of nation-wide participants was limited, knowledge from a range of expertise and job roles has ensured that the present study considers all aspects of Prevent in HE. Each of the 16 interviews took between 25 and 50 minutes totalling in approximately 8.5 hours of data. Every interview has been transcribed and can be found in *Appendices 3-18*.

According to Longhurst (2003) semi-structured interviews are “an attempt to elicit information from another person ... through a list of predetermined questions.” Longhurst identifies interviews in its most basic form and does not allude to the conversational approach used in the present study, which is critical to obtain the truest findings from research participants (Madill, 2011). Interviews are a common research method used in the social sciences as information provided is limited only by knowledge of the participants (Ellis, 2016). Demircioglu (2016) identifies that using a conversational approach allows the participants to relax, making it more likely that information will be volunteered.

Using semi-structured interviews the research cannot be dependent on meeting a hypothesis outlined at the start of the study (Kallio, et al, 2016). The unknown entity of participant knowledge can make the research process more difficult in contrast to fixed knowledge based research such as maths or natural science (Sutcliffe, 2016). For the present study a black boxing method allowed for “processes and mechanisms” to develop as the research unfolded (Bennett and McWhorter, 2016). Black box evaluations are a form of evidence-based research (Hoffmann and Walker, 2015)

which explores the value of interventions to stop specific outcomes; in this case the Prevent duty is the intervention that seeks to reduce the risk of individuals being radicalised. The term 'black box' stems from the view that, because the mind is a function that is not visible it can generate unexpected information as new situations develop (Bennett and McWhorter, 2016). Each individual's 'black box' provides different information depending on their expertise, but this variation adds richness to the data (Chai et al, 2015), and in the present study provides knowledge and opinion from across the HE sector. Having different black boxes is not a new concept in research and is of benefit if each interview is planned slightly differently (Gingerich et al, 2014), by understanding the specific knowledge likely to be within each unknown space (Berkman and Lieberman, 2011).

In an area of sensitivity such as terrorism, it is important that participants feel comfortable talking in an interview situation, reducing the barriers that are in place through the environment (Pedersen et al, 2016). In interview research information that is not shared can be as important as key discussion points; this is apparent when participants consciously avoid stereotypes, or attempt to say what the researcher may want to hear (Ongena and Dijkstra, 2007). Building rapport with participants is essential to break down barriers (McDavitt et al, 2016) and attain true opinion and experience to enrich the research outcomes. Having prior connection to many of the participants through working in Prevent produced an element of trust and rapport which was utilised as part of the process. Although a benefit, knowing many of the participants could have led to common knowledge not shared due to previous conversations on the subject. Rapport is crucial to build with interviewees to gain an element of trust and comfortability to collect the best data possible. Croker et al (2015) outline that without rapport a true understanding between interviewer and participant

cannot be reached, or there could be a lack of willingness to share information, proving critical to the study. In undertaking the conversational approach rapport is essential for the participant not to feel interrogated, and building a relationship with the participant can improve the steady flow of conversation in a relaxed environment (Cerekovic et al, 2017). Ford et al (2017) discuss that in a formal interview situation it may be difficult to obtain critical information for a study, in particular where a topic is sensitive. Participants in the present study were comfortable talking about controversial areas of Prevent in education and were happy to share their opinions as a result of the initial rapport building. Without previous rapport being built with the participants the interview process would have been difficult and the quality of the research may have been diminished. Through identifying barriers within the research methods the researcher can plan to reduce the limitations of the study and seek to gather the best data possible.

Initial discussion topics were chosen to form the basis of the interviews through using issues that were outlined in the literature review as well as information that could help to address the research objectives. Further themes emerged from the interviews which are outlined in section 3.4. The topics chosen prior to the data collection, including rationale and research objectives covered, are collated in *Table 3*:

<b>Table 3 – Interview Discussion Topics</b>		
<b>Topics for Discussion</b>	<b>Rationale for Inclusion</b>	<b>Research Objective</b>
Knowledge of Prevent	Important to establish baseline knowledge of staff in HE on Prevent	1
Requirements of Prevent in HE	Covered in section 2.3 of literature review	1 & 2

Prevent and academic practices	Covered in section 2.6 of literature review	3
Efficiency of Prevent	Important to understand the capability of Prevent in HE	2 & 3
Prevent in Cyberspace	Covered in section 2.7 of literature review	2 & 3
Social Media and Terrorism	Covered in section 2.7 of literature review	3
Methods of Preventing Radicalisation in Cyberspace	Covered in section 2.7 of literature review	2 & 3
Future Direction for Prevent	Important to establish whether further measures for Prevent would be welcomed in HE	3

The topics shown in *Table 3* were collated in a briefing document which I used to ensure all topics were discussed in each interview to allow consistency across all interviews and maintain reliability of data. The briefing document can be found in *Appendix 2*. In addition many topics were discussed by the participants which had not been considered prior to the present study but have been informative to the research outcomes. By using the conversational approach topics were discussed naturally and the participants often covered vital talking points without a need to prompt the discussion, particularly when talking about cyberspace.

Having some topics of discussion set out prior to the interviews added a structure and meant that once a topic had been discussed there was no need to re-discuss it and disrupt the flow of conversation (Bennett and McWhorter, 2016). Each participant put emphasis on certain topics, such as the role social media has to play in radicalisation, showing evidence of different information being in each 'black box' (Chai et al, 2015).



Key aspects of the interviews were maintained, including providing Sterling's definition of cyberspace, 'the place between' two electronically connected communication devices, or even, 'the indefinite place out there, where ... two human beings, actually meet and communicate' (Sterling, 1992). Participants found a definition of cyberspace useful to refer to in their discussion to maintain confidence that input made was valuable to the present study. Although the same definition was provided to all participants differing opinions were offered which have been informative to the analysis chapter of this research. The next section outlines the processes taken to analyse the data and identify themes to inform the analysis chapter.

### 3.4 Coding and Themes

DeLyser et al (2013) suggest that coding interviews is the most labour intensive and revealing part of the research process because the analysis and areas for recommendation begin to develop. Coding is complex and can be difficult depending on the type of data that is available (Olszewski et al, 2006) – in the present study, 16 interviews. Observation notes were made in each interview to identify unexpected themes as well as participant comfortability in discussing certain issues, as with topics of sensitivity the information that isn't provided can be as important as the information that is (Berkman and Lieberman, 2011). The coding process involved identifying information that appeared important to the present study, including where a participant stated something was important or my perception that a topic was worth exploring. The process was efficient because the data was familiar after undertaking and transcribing the interviews, allowing the focus to be on specific information and quotes that stood out, which have been included in the analysis chapter.

Topics identified during the interview process were listed to begin the coding process, to assess correlations that had already formed. The main topics that emerged from the observations were the media and NUS as barriers to Prevent in HE, which are discussed further in section 4.3. The main research aims and objectives of the present study were considered before analysing each interview transcript to ensure alignment with the key purpose of undertaking this research – to help guide HE institutions in implementing Prevent in cyberspace. *Figure 1* presents the themes that emerged from the interviews alongside the percentage of interviews where that theme was discussed in detail.

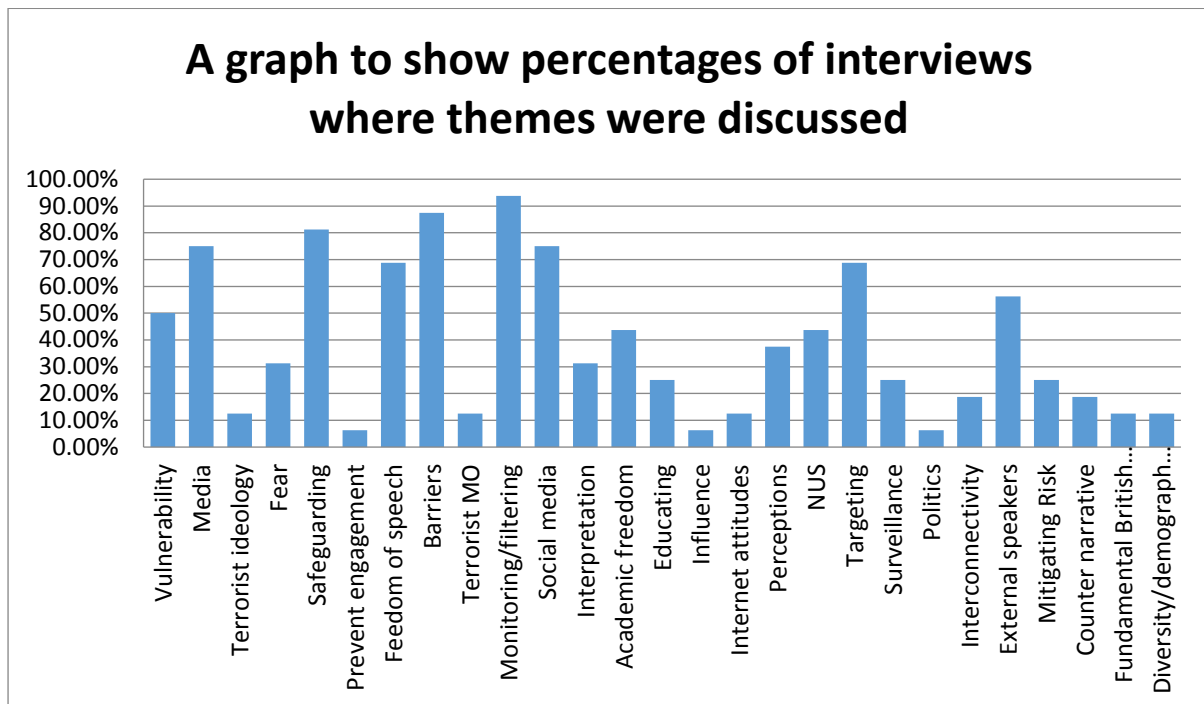


Figure 1

Monitoring and filtering were the main points of discussion across the interviews showing that the debate around Prevent in cyberspace focusses on using technological methods to stop viewing of internet content in the HE sector. Barriers to Prevent were discussed in most interviews and this is the most difficult to define as a

'theme' because participants discussed a range of challenges with Prevent and my interpretation of what they said forms the basis of this theme. The third most discussed theme was safeguarding as a method of implementing Prevent and this was paramount to the methods that the participant institutions use, even though the targeting approach was also discussed in 68.75% of interviews. Information which was provided in the interviews were set out into categories after the coding process to form the basis of the analysis chapter. Miville et al (2005) argue that grouping themes together is where correlations from conversations can be identified and critiqued and where conversations can be considered as data (Mitchell et al, 2008). The categories that were used are outlined in *Tables 4, 5 and 6*.

<b>Table 4 - 'Methods of Implementing Prevent' Themes</b>	
<b>Methods of implementing Prevent</b>	<b>Theme discussed in % of interviews</b>
Vulnerabilities	50%
Safeguarding	81.25%
Interpretations	31.25%
Perceptions	37.5%
Targeting	68.75%
Surveillance	25%
Mitigating risk	25%

The basis of the 'methods of implementing Prevent' section was formed on the discussions about student vulnerabilities, safeguarding, targeting and surveillance. Participants were confident in discussing each method because of the approach they take at their institution or methods they had seen other universities use. Consideration was made as to why a university might choose safeguarding or targeting as an approach and this depended on interpretations of the legislation as well as perceptions that had been created from the media, a job role or prior research. 'Mitigating risk' as a theme was not specifically discussed as a section within the analysis but there is

consideration to risk throughout, whereby an institution is required to consider compliance with reputational risk.

<b>Barriers to Prevent</b>	<b>Theme discussed in % of interviews</b>
Barriers	87.5%
Media	75%
Fear	31.25%
Freedom of Speech	68.75%
Academic Freedom	43.75%
External Speakers	56.25%
NUS	43.75%
Educating	25%

‘Barriers to Prevent’ was a critical section of the analysis because to implement best practice the challenges that an institution can come across are important to consider. ‘Barriers’ as a theme was difficult to categorise because the theme included small discussions with each individual that amounted to something that could disrupt successful implementation of Prevent. Impact of the media on radicalisation and the coverage of terrorist incidents was a critical discussion, with consideration given to media influence toward perceptions of Prevent. As universities, upholding freedom of speech and academic freedom is part of the core business and therefore was important to consider why they could hinder a university implementing certain measures of Prevent. A barrier which was not considered prior to the research was the role of the NUS in producing anti-Prevent campaigns against the agenda, and spreading their interpretation of Prevent to SU’s, which can potentially create difficulties in implementing certain measures of Prevent in HE. Education and fear as themes have not been included in a particular section because they are overlying issues that have been included throughout the research. Fear has increased with

terrorist activity which heightens the need for Prevent, and educating people to build resilience against radical ideology is considered throughout the analysis chapter.

<b>Prevent in Cyberspace</b>	<b>Theme discussed in % of interviews</b>
Monitoring/filtering	93.75%
Social media	75%
Interconnectivity	18.75%
Attitudes towards the internet	12.5%

‘Prevent in cyberspace’ is a section which addresses the main objectives of the present research. The realistic capability of monitoring and filtering web content is considered in the cyberspace discussions, including whether they can potentially contribute to reducing radicalisation on a larger scale than HE. Discussions around social media were critical to understand the extent to which terrorist organisations are using up to date communication applications to radicalise young people. Mass use of social media by students is considered in this section as well as how realistic it is to build resilience to what is seen online. ‘Interconnectivity’ and ‘attitudes towards the internet’ have been considered within the social media discussion and ‘the attempt to control the uncontrollable’ has been used as a theme which was not considered at first. In revisiting the transcripts and in particular the cyberspace discussions this was an obvious theme which included key content on how realistic it is for a university to contribute to reducing radicalisation in cyberspace.

Through analysing each interview transcript in detail key topics of discussion were assessed for inclusion in the analysis chapter of this research. Consideration was given to topics which the participants stated were important, or discussions that collated similar opinions across all each interview. The next section outlines ethical considerations that were made during the research process.

### 3.5 Ethical considerations

Massoudi (2008) argues that ethics is the most important factor within research and can influence the methods that are used to obtain primary data. The present study has been overt with each participant consenting to take part in the interview process. Bryman and Bell (2007) outline ten important factors to consider in ethical research, which formed the basis of ethical considerations made before undertaking the semi-structured interviews. The ten factors to consider and how they were applied to the present study can be found in *Table 7*.

<b>Table 7 – Factors to Consider in Ethical Research (Bryman and Bell, 2007)</b>	
<b>Bryman and Bell's 10 factors to consider in ethical research</b>	<b>How the factor was considered in the present study</b>
Research participants should not be subject to harm in any ways whatsoever.	Participants were in no way subjected to harm and were briefed of conversation topics before the interview began. This ensured participants were not surprised by sensitive or controversial conversations about Prevent.
Respect for the dignity of research participants should be prioritised.	Participants were given information about the study and how the data provided would inform the research. All participants were approached due to their expertise or job role within Prevent and HE.
Full consent should be obtained from the participants prior to the study.	Participants consented to being interviewed and for the interview to be recorded, transcribed and included in the appendices of the research. In addition, the purpose of the data was explained again before the interview began.
The protection of the privacy of research participants has to be ensured.	Participants have been anonymised by using initials rather than names in the transcripts and not including names of the institution. Each transcript has been analysed to remove names of key people at the institution or any mention of the institution. The universities who have taken part in the study as well as those

	who declined taking part have not been named in this thesis to provide anonymity.
Adequate level of confidentiality of the research data should be ensured.	Data collected from the participants only informs the present study, and will not be used for any other purpose, or future study without further consent.
Anonymity of individuals and organisations participating in the research has to be ensured.	Participants and their organisations have not been mentioned by name in the thesis or in the transcripts. Where the name of individuals or the institution has been included, the name has been shortened to the first letter of the name given, and any institution has been replaced with *institution*.
Any deception or exaggeration about the aims and objectives of the research must be avoided.	Participants were given the research objectives prior to agreeing to take part in the present study. The objectives have remained the same throughout the research ensuring this factor is upheld.
Affiliations in any forms, sources of funding, as well as any possible conflicts of interests have to be declared.	This factor does not apply to the present study.
Any type of communication in relation to the research should be done with honesty and transparency.	Participants were aware of details relating to the research prior to engaging with the present study, and were informed of the purpose of the information they provided. The contact made prior to the interview process can be found in <i>Appendix 1</i> .
Any type of misleading information, as well as representation of primary data findings in a biased way must be avoided.	The coding process ensured that the data used in the present study has not been portrayed in a biased way. Any quotes that have been included in the analysis chapter have been used in the context of discussions had with participants.

The present study could be considered of a sensitive nature due to the increase in terrorist activity in the UK in 2017 (Alison and Alison, 2017). As most UK Universities

implement the safeguarding approach the risk of harm or upset to participants was low. In addition the conversational approach allowed the participants to be comfortable in the interview setting, supplemented by rapport building which took place throughout the research process. Prevent is a controversial topic in HE with significant publicity against the agenda and in respect of the participants, their opinions were considered which allowed for constructive debate as opposed to a clash of views.

### 3.6 Researcher Reflexivity

As a former President of the University of Gloucestershire (UOG) SU, as well as a practitioner of Prevent in HE, I was able to draw upon experiences to inform topics of conversation for the present research; these conversations helped me to understand some of the barriers to the implementation of Prevent. For example, as President of the SU at UOG, when Prevent was made compulsory in HE, the NUS launched what could be described as an anti-Prevent campaign. Understanding Prevent as a safeguarding mechanism, I found myself at times challenging the NUS' contention that Prevent was in some way 'racist'.

Following my role as President, I was employed by UOG as a Student Engagement Officer for Prevent. My duties included implementing Prevent as a safeguarding mechanism and engaging with students in order to raise awareness of Prevent and any Prevent-related activities sponsored by the university. These experiences gave me a unique perspective on Prevent. Upon commencement of the present study I began to build connections with individuals working in Prevent and HE; these connections proved invaluable when recruiting participants and helped me to establish an open and relaxed dialogue with participants.



### 3.7 Summary

Data has been identified from 16 semi-structured interviews with professionals in Prevent and HE, as identified in section 3.4. The themes that emerged from the data have been placed into four categories which make up sections of the analysis chapter. By using extracts from the interviews the analysis identifies methods used to implement Prevent as well as the barriers in place, implementing Prevent in cyberspace and areas for improvement for Prevent to have a greater impact on countering radicalisation in cyberspace.

## 4 Analysis

### 4.1 Introduction

Much of the interview data shows that there is some concern in the education sector that radicalisation on campus is a risk due to the vulnerable nature of some students. This chapter will identify the methods that participants' universities use to comply with Prevent, the perceived barriers that are in place within those institutions and how radicalisation could potentially be reduced in cyberspace. Ackerman (2014) suggests that an increased presence of terrorist organisations in cyberspace creates a need to find methods to counter radicalisation techniques online. Interview participants gave an insight into both positive and negative anticipation toward implementing enhanced measures for Prevent in cyberspace which have helped to recommend methods of best practice for universities. The first section identifies methods that participants' universities use to implement Prevent.

### 4.2 Methods of Implementing Prevent

The way in which a HE institution implements Prevent can depend on the perceptions of the individuals running the organisations or how they have interpreted Prevent. It is difficult to assess whether institutions are simply meeting compliance or are having an impact on reducing radicalisation, but is an important consideration for the research. Regardless of the measures a university takes to comply with Prevent, participants in the present study discussed two methods: safeguarding and targeting. Both of these methods are analysed in this section, which will also include vulnerability and surveillance of students in HE.

## 4.2a Vulnerability and Safeguarding

The process of radicalisation can sometimes be linked to vulnerable individuals, which according to Coppock and McGovern (2014) is the social driver for starting to get involved with groups that support terrorist ideology. Similarly, Participant 11 discussed vulnerability of students suggesting that 'students are vulnerable to being radicalised, just because it's a time of their lives when they are not fixed'. Borum (2014) discusses that the strains of university life are the same as that in every day society where the stress of work, finance and mental health are a challenge every week. The non-fixed element of student life, as discussed by Participant 11, can increase stress, and seeking a sense of belonging to reduce these strains could hypothetically lead a student to radicalisation. The exploration of ideas at university can contribute to the stress of a student because thinking is stretched and challenged (Chanock et al, 2012). When adding the strains of non-fixed student life to the exploration of ideas, Molesworth et al (2009) argue that strong opinions are formed and transformations can take place. Through digital devices some students are able to have conversations and engage with people all over the world and by simply 'finding out information... can be drawn down a route' (Participant 1) to getting involved in discussions that may progress into radical thinking.

Extremist organisations such as Daesh or National Action are known to target university students to join their cause by using hashtags (Berns-McGown, 2016), not based on the fact that they are vulnerable but because they are of a high level of intelligence and can bring new ideas to initiate further development of their organisation (Aherne, 2017). This could be a concern within the HE sector whereby leaders are produced at universities and could be recruited with the aim of enhancing an extremist movement. In the context of the universities that participated in the

present study the concern was less of being actively recruited but instead by what Participant 7 described as 'stumbling across things they don't mean to'. The 'stumble' (Participant 7) across information is a concept that has developed with the rise in technology (Harrison et al, 2006). As technology has become common in everyday activity, Johansson (2016) suggests it has been shown to decrease the level of social interaction that young people have. According to Ye and Ling (2015), the less that one socially interacts the more disenfranchised they become with the changes that occur in society, thus adding to their vulnerability. Some participants were concerned that behaviour is undetectable due to the 'levels to which you can be involved in students' lives [being] very limited' (Participant 8). An increase in technology usage provides challenges for detecting radicalisation at a university and leaves the option for a university to apply safeguarding measures in a generalised manner as their method of implementing Prevent.

Safeguarding as a method of implementing Prevent was mentioned in every interview. Universities have a general duty to safeguard its students and Prevent is an extension of pastoral support with a focus of reduction in radicalisation:

*I think the balance for us here at the university is around umm raising peoples understanding and actually getting across the message that it's not about spotting terrorists. It's really, and I think our approach is right, in that we have a responsibility around safeguarding and that is the kind of focus we took in the education sector is that it was about protecting and safeguarding our young people. (Participant 2).*

Participant 2 discussed safeguarding as the approach taken to implement Prevent at their institution, and alluded to the perception of Prevent as being about 'spotting

terrorists', which could be perceived by some as the underlying principle of Prevent. The majority of those interviewed firmly support the safeguarding approach because it is a 'no brainer' when they have departments to care for student welfare already set up (Participant 14). Prevent is the only strand of the national counter terrorism strategy that operates in the pre-criminal space, meaning that there is an intervention prior to any criminal acts taking place. This concept was only mentioned in one interview, with the others focussing on general vulnerabilities:

*It is the only strand that operates in the pre-criminal space so basically before someone committed a crime and turned to terrorism this one tries to divert them away from the path of radicalisation. It's about safeguarding and a duty of care. (Participant 6).*

The pre-criminal space is important when thinking about Prevent, because Prevent as a strategy to address the pre-criminal space can be 'very soft in relation to the other strands' of CONTEST (Participant 14). Addressing this space, in essence, works alongside safeguarding and supporting individuals with vulnerabilities. Welsh and Farrington (2013) postulate that creating an intervention at an early stage can preempt any criminal activity taking place, which is the underlying premise for Prevent. Applying routine activity theory, the presence of a capable guardian stops a criminal act happening (Cohen and Felson, 1979) and a university can act as the capable guardian for the radicalisation process. Although the pre-criminal space concept is not being used by everybody the idea to take Prevent as a safeguarding matter operates on the same premise, and with successful implementation radicalisation in the HE sector can be reduced as a result.

Discussions with Prevent leads who implement the safeguarding technique suggested that they have not been required to implement new measures specifically for Prevent since the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015) and has focussed on effectively documenting the safeguarding work that is done by the university:

*I don't think we have changed our approach because of the duty but we have documented it because we had to because of the duty. I think what is interesting is that it's given a ... torch onto how we do things like that for people in executive management and the governing body because actually would never have gone to the governing body, what we call the council, and given them a training session on how we do student safeguarding because the interest wouldn't be there but we have had to so I have. (Participant 7).*

Participant 7 thus asserts that documenting the measures already in place is what Prevent has asked universities to do; this revolves around safeguarding students and looking after their wellbeing. Safeguarding is a universal concept that takes place at all universities (Appleton, 2013) and is the approach that all participants observed at their institutions. Support staff participants who are responsible for the implementation of Prevent understand the premise to be safeguarding:

*Conditioning it in a way that brings out as a safeguarding issue, we have a duty of care to our students and we want to stop our students getting involved in things across a range of different issues and this [Prevent] is one of those. (Participant 16).*

According to Participant 16, Prevent is an extension of safeguarding measures that exist at university for other vulnerabilities that students may have, and that it has not

required a different approach at their institution. According to Participant 13, getting the support for Prevent depends on 'interpreting what [Prevent] means', to which the information can come from a range of resources such as the media.

Some participants believe that university students are a vulnerable group that need to be safeguarded and one could assume that a Prevent style initiative is needed to enable this effectively. According to Participant 7, a mandatory duty is 'a bit over the top' as they believed they 'were doing the Prevent strategy already'. This suggests that a government mandate has not changed the approach from safeguarding at that institution.

This section identified student vulnerabilities to radicalisation from the interview data. According to participants the safeguarding approach is used introduce Prevent to those individuals in the pre-criminal space. The next section will discuss an alternative method of implementing Prevent: targeting.

#### 4.2b Targeting and Surveillance

According to participants in the present study, the targeting approach to implementing Prevent is not commonly used in the HE sector. Some participants, including Participant 3 were 'worried about the influence [Prevent has] on Muslim communities' due to the stigma that surrounds Islam and terrorism. A university member of staff stated 'the whole issue of Prevent is that it is seemingly geared towards Muslims and Islam and I have had discussions with people about the extent to which radicalisation is about Islam and extent to which is about foreign policy' (Participant 3). Participants indicated this premise comes from outside the sector and the challenge to Prevent is welcomed 'and I like it when people challenge Prevent as long as they are willing to listen and really understand the duty' (Participant 6). This is not always the case, as

noted by Participant 10: 'a lot of academics are very negative about the whole Prevent agenda'. One academic stated that if 'he looks a bit foreign' and 'before even meeting anyone ... students can be judged on a surname' (Participant 8) and Participant 8 was concerned that Prevent was created for this purpose. Prevent being a targeting function of the government, according to some participants, stems from discussion in the media, 'the media... are... absolutely vilifies Islam and Muslims to the detriment of the British society, not just Islam' (Participant 2).

A large number of terrorist incidents carried out by individuals associated with Islam have become high profile events, such as the Barcelona incident in 2017; this has created a stigma around terrorists being Muslim, according to Participant 13, 'if you think of a terrorist you think it's IS, or ISIS or Taliban because of the tactics they use but they don't represent Islam'. A trade union representative took part in the present study and they took an anti-Prevent stance because 'it is seemingly geared towards Muslims and Islam' (Participant 3). Prevent requires university staff to refer individuals showing signs of radicalisation to the police. Durodie (2016) identifies that this implementation has brought an element of policing into education. Participant 11 suggested academics 'have issues' with Prevent and believed this was for a 'good reason' because it could be interpreted to remove the ability to discuss sensitive topics or radical debate within the learning atmosphere. One participant stated, 'we have had some debates and discussions in class and outside of class about what is acceptable in terms of material that we read' (Participant 8). Participant 12 described 'Prevent in itself [as] problematic' and could be seen to contravene the job of an academic of helping students to explore and expand their thinking. The premise of using the targeting approach is not flawed in its method; to be successful at reducing radicalisation there has to be a target audience to enable positive engagement in



Prevent. Issues surrounding the approach come from the preconceived ideas and assumptions that are purely based on ethnicity, race, or perceived religion (Victoroff et al, 2012) and that is where the method can come into scrutiny.

According to Participant 9, using the targeting approach to Prevent is akin to a 'big brother' society, whether via the university IT networks or physical monitoring (Power 2016). Participant 1 seemed to believe that academics at their institution were sceptical about what Prevent was asking them to do and that some believed they were acting as 'the government's ears and eyes' (Participant 1). This is supported by Wragg (2016), who asserts that the expectation to spot signs of radicalisation is a sign of the securitisation of education and that such a strategy is not complementary to the core business of a university. Participant 8 discussed why there might be resistance from academics to implement Prevent when they stated 'there will probably be more suspicion at the very least than collusion, academics by their training usually don't just go along with things, they will come and question it'. The provenance of the scepticism of Prevent, though, comes from the belief that Prevent is a program to 'spy' on students (Participant 6). From the institutions that participated in the present study, alongside networking conversations at Prevent conferences it is not a common view shared that 'spying' is an appropriate implementation of Prevent. Universities already have services for safeguarding, with one participant stating that 'student wellbeing, student pastoral care... to then fall in line with what we do in the Prevent duty it wasn't difficult' (Participant 7). This suggests that some institutions use Prevent an extension of safeguarding measures already implemented. Identifying students as vulnerable to radicalisation can sometimes be related to observations of their behaviour by other students or university staff (Durodie, 2016); some participants suggested this was

being done in the same way as other welfare issues, rather than targeting certain student communities.

Although the targeting approach to Prevent did not appear to be used by any of the participants' institutions, it is still important to consider whether it could work effectively to reduce radicalisation. Some participants discussed the extent to which they were able to identify students at risk; for example, Participant 8 stated, 'you are teaching adults, 18 year olds and the levels to which you can be involved in students' lives is very limited'. Participant 8 went on to discuss concerns that a 'very limited' interaction with students would not necessarily highlight vulnerability and therefore an intervention may not take place. With students who are not present in lectures, it would be difficult to identify signs of radicalisation, as any concerns may not be noticed. When thinking specifically about radicalisation, Participant 10 believed Prevent could turn into racial profiling 'because most students come from a certain ethnic group', which would lead to negative implications for the university. In short, the targeting approach does not appear to be used within participant institutions but participants believed it would not be effective if it was put in place. The issues that stem from a 'big brother' society directly transfer into crime prevention initiatives and cause perceptions that may not be true, leading to false opinions on how policies are implemented, such as Prevent.

The targeting approach is based on the premise that Prevent focusses on Muslim students (Durodie, 2016). This view was not shared by many participants but they were aware of the method and the implications it may have should their institution decide to adopt the targeting approach. The next section discusses the importance of interpretations and perceptions of Prevent and how significant they can be in implementing either the safeguarding or targeting approach.

## 4.2c Interpretations and Perceptions of Prevent

Interpretations of Prevent could be important for an institution in choosing a method to implement. Participants had varying interpretations with some being pro-Prevent and others being sceptical or anti-Prevent. Views that participants and others hold on Prevent can be based on what they have heard in the media, a personal interest or their understanding from their job role. Having a range of knowledge in the data has led to understanding how important interpretations and perceptions can be with regard to Prevent implementation. One participant did not originally agree with the premise of Prevent and stated the following:

*I've seen so many people take the Quran passages completely out of context and then I thought that is what is happening with Prevent. They are taking something and are taking it out of context and then they are blaming Prevent, they are not blaming the interpretation and that's what's happening. Most people who are for or against it, for or against the actions, what should be is there is a lack of education of the actual interpretation of it and so going back to your original question, do I agree with Prevent, yes I do. Now I do because I know about it. (Participant 13).*

As mentioned previously, some individuals believe that Prevent is about 'spying' on students (Thomas, 2016). Views such as those espoused by Participant 13, who believed that the policy, not the interpretation, are blamed and it is critical to understand how crucial first impressions on a topic can be. Those who are radicalised could be presented with interpretations which represent political underpinnings, and if those ideas are developed, they may result in terrorist action. An initial interpretation

is difficult to change (Shirani et al, 2015), so whether it is becoming a terrorist or falsely interpreting legislation there is a significant risk in a lack of help to individuals or organisations in interpreting policy. How one chooses to interpret policy or information is not something that can be easily changed, but it can be supported with guidance and positive media (Radovic et al, 2017). Participant 13 believed that the interpretations of Prevent are often not as they are intended by the government as it is 'out of the government's hands'. Many participants suggested that guidance and resources for implementing Prevent were poor:

*I think that we just need to make completely sure with Prevent that we are supporting those who are responsible for delivering it on the ground properly and there are people who feel like they don't have enough resources or training to be able to do that properly so I would like to see, I know we have WRAP training at the moment and I know in some cases WRAP training people like it and it is comprehensive for them and that is great and they have a good Prevent coordinator and they feel confident in delivering it. In other cases people don't feel as confident and they feel that WRAP is just an hour long session and it doesn't give them enough and I would like to see more resources and training in a compulsory way for Prevent because I think that will help the frontline workers feel more confident in tackling these issues in the education setting they are in. (Participant 14).*

Participant 14 highlighted that there are limited resources for those who implement Prevent at their institution, and that more resources might aid in helping them to feel more comfortable in delivering Prevent. A university has to comply with Prevent and some do the minimum but do not benefit the perceptions of Prevent, or the reduction

of students being radicalised. Clear guidance and expectations from HEFCE will remove the scope for interpretation and allow a standardisation in the HE sector. A lack of guidance can frustrate universities as 'they want everyone to go down a certain road without saying it, they need to say it if that's what they want us to do' (Participant 7) and further resource would strengthen Prevent as an anti-radicalisation program.

For many involved in Prevent by law under the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015) the first perceptions formed may have been from their place of work or the media. The origin of perceptions is critical to the opinion that one holds (Dietrich and List, 2013); this is evidenced by Participant 6, who seemed to suggest that the issue with Prevent is that when challenged it is rarely defended as to its reality and that 'the perception is out there and we have to respect that and try to change it'. Most participants suggested that Prevent was Muslim oriented and that, more specifically, 'it's about complying but being careful not to tar Muslims with the wrong brush' (Participant 3). There can be a complacency factor with such perceptions, in particular when the student demographic is not considered diverse. For example, a senior executive from one institution stated, 'if there is a risk it may be that we underestimate the possibility of an individual ... getting drawn into extremism and taking it through to committing a terrorist act' (Participant 5). In addition Participant 6 stated:

*I think the university have a duty of care and have to protect their reputation because that's not going to sound very well in the Daily Mail for example where the university student has planned an attack and all of that at the university campus, killing 200 or 300 people and the university didn't even know, so I think it's a balance. (Participant 6).*

Participant 6 thus suggests that for a university Prevent can be seen as a balance between reputational risk of a student being radicalised and only doing enough to tick the boxes of compliance. How much a university engages in Prevent can be dependent on perceptions of the staff, students and externals, which is a considerable risk that should be addressed if Prevent is to be more effective.

According to Zsidisin and Wagner (2010), the perceptions that people develop can often become their reality. With respect to the perceptions formed by young people, one response is through education, as noted by Participant 2, who stated, 'I think the really important area where we can influence and make a really big difference [is in] educating young people'. Education can thus serve to counter the narratives of terrorist organisations and change the negative perceptions of Prevent. This is evidenced by Participant 6, who stated, 'it's about us being more transparent and maybe [having] a way of regularly sharing with key stakeholders, some of the success that we do' in order to begin changing negative perceptions of Prevent. Challenges to Prevent are healthy in that they ensure continual development of Prevent; however, without an efficient response to challenges, negative perceptions can be enhanced. Theoretically, Prevent can be effective but the implementation or as Participant 14 stated 'I would like to see more resources and training in a compulsory way for Prevent because I think that will help the frontline workers feel more confident in tackling these issues in the education setting they are in' which would help standardise Prevent and align good practice across the sector.

#### 4.2d Summary

Overall, the initial interpretations that are made on Prevent are widely significant to how an institution implements the duty. A few challenges that face the HE sector with

implementation have been explored to allude to the efficiency that reducing radicalisation can actually have in the education sector. Participants discussed two ways in which universities might implement Prevent, safeguarding and targeting, both of which are addressed by being alert to student vulnerabilities or by 'spot[ting] the signs' (Participant 4) of potential radicalisation. The safeguarding approach was most often used by participants' institutions because universities 'are responsible for protecting young people against all kind of vulnerable influences' including radicalisation (Participant 14). However, elements of targeting are used in order to reach out to the most at-risk students. The methods that an institution implements may be influenced by the preconceived perceptions and interpretations of the Prevent policy which can in itself provide challenges. Using the interview data, the next section will seek to identify the essential barriers that need to be overcome to implementing Prevent effectively in the HE sector.

### 4.3 Barriers to Prevent

The implementation of Prevent has been controversial in the HE sector (Durodie, 2016). A key part of the interview process was to explore if participants perceived any barriers to Prevent being successful in reducing radicalisation. This section will present three key themes identified by participants as barriers to implementation of Prevent: the media; academic freedom and freedom of speech; and, the NUS. There will also be a discussion of other barriers deliberated by participants that did not necessarily fit into the key themes of the findings, but that are nonetheless important to consider. The next section identifies barriers that the media present to Prevent and the impact that negative coverage may have on a university when implementing counter radicalisation measures.

### 4.3a The Media

Each participant in the study referred to television, radio, newspaper and social media narratives concerning Prevent, as well as the overarching role that social networking platforms can have both in perpetrating terrorist attacks and in the strategising of defence tactics. Barnard-Willis (2011) highlights that the media sometimes present non-balanced interpretations of terrorism; one could argue that such interpretations have led to the misconception that Prevent targets certain groups in the community, namely Muslims (Barnard-Willis, 2011). For example, Participant 13 noted that the ways in which Muslims have been portrayed as terrorists has come directly from the media, whereby criminal activity that is committed by a Muslim takes 'the spotlight ... even though everyone does it'. In support, Participant 11 stated, 'the way Prevent has been publicised in the media can almost be seen as a corner of shorthand for islamophobia'.

Kellner (2004) suggests media coverage is traditionally more negative than positive. Indeed, Participant 2 believed terrorism was 'sensationalised' within the media to generate interest in the news program. Having such negative coverage creates fear, and in the case of terrorist attacks promotes angst about being a victim of an attack. Attacks or incidents tend to promulgate a focus on blame, for example the unveiling of Jihadi John as Mohammed Emwazi, a former student from the University of Westminster (Palmer, 2015). According to Participant 3, the media have assisted in generating negative perceptions of Prevent as being 'disproportionately focussed' on the Muslim community; however in the case of Mohammed Emwazi, the media claimed that the University of Westminster should have done more (Showalter, 2015). Most of the participants in the present study noted that whilst there appeared to be compliance with Prevent at the institutional level, some individuals nonetheless held



negative attitudes towards implementing Prevent. Participants shared concern that there may be a reputational risk if a student involved in extremism became the target of the media. Some participants expressed that this may be a difficult balance for an institution, that is, to uphold academic freedom whilst at the same time (successfully) detecting those susceptible to radicalisation. It is important to remember that those who implement Prevent in education are not the police, a fact that seems to be overlooked by the media, as one participant noted:

*The first thing the media jump on is what about this Prevent and how was this missed and how was that missed, I mean Jesus Christ. The public are not trained police officers and when I have this discussion with the police, we are doing what we can here, these are school teachers, these are gardeners, these are kitchen staff, these are wellbeing staff, you know we are not trained police officers; we are doing what we can.*

(Participant 8).

Participant 8 thus highlights that Prevent is difficult to implement because it is an 'add on' to another job role and that those delivering it are not specialists in countering radicalisation. As terrorism is such a serious issue, it could be argued that the pressure is on HE institutions to be 'experts' in spotting radicalisation; however, not all who work in the HE sector are 'education[al] psychologists... so there isn't the expertise' to necessary to get Prevent right every time (Participant 12). The pressure some universities might experience as a result of terrorist-related media narratives could be seen as a barrier that creates an expectation of compliance whilst at the same time criticising the manner of implementation, thus making it difficult to ensure a significant difference is made.

When a terrorist attack takes place in Europe or the USA there is mass coverage on televisions, news feeds and any other form of media. According to Spencer (2017), terrorism will always be discussed by the media because of the nature of its conflict; this could add to public fear of terrorism and anxiety of being involved in an attack. As fear is created there is a heightened emphasis on Prevent to be more effective to reduce the number of attacks that take place. One participant discussed the lack of public knowledge about Prevent dealing with all forms of terrorism, not just Islamist extremism:

*About 90% of referrals in February were relating to extreme right wing as opposed to Islamic terrorism and people don't know. They think we are in our offices trying to target Muslim people but that's not reality, its perception and its only when you talk to people and try to understand that they know its factually incorrect but the perception is out there and we have to respect that and try to change it. (Participant 6).*

Participant 6 thus discusses the rise of right wing extremism and how significant the issue has become in the HE sector, a notion, they seemed to suggest, that counters the perceptions of Prevent as 'target[ing] Muslim people'.

Referrals that are made through Prevent are rarely broadcast by the media. One such case involved a young child who had written about living in a 'terrorist' house as opposed to a terraced house (Frankel, 2017), and as a participant discussed, a child said 'cooker bomb instead of cucumber' (Participant 13). These two cases were mistakes from the child but because they were referred to the police they became news coverage, and may have assisted negative perceptions about Prevent. Even

those who are sceptical about media coverage can sometimes find it difficult to know what to believe as one participant stated:

*If you believe the ... media umm ... you know, the security agencies are preventing terrorist attacks weekly but we don't hear about, you know, we only hear about the fact that there are planned attacks that have been thwarted. (Participant 4).*

Participant 4 thus outlines one of the difficulties in understanding the true nature of terrorism due to specifics not been broadcast to the public and suggests that transparency would perhaps provide more confidence in the security services. Despite this, Bauhr and Grimes (2014) outline that a lack of information shared is likely to be down to national security measures, making complete media transparency difficult to implement.

The media, at times, have assisted the negative perception of Prevent by discussing that it is an initiative to target Muslims but as Participant 6 discussed 'that is not reality'. The next section will identify barriers discussed by participants that are specific to a university as opposed to issues that are presented as a result of all terrorist activity. Freedom of speech and academic freedom are critical to the core business of a university and are believed to present barriers in Prevent implementation.

#### 4.3b Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom

Universities can be a common place for speakers to share ideas, beliefs and knowledge to students. Some participants stated that radical ideas can sometimes create interesting discussion and Participant 1 believed that 'freedom of speech can be an issue because actually in what is said people can be ... quite badly offended'. The freedom of speech issues discussed by participants were about exploring ideas

and understanding differing points of view at university and Participant 8 stated 'it's fascinating and for those of us interested in it, it is part of the appeal'. Some participants felt there could be concern that Prevent could, at some stage, reduce the likelihood of these types of discussion happening. Participant 14 spoke about the ability of counter-narratives to enhance conversation about extremism, 'A good way to talk about some of these counter-narratives and the issues that come out about extremism'. Some academics that took part in the study were sceptical of Prevent in a way that 'students won't want to have conversations that they believe can be monitored by academics' (Participant 10), which could make it more challenging to teach radical topics within lectures. Noting what can and cannot be said and what is considered extremist is a grey area and Participant 8 discussed that students, in particular, can be uncomfortable speaking within a borderline area:

*We have recently had a debate about freedom of speech where at the end I joked with students about largely it was only me speaking because they were anxious about speaking about free speech and most of them left the room thinking, I did a vote at the start and a vote at the end and at the start most said they believed in free speech, by the end of it, it was only me with my hand up and it kind of changed their mind a little bit.*

*They said that you can't say anything, there are limits. (Participant 8).*

Participant 8 provides an example of how free speech is perceived by some students at their institution, indicating that the concept is unclear due to the 'limits' that mean 'you can't say anything', in particular which may cause offence. Controversy has been widely associated with Prevent but Crocker et al (2003) discuss that concerns about speaking on certain topics is an issue within society, so Prevent may not be the only perceived factor affecting free speech in education. Dobewall et al (2013) state that

people worry about how others perceive them more than self-happiness which could reduce the number of radical views that are presented in every day discussions. Although seen as a barrier by some participants this could be a societal issue as opposed to one that has been put in place by the duty. However participants showed concern that there is a perception that Prevent could be used as a narrative against freedom of speech which could potentially reduce debate surrounding challenging topics.

Academic freedom is considered as having free space to be able to research and discuss any topics within an educational boundary to find out information that is not yet known (Davies, 2015). Academic freedom is a core principle of a university and some participants in the present study stated it could be infringed with elements that Prevent has introduced to the HE sector:

*A lot of academics are very negative about the whole Prevent agenda and while they might see what we are doing here at the moment as unproblematic they also think well it's only unproblematic at the moment and it is going to be ramped up so that it is going to deny people freedom of speech and freedom of opinion. (Participant 10).*

Linking in with the freedom of speech discussion, some participant academics were concerned about researching topics that may be considered sensitive because of the belief that exploring information online, even if for the purposes of research could contravene Prevent and result in a referral to the police:

*It would affect my research because if key words were triggered there would be people all over it. I don't know how it would affect it actually. It might inhibit people from being inquisitive. I think part of the tension with*

*the Prevent duty is that you have a requirement as an education professional. As an education professional in Higher Education work or in schools you have on the one hand a requirement to provide opportunity to explore ideas to explore extreme ideas and they are learning, developing and playing with ideas. (Participant 12).*

Participant 12 discussed how Prevent could affect university research and could remove difficult but stimulating conversations from the education environment. Conversely the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015) specifically states that each university must have 'particular regard to the importance of academic freedom' in order to protect research in sensitive areas. Although the legislation provides a safety net for academic research, some academics are not wholly sold on the idea of Prevent, as one participant stated:

*I think a lot of researchers and a lot of academics who work in areas that could be sensitive and ... nervous about putting certain words into search engines, often we self-censor ourselves before we realise we have even done it and I think we want to stay away from certain subjects and I think people who are really at the cutting edge looking at these issues, I think they would be very anxious and they would be wise to keep a wary eye. (Participant 8).*

Participant 8 discussed that people can sometimes sensor themselves subconsciously which can lead to being anxious about looking at sensitive areas, even for a research purpose. Some academics in the present study discussed the fear of the government 'knocking on your door' (Participant 8) after typing things into search engines to which they relay to students within lectures on certain modules. Interestingly, in an informal

discussion after interviewing one academic, they stated that I was lucky to be researching such an interesting and sensitive area and that they would be wary of one of their students researching terrorism. There have been no constraints from an academic point of view in researching Prevent and the sceptical perception that some academics in the present study had towards academic freedom could potentially be more of a barrier to freedom of research than Prevent itself. Universities are a safe space for students and academics to explore ideas and according to most participants Prevent allows that to continue. The line between expressing extremist views and researching an area and the balance between protecting students from radicalisation and researching sensitive topics appears to be undefined. Some participants held the perception that Prevent and extremism research cannot coexist but as Prevent develops the resistance from academics towards Prevent may decrease and research could help to inform and assist HE institutions to implement the duty.

Some academics in the study fear that the ability to research sensitive areas may change as a result of Prevent. This could include the ability to discuss certain topics in lectures and discourage the development of knowledge in sensitive areas. The next section will identify participants' perceived barriers that are presented by the NUS and subsequently SU's.

#### 4.3c NUS and Students' Unions

The NUS and SU's are not bound by the duty to have due regard in stopping students getting involved in extremism and according to participants this could create barriers to implementing the duty successfully. Participant 4 claimed that 'NUS are producing quite a lot of materials for officers to challenge any practices on campus that might be linked to the Prevent agenda' including forums to build resistance against Prevent, for

example a 'students not suspects' campaign (Participant 9). Participants in the present study discussed the importance of SU's in implementing policy and new ideas that will affect students, Prevent being one of those:

*It's like anything we are trying to do, it has an impact on students so we need some kind of SU guide and if they aren't on board we start at a disadvantage already so I think umm ... having them on board means that there is a certain amount of buy in because the SU are helping support it so there is a task assumption that if the SU are on board it is probably OK. (Participant 16).*

Participant 16 outlined that at their institution the SU act as a good guide as to whether a new policy is a good idea for students, and without SU support it may be difficult to implement something. Participant 6 described the NUS as 'one of the biggest barriers' to Prevent because the NUS have publicised Prevent as a 'racist agenda' (Participant 4). The NUS view could be presented to student sabbatical officers, within SU's, who can sometimes have direct impact on how policy is implemented at that institution. Permanent staff members of an SU discussed the 'students not suspects' campaign that the NUS run which they perceived to be based on the targeting approach, with a particular focus on Muslim student communities:

*The Students' Union is led by the exec, it's their final decision. If they chose to follow the NUS stance that is Prevent is a racist, it has a racist agenda, if the exec chose to adhere to the NUS message I think things would be very different for me as a permanent member of staff. They could quite easily say the SU is not going to sit on the Prevent steering*



*group, we are going to actively campaign against the Prevent agenda.*

(Participant 4).

Even though student groups were not seen to be targeted at that particular institution Participant 4 discussed that there was concern from the SU executive about the targeting of students. The interview data suggests that educating students about Prevent is difficult for participant institutions, potentially allowing the NUS or the media to form the basis of opinion. In an age where a social media feed is a key source of information for students (Barnidge, 2015) further education around challenging content could help to build better informed opinions on subjects such as Prevent.

Participant 2 discussed how universities should consider 'educating young people and making them ... better informed around what Prevent is, what it isn't and actually how they can help themselves and their friends'. A narrative to explain what Prevent isn't, as well as what it is could be useful to inform student opinion on the subject. There are many university courses, criminology for example, where Prevent could be embedded into the curriculum, to highlight what the initiative seeks to achieve as well as giving an insight into counter terrorism practices that are not in the Pursue and Protect strands of CONTEST. Students who may be susceptible to radicalisation might benefit from being involved in discussions about Prevent and help them to build a view that may challenge extremist ideology. Having a position whereby a student understands the extremist narrative but also be able to challenge it could be advantageous in order to build resilience to radicalisation.

Participant 4 discussed that the NUS view that 'Prevent is a racist agenda' could create problems with implementing Prevent at institutions as 'if [the SU] aren't on board we start at a disadvantage' (Participant 16). The final decision of the SU executive on

whether to support Prevent could be critical to a university and if they do not receive SU support. The next section will identify other barriers that participant institutions discussed when implementing Prevent.

#### 4.3d Other Barriers to Prevent in HE

Every participant within the present study found flaws with Prevent in the HE sector in addition to the main themes that have already been explored in this section. A common topic of discussion was whether education was the right setting for Prevent and whilst the majority agreed that it was, participants believed the approach across multi-sectors should be less generalised. Participant 10 stated that Prevent is a 'scatter gun approach' to tackling extremism in the pre-criminal space. Some discussions compared Prevent in education to Prevent in prisons:

*It is weird though that ... the Prevent duty covers such a multi-sector, at the same time with an equal relevance or hierarchy or expectations for us to be in the same band as prisons, probation, does feel weird so I'm not sure how efficient it can be. (Participant 7).*

Participant 7 outlined that the multi-sector approach to Prevent did not feel like the best approach. This is supported by Participant 10 who discussed the 'scattergun approach' due to Prevent being similar across each sector bound by Schedule 6 of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015). According to the interview data introducing variations of Prevent in each sector would be welcomed by participants where the universities needs could be applied to get the best results in identifying students susceptible to radicalisation. Conversely Participant 14 believed that Prevent 'does not have enough resources or training', and further resources would be welcomed by participants to assist the delivery of Prevent. Understanding the processes of referring

an individual was undefined by participant institutions. Participant 12 stated, 'when do you cross the line? If a teacher is scared that somebody is coming radicalised, where is the line? They don't know where the line is and why would they? They aren't psychologists'. Many participants believe that those implementing Prevent would benefit from further resources to help them decide where the 'line' is. The final question I asked each individual was about future directions for Prevent to which a common opinion was 'I would like to see more resources and training in a compulsory way for Prevent because I think that will help the frontline workers feel more confident in tackling these issues in the education setting they are in' (Participant 14). It appears that the direction of travel is to ask institutions to consider monitoring and filtering of content, without placing a statutory order and further guidance and direction could help standardise Prevent in HE.

Some participants discussed that Prevent is generalised across the sector and within participant institutions the counter-narratives offered can sometimes be undefined or unclear. 'The only counter-narrative that Prevent offers us is a narrative of fundamental British values' (Participant 12) which Curren (2017) argues should promote 'respect and tolerance' for cultural differences. One participant discussed how 'fundamental British values' links to radicalisation:

*The notion of fundamental British values is problematic in its own right and so I think we are dealing with complexity, built on complexity built on complexity and when that meets in Higher Education, what have we got? We have a narrative of fundamental British values to counter a radicalisation agenda or a radicalisation narrative and that's insufficient I think because its insufficiently understood, it's insufficiently argued it's insufficiently engaged with by people, it's not a narrative that people*

*regularly use, a narrative of fundamental British values is not a British narrative today. (Participant 12).*

Participant 12 discusses the problems associated with the fundamental British values narrative in that it is difficult to interpret what it means, in particular with regard to counter radicalisation. Elton-Chalcraft et al (2017) outline that a lack of understanding of what fundamental British values means leaves the concept unchallenged, which can create uncertainty about the premise of Prevent through ‘the way it stigmatises...Muslim communities in particular’ (Participant 3). One participant, however, argued that values are an important aspect of Prevent:

*I don't like using the term British values because it is restrictive but, in keeping with human values umm, so kind of tolerance, respect for everyone and they are pluralist values that I too I think,[can benefit] lots of different countries not just the UK. (Participant 14).*

Participant 14 agreed that the narrative of values is a good idea but they are difficult to determine when calling them British values. British values as a narrative could instead include other cultural beliefs to avoid negative connotations of racism and targeting of student communities being associated with Prevent. Without further development of what the term ‘fundamental British values’ means, perceptions and interpretations could act as a barrier to implementing Prevent.

#### 4.3e Summary

According to participants implementing Prevent has come with challenges and that many barriers stand in the way of positive approaches to reducing radicalisation in the sector. Kellner (2004) outlines that the media are likely to provide a negative narrative that could be seen to promote Prevent being a targeting tool for universities to spy on

student communities. Universities have an opposition to implementing Prevent which is supported by the media, causing resistance to methods that could be used to safeguard students from extremism. Participants discussed that the education of students and those working in the sector could soften the barriers at play with a view to helping students both understand the views that extremists hold but also how to challenge the narrative that terrorist organisations publish. The next section will discuss how universities are approaching Prevent in cyberspace as well as how student use of the internet should be considered in any implementation of Prevent in cyberspace.

#### 4.4 Prevent in Cyberspace

Cyberspace is an area which has emerged with the development of technology. Each interview included a discussion around what methods HE are exploring to implement Prevent in cyberspace. Prevent duty guidance for HE (2015) outlines that universities must consider methods of monitoring and filtering web content on the university servers with a view to stop students accessing extremist material. Johannsson (2016) discusses that social interaction of students is decreasing as it becomes easier to communicate online. In addition Awan (2017) suggests that social media has also become a factor in the way terrorist organisations recruit individuals. The next section will be discussed in three parts: monitoring and filtering, social media and a discussion around the ability to control the cyberspace applications. The extent to which monitoring and filtering can be effective to counter radicalisation will be identified in the next section.

#### 4.4a Monitoring and Filtering

Seroff (2015) states that monitoring and filtering are used as firewalls for safeguarding the internet in schools and colleges in the UK to protect under 18's from viewing certain material online. It is under the discretion of each university to implement web monitoring or filtering. The requirement is not in place because university students are traditionally over 18 and Faci et al (2017) outline the argument that adults should not be censored on the open source web within an education setting. As the methods are mentioned in the Prevent duty guidance (2015) monitoring and filtering have become a part of lengthy discussions within participant institutions about whether to screen out extremist content so that students cannot access the material whilst connected to the university server. Some participants believed there is a perception that monitoring of web content takes place, but in reality none of the participant institutions used the method. Walters (2017) discussed that some institutions have implemented web filtering so that students cannot access extremist content but they do not look at who has tried to view any blocked content. A common discussion with participants was 'how far could and should universities go' (Participant 5) to stop a student viewing content online? The 'due regard' (Counter Terrorism and Security Act, 2015) is to stop radicalisation taking place on campuses where there are physical boundaries, but Wilner et al (2017) state that there are no boundaries to cyberspace.

Stopping access to content on the university servers is a concept that did not appear to be well-received by some participants; for example, Participant 12 noted, 'it would affect [their] research because if key words were triggered there would be people all over it...it might inhibit people from being inquisitive'. Academic freedom aside, some participants considered whether web filtering could help reduce radicalisation at a university and did not see the link between filtering and radicalisation. Participant 7

stated, 'I can't believe there is a capacity to exist to watch every conversation ... that is massive'. At a time when many students have personal devices that can connect to the internet via 3G and 4G networks, they are able to circumvent university Wi-Fi connections to access information on the open source web. Participant 15 believed this was a barrier to implementing Prevent in cyberspace:

*It's like having two bridges across the river and you shut the one bridge and you just walk across the other one... what can you do? That is technology and it is down to government things to get into these technology companies, this 4G and all this and if there is any way it can be done, but that is what they do. It's like porn, they can't access porn through university Wi-Fi but they just switch Wi-Fi off, go on 4G and there you go. (Participant 15).*

Participant 15 discussed the ability of students to explore the internet away from the university server, making it difficult to completely remove the capacity for people to be able to view extremist content online. Even if the university could cover all devices in the radius of a campus under a filtering mechanism, 'as soon as they go 100 meters down the road they can look at whatever they like' (Participant 11). Such technological barriers could make implementing Prevent in cyberspace challenging.

For the most part, participants seemed to be of the belief that for institutions to implement monitoring and filtering there would have to either be a direction to enforce it or significant evidence that it would reduce the risk of radicalisation within the sector. One participant stated:

*If we were ever to start properly doing it I think that would be because we have been told to and I don't mean by the boss, I think a change in*

*the Prevent duty legislation that says you must. I don't think we have the appetite here to do it, I think that's one key thing. When we do it, it will be because we have to, not because we want to or choose to.*

(Participant 7).

In addition, Participant 16 described any implementation of monitoring and filtering as a 'method to make it look like we are doing something' with reluctance to suggest it can help to reduce radicalisation. Another participant discussed that if monitoring was implemented it could create more problems than solutions:

*If you start monitoring and someone has looked at something that could lead to a right old industry on who are my officers to investigate, what do we do about it anyway, is it our business? Who are we to judge?*

(Participant 7).

Although monitoring can be seen as a deterrent (Loughry and Tosi, 2008), it was met with resistance by some participants. Participant 9 suggested that monitoring could be seen as a breach of privacy:

*Again I feel slightly uneasy with monitoring absolutely anything and I think we need to be really carefully around that space because I think it can be, it can start leading to other things that are not what we want... umm it's a real challenging one, but then there is the flip side which is we have to, we do have a duty umm ... under Prevent to be reporting against any students who feel they are at risk and at the moment that is completely unchartered, we don't know what is going on in that space and we may think we are doing it brilliantly but actually when student A comes into their halls of residence and looks at things on their iPad we*



*don't know what is happening and it's about finding the balance and doing it the appropriate way. (Participant 9).*

Participant 9 discussed that monitoring could be the start of other processes which may include a need to investigate. On the other hand Participant 9 also discussed that students can use other networks to access the information which could possibly make monitoring difficult to identify undesirable online activity through the university servers. Although some participants suggested monitoring may be effective, the viewpoint that many students could use alternative methods to access content could question the benefits of introducing monitoring in HE.

According to some participants, avenues are available for individuals to look at content, through 3G and 4G networks, and universities could struggle to control activity in this space. Participant 12 alluded to the fact that 'cyberspace is too vast' and 'we have to remain realistic about the limits and the ability of anybody to control what then happens in cyberspace' (Participant 5). The focus therefore in HE does not appear to be on what method to implement but instead about educating students to challenge narratives, which could be more effective.

Many participants discussed that monitoring and filtering of web content at a university has limitations due to some students being able to access the internet through 3G and 4G networks. Some participants suggested that cyberspace is difficult to control and using monitoring and filtering could lead to students using other means of accessing the internet to view extremist material. The next section will identify the role that social media has to play in terrorist recruitment and radicalisation of students.

#### 4.4b Social Media

Social media provides a platform full of information and opinion as well as opportunities to communicate with individuals anywhere in the world. The opportunities that the online world offers crime is extremely vast, and Goodman et al (2007) outline that terrorist organisations are using social media to their advantage to further their cause, generate fear and communicate with the public. Each participant believed that the majority of students at university are using social media and as cyber-natives, communications with virtual friends could be common. Thaver (2015) believes that effects of an increased cyberised world has led to decreased social interaction within the millennial generation, and the lack of ability to interact with people socially may lead to further immersion in social media and communicating in cyberspace.

Ye and Lin (2015) discuss that the lack of interaction can leave individuals lonely, making them vulnerable and Participant 2 suggests that with the addition of the cyberised world 'it's very easy to go with the flow and [get involved] with something that sounds quite interesting'. Participant 8 stated that 'the levels to which you can be involved in students' lives is very limited' due to small amounts of contact time and the lack of social interaction could lead to 'things that are not particularly healthy for them to get drawn into' (Participant 1). It could be considered that cyberspace is a large platform which could be difficult for universities to control. Prevent could, instead, focus on what is controllable in terms of educating students to build resilience against information they see on social media.

A popular facet of social media is the sharing of videos and vlogging, in particular via YouTube. Araujo et al (2015) postulate that providing information by video is far more likely to have an impact on the audience due to the visual aesthetics that can help

trigger emotions. Dattani (2017) discussed that promotion videos for the Islamic State show visuals of power, previous attacks and encourage viewers to carry out attacks in their home land as opposed to fleeing to fight in Syria. Participant 14 used the example of Daesh propaganda videos stating that 'its slick, its sexy, its high quality, its cutting edge, they have a marketing department and they take this very seriously'. Some videos that Daesh publish are similar in quality to a Hollywood movie trailer, showing action, expressing emotion and as Participant 2 discusses, humanising the terrorism cause by presenting that 'they want to build a caliphate that they want to create a state where everyone is equal'. The high quality of film could be part of the persuasion as terrorist organisations might come across as professional, opportunistic and a worthy cause. In some cases individuals might search for these videos to find them but they are sometimes shared on social media, often post attack, where Xie et al (2017) discuss that some social media users like to express reactions in fear of further attacks. The sharing of terrorist videos could be considered a contribution to the ideology that they represent. Those who see the videos may condemn them but when shared on social media, they could spread fear of further attacks and in some cases assist Daesh or other terrorist organisations. Participant 16 believed it is important to educate students to challenge social media information 'in a critical way and not assume that everything you see is 100% true', to form opposition and reduce the sharing of videos from Daesh. Participant 2 stated 'maybe the authorities should use social media more effectively to counter some of the narrative that ISIS is putting out'. In addition, Participant 13 discussed how important communication with the public can be:

*We have so many vloggers and so many right wing, left wing speakers that and they are the people that UK public are listening to ... they are*

*the people that are engaging with the public, the groups that are umm ... advising the government, they aren't very good at engaging with the public.* (Participant 13).

Prevent does not have to be a program simply to reduce radicalisation, it could be used as an education tool to boost resources against extremism. As Participant 13 discussed, in reference to government advisors, 'they aren't very good at engaging with the public' and social media is being used every day by a lot of individuals, and this could be used to the advantage of the government in countering negatives in society. Universities could provide an opportunity, whereby students who understand the key communication tools available to young people could help to develop opposition to terrorist organisations in cyberspace. This could further engage students with Prevent as well as create some counter-narrative content for social media.

Ackerman (2014) postulates that social media is an important recruitment tool for extremist organisations due to the ability to contact anyone. Participant 7 identified that it is easy for students to 'stumble across information' on the internet by scrolling through their social media feeds, or clicking on 'trending' hashtags on Twitter. The content of Daesh propaganda messages can be persuasive and Dattani (2017) discussed that the CTIRU are taking down thousands of extremist comments on social media a week but there remains a difficulty in keeping extremist material off the internet. That said, Participant 1 discussed that drivers to radicalisation are most likely to occur outside of cyberspace but 'one of the primary ways in which a student could move down a path toward radicalisation is through the use of social media'. Social media can sometimes be exploited by extremists to propagate their cause and influence individuals to get involved in radical action.

Terrorist organisations are often using social media as a source of recruitment due to the interconnectivity that it presents. Social media can provide the ability to find out information about a number of topics, including extremism, and according to participants could be a difficult area to control at a university level. The next section will identify the difficulties that cyberspace presents in attempts to regulate extremist activity online.

#### 4.4c The attempt to control the uncontrollable

Cyberspace is an area which individuals all over the world can access each other and as defined by Sterling (1992: 10) is considered as 'the place between' two electronically connected communication devices, or even, 'the indefinite place out there, where ... two human beings, actually meet and communicate'. HEFCE indicate that implementing measures for cyberspace is the direction for Prevent with the mandate to consider monitoring and filtering and the capabilities of a university to carry this out successfully was considered by participants in the present study:

*The way cyberspace operates umm it can be used by two individuals to communicate with information, news and beliefs and intentions to act. I think it's beyond the, any agency to control. Cyberspace is not controllable, it's not manageable, it's not as far as I can see, GCHQ may give you a different story, but as far as I can see it's not controllable. You can't stop two individuals using it to communicate in a way that creates a risk of extremist behaviour. (Participant 5).*

Participant 5 discussed potential difficulties for 'any agency' to control cyberspace and with the ability to communicate on multiple platforms Participant 5 thought this was an issue for outside HE. Participant 13 identified social media as a barrier to the ability to

control the internet, 'social media is just, you can't stop it, you know, if you do people will just find another way around it and you can't stop it'. Due to the confines of freedom of speech it could be considered unethical to monitor student's social media activity, as Ceron and Memoli (2016) describe social media to be a key form of democracy in today's society. With mass access to cyberspace within society the ability to control every aspect of it can be difficult. As technology develops further it could create more avenues available for terrorist organisations to communicate, enhancing the challenge to extremist content online both for and outside of the HE sector:

*We can contact each other Skype each other, get books off Amazon etc, watch Game of Thrones for free, we can do all of that and its brilliant, we love it. That's the very same freedom that allows terrorists to communicate with each other, allows terrorists to put up propaganda and allows terrorists to groom young vulnerable people and get them together and we can't have one without the other I'm afraid and we kind of know that and terrorism is always there as a kind of, as a virus in our system so we can't ... there's nothing we can really do about it and I don't think many of us trust nation states to trust people to stop it.*  
(Participant 8).

Participant 8 described that the ability to communicate in cyberspace can potentially create problems, as well as advantages within society. Interconnectivity has been improved with the implementation and development of social media and as more companies develop messenger style apps, Participant 10 suggests that monitoring conversations or having the ability to identify 'communications that are dangerous' becomes more challenging. Barber and King (2017) discussed that Westminster attacker Khalid Masood was in contact with others via WhatsApp minutes prior to the

incident being carried out and the social media app has been criticised since. WhatsApp offers encrypted messages to avoid being seen as a part of a big brother style monitoring of communications. Terrorist organisations use many social media platforms but the encrypted messages that WhatsApp provide have come under scrutiny for not doing more to monitor criminal activity that is being planned and discussed within the confines of the app. With scrutiny toward large corporations for terrorist organisations using their platform, the concept of implementing cyberspace measures for Prevent in HE could be daunting with cyberspace not necessarily being the expertise of individuals implementing Prevent.

In the HE sector students may not always be connected to the university servers and with the ability of 3G and 4G networks, students could access undesirable content. This could, in some cases, mean that monitoring and filtering may not always be effective where the ability to disconnect from the Wi-Fi is an option. The free ability to share information online could be considered challenging in the context of terrorism but may be a consequence of developing cyberspace further. Attempting to follow all technological breakthroughs for social media and communication could be difficult at a university level and so non-technological methods such as educating students to challenge information on social media could be an alternative method used. The capacity of participant institutions to attempt to control cyberspace was limited due to it not being the core focus of the business. Education is the business objective for a university and this could be used to develop online counter-narratives, whilst also building a student's resilience to challenge what they see on social media and cyberspace.

#### 4.4d Summary

Overall, trying to implement technical methods to reduce radicalisation in cyberspace in HE could be considered challenging. Participant institutions found it difficult to link monitoring and filtering to Prevent and Participant 16 believed that implementing the methods would be to 'make it look like we are doing something' rather than using the methods to reduce radicalisation. Monitoring and filtering may not always be able to stop the challenges that social media can sometimes present, through communications with organisations and the sharing of opinions and terrorist propaganda. Cyberspace is vast and the last section of this chapter has looked at the challenge that cyberspace presents global companies in reducing the online presence of terrorist organisations. According to participant institutions, universities would find it difficult to solve the cyberspace piece alone but instead could use their students to develop positive counter-narratives to terrorist activity which would comply with Prevent and help to produce educated material which could help to build resilience against extremism in cyberspace. The next section will set out areas of improvements for HE institutions implementing Prevent in cyberspace.

#### 4.5 Areas for Improvement

The analysis chapter so far has outlined that terrorist organisations can sometimes exploit vulnerabilities in order to recruit individuals. This section identifies three key areas for improvement, first looking at contributors to radicalisation in HE, secondly educating students and building their resilience, and finally developing counter-narratives for cyberspace. Student vulnerabilities could be considered important to understand in order to develop Prevent at their institution. Participants discussed some specifics that are not within the Prevent remit, including educating students about



extremism and developing their resilience to challenge what they see online. When discussing the safeguarding approach to Prevent one participant stated the following:

*Did I need the Prevent duty to [implement safeguarding]? No, so does it feel like in a place like this from my job a bit over the top...yes it does because I think we were doing the Prevent strategy already. (Participant 7).*

Participant 7 discussed that Prevent as a duty has not changed the way that their institution have implemented the duty, as they have always interpreted Prevent as safeguarding. The present study considers radicalisation to be a process influenced by society with cyberspace offering a route of exploring extremist ideas. Participants discussed that cyberspace itself is not a driver for radicalisation:

*Radicalisation happens outside of cyberspace, I would say cyberspace provides a platform or space where radicalisation can take place but I think there have to be other factors that are going on, or other drivers which may cause someone to kind of move in that direction. (Participant 16).*

Two 'drivers' have been identified in the present study which could be considered by universities in order to provide an institution-specific approach to Prevent. Social interaction, or a lack of interaction, is the first factor considered by participants. Participant 13 stated that some people 'need help to show them what is ... proper etiquette and how to behave in social interaction' to stop them from being disenfranchised. When in a new environment some students could feel unsettled, possibly making social interaction in addition to studying an important facet to university life. Participant 11 described that students are at 'a time of their lives when

they are not fixed' and they could seek 'a sense of belonging' (Participant 10). According to Participant 2, the vulnerability of being in a new environment is that 'young people can drift' and be easily influenced, which could lead to an individual becoming a target for extremist groups. Considering social interaction and finding a sense of belonging as contributing factors to radicalisation could make HE more efficient in addressing matters relating to Prevent. In addition, there are criminal factors that can influence chances of radicalisation but they have not been considered within this research. Further factors that are specific to the locality of an institution could also be worth consideration from each institution when implementing measures for Prevent in cyberspace.

Cyberspace provides an avenue for some students to explore extremist ideology as well as make contact with terrorist organisations around the world. Participant 10 discussed that building the resilience of students to what they might view online is important in a society where 'social media is not the safe place that a lot of students and a lot of people think it is'. Some students occasionally use social media as a news source and Participant 2 stated that information they see is 'just accepted as a given because [they have] found it on the internet'. Building resilience to and challenging narratives on the internet is not currently taught within the participant institutions, and Prevent could be used to facilitate educating against extremism in cyberspace:

*I think educating our students is a huge ... challenge but also an opportunity for us and I think perhaps, what we, an opportunity we aren't realising is would be around building elements of Prevent and the government wider strategy around preventing violent extremism into relevant parts of the curriculum so it wasn't seen as an add on.*  
(Participant 2).

An institution is required to engage with students on Prevent (Prevent duty guidance, 2015) and interacting with students as part of their course removes the need for attendance outside of their timetable. Some students use social media on a daily basis and it may be beneficial for them to be aware of the risks associated with developing technologies and platforms which could be used for extremism. Through understanding the vulnerabilities previously outlined in this section a university could use these factors to base the education piece on. By engaging with students, compliance with Prevent would be enhanced as well as knowledge of extremism in cyberspace.

Counter-narratives are used to challenge extremist content online, and 'as soon as you take one site down they are in behind with another one, and you take this down and they are in behind that' (Participant 15) so producing challenges to content can help cancel out extremist presence online. Using the radicalisation contributors previously identified, university students could develop counter-narrative content for inclusion in cyberspace. One participant discussed a successful online counter-narrative campaign:

*Abdullah X was made by a former Islamist extremist and is a cartoon essentially and he is called Abdullah and he basically every time there is something, so one of the videos ... I think it was after Charlie Hebdo, they put out animation talking about all of the grievances that those perpetrators had and there were people following Islamist ideology have but in a deconstructed way and in a way that was like, I have this grievance but I'm not going to go and shoot someone. It was trying to show the message that these grievances exist but violence is not the answer and ideology is not the answer essentially. (Participant 14).*

Some students understand developing technology and social media being used by young people and the counter-narratives could be targeted at both current and developing social media platforms. Producing counter-narratives would not only meet Prevent compliance but also create a series of material which can be used to challenge extremist narratives in cyberspace. The present study has noted that Prevent in HE does not currently require measures for cyberspace other than considering implementing monitoring and filtering. Through understanding drivers to radicalisation to build online counter-narratives, universities have an opportunity to both meet Prevent compliance as well as develop material that can be used in cyberspace. The next chapter consists of an overall summary of the research, including limitations of the present study and future directions for research on Prevent in HE.

## 5 Conclusion

Implementation of Prevent in HE is an important facet of the UK Government counter terrorism strategy to reduce radicalisation in the pre-criminal space. Prevent is the soft strand of the CONTEST strategy (2011) and is implemented on various public sector bodies. This research has focussed on Prevent in HE and in particular how it can be implemented in cyberspace. Ackerman (2014) and Goodman et al (2007) highlight that terrorist organisations are increasingly using cyberspace with an objective of radicalising individuals through social media. Some students in HE have grown up in a cyberised world where social media can be easily accessed, which enhances potential risk of coming across extremist material on social media. HEFCE outline factors that universities have to comply with in order to meet 'due regard' of considering radicalisation at their institution (Prevent duty guidance, 2015). An institution must have an IT policy which relates to monitoring and filtering of web content on the university server but there is no direct orders to implement these measures. This research has identified potential limitations of implementing these measures at a university in that a student could use their own devices to access material via 3G or 4G networks. The choice as to whether universities should implement these measures may be best placed with each institution as opposed to making them a compulsory element of Prevent.

In the present study 16 participants were interviewed to gather knowledge of Prevent in HE as well as their perceived barriers of Prevent implementation within cyberspace. The participants consisted of specialists in HE who work to implement Prevent as well as Prevent advisors from the government and counter radicalisation agencies. This research took an interpretivist epistemology whereby the opinions of the participants were constructed by their work and societal environment (Hardy, 2016). The opinions

that were received within the interviews have been informative to suggesting ideas that could develop Prevent further. Interview data is made up of opinions of those who implement Prevent and therefore can be seen to reflect reality as opposed to simply theory (Dowling et al, 2016). Each interview transcript was analysed for data which could be extracted and included within the analysis chapter of this research. Throughout the research ethical considerations were made with relation to comfortability of the participants. Bryman and Bell (2007) outlined ten factors which were incorporated into planning the present study as well as reflected on as factors changed within the research, such as the UK threat level.

This research established that participant universities use the safeguarding approach and identify student vulnerabilities in order to address radicalisation factors. Although the participating institutions used the safeguarding method participants discussed the premise of the targeting approach and what it could potentially mean for an institution using Prevent to target certain student communities. The method used by an institution can sometimes depend on their interpretations of the Counter Terrorism and Security Act (2015) and perceptions that have been created from their job role and the media.

Participants identified challenges that they find when implementing Prevent, for instance negative media coverage. Some participants alluded to the media as a barrier to Prevent because some coverage around Prevent and terrorism at times can be negative. Media coverage can sometimes enhance a perception that Prevent targets certain communities and is not implemented as a safeguarding measure. Participants discussed that this could become problematic when this might be the main source of information the public receive on Prevent. Specifically in universities freedom of speech and academic freedom were discussed by participants as barriers to implementing Prevent. Academic participants, in particular, discussed the perception

that Prevent can sometimes reduce the ability to debate or research sensitive issues such as terrorist activity. Davies' (2016) view that universities are a place where ideas and opinions develop, could suggest that being able to explore any topic as part of studying benefits the development of researchers. According to participants, in reality Prevent does not infringe on freedom of speech and academic freedom but interpretations and perceptions that are formed can sometimes be developed through information from unreliable resources. Participants' perceived barriers that have been outlined in the analysis chapter have been considered in putting together 'areas for improvement' for implementing Prevent in cyberspace.

Introducing methods to implement Prevent in cyberspace is an important decision for a university. Monitoring and filtering have to be considered by institutions (Prevent duty guidance, 2015) but this research identifies that there are limitations to these methods due to the accessibility of 3G and 4G network access. Seroff (2015) suggests that monitoring and filtering work in environments where the internet server is closed such as in schools can be limited when students can access the internet on their own devices. Terrorist organisations are increasingly using social media as a forum for posting content. According to participants, filtered content on a university server would not include social media so these measures would not be certain to stop students viewing extremist content on social media. Social media can provide an avenue to explore any up to date information, including extremist material. Participant 5 stated that governing social media and the internet is a difficult task and 'as far as [they] can see it's not controllable' within the confines of a university. Participants appeared to struggle to see the difference that monitoring and filtering could make in a university environment and instead some participants discussed challenging information and building counter-narratives as ways of implementing Prevent in cyberspace.

Participants described that the 'not fixed' nature of student life (Participant 11), alongside factors contributing to radicalisation could be better understood by universities. Participants discussed that a lack of social interaction can lead to a lot of time spent alone, and potentially become disenfranchised and immersed in cyberspace. Participants in the present study identified that cyberspace is not the 'driver' for radicalisation but instead it provides the avenues to explore extremist ideology. By understanding social interaction and finding a sense of belonging as contributing factors to radicalisation, a university could specifically educate students to build resilience when interacting with groups in cyberspace. Participant 2 discussed that 'educating our students' about the dangers of cyberspace is not covered in Prevent but it provides a forum where it could be explored with a focus on extremism. In addition to or instead of monitoring and filtering, counter-narratives such as 'Abdullah X' (Participant 14) could be an effective way of challenging extremist content online. 'Due regard' requires universities to engage with students about Prevent, and students producing counter-narratives to specific drivers at their institution would both fulfil Prevent compliance and produce content which could be used both for universities complying with Prevent and for other counter extremism initiatives outside of education.

The present study has gathered opinions from professionals in Prevent and HE to understand what universities are doing to comply with Prevent, barriers that are in place and any measures that could be used to implement Prevent in cyberspace. Some participants discussed that social interaction and finding a sense of belonging are drivers to radicalisation and these could be better understood by universities. Cyberspace offers a place for students to explore terrorism and get involved in extremist activity, making educating students to challenge what they see online a



factor that could be considered by universities in Prevent compliance. Due to the limitations of monitoring and filtering discussed by participants, counter-narratives were discussed as an option for implementation that could be created by students to challenge extremist ideology online. Through producing online counter-narratives a university can meet compliance with Prevent and make an overall difference to countering radicalisation in cyberspace. The next section will outline limitations that were in place during the present study.

### 5.1 Limitations of the study

Within the present study there have been limitations which need to be considered to be able to reflect on whether the research outcomes could realistically influence Prevent implementation in HE. Prevent is a new subject area for research, making it difficult to present a literature perspective of the area. In addition the number of participant universities in the present study as well as access to institutions could be considered to have been limiting factors of the research.

Prevent was introduced as a compulsory element to HE in 2015 with the Counter Terrorism and Security Act. Although Prevent had been an agenda associated with the education section prior to 2015 it is not an area which has much in the way of academic publications. The amount of literature available on Prevent in the HE sector is limited due to it being a new area of study and research that does exist tends to be focussed on schools. Although this literature does relate to HE it does not address the issue of academic freedom due to a curriculum being in place. To compile a literature review meant using interpretations from other sectors and similar crime initiatives to apply to Prevent in HE. Any future research into Prevent in HE will have a more institution specific literature review as research develops in the area.

A large number of UK universities were contacted to participate in the present study but due to Prevent being controversial in HE many did not respond. To enhance discussions on Prevent nationally it would have been beneficial to have interviewed more institutions. If the present study had included further universities there would have been a larger amount of data to consider and the findings of the present study may have been different. In future research accessibility of institutions nationally will need to be considered as to whether the research can be considered to assist national practices. The next section will identify directions for future research into Prevent in the HE sector.

## 5.2 Directions for future research

As previously discussed Prevent is an emerging field of research and the present study could have implications for future research in the area. Understanding best practice of implementing Prevent will be different depending on the sector or institution and the interpretations of implementation strategies. In particular this research could influence Prevent in the education sector as a whole as well as provide a framework for institutions to develop counter-narrative content for cyberspace.

To develop the work done in the present study it would be likely that counter-narratives that are appropriate for cyberspace in an education setting will be identified as well as how these can be created. The analysis chapter has identified key contributing factors which could be considered in any counter-narratives created for individuals in education. This research suggests that cyberspace is not completely controllable making it difficult to suggest measures of technical implementation such as monitoring or filtering. The technical side of cyberspace could add to the counter-narrative

approach to counter extremism, but this research highlights the importance of having something to challenge narratives that might always be present in an online space.

Barriers to Prevent that have been identified in this research could be critical to future academia. It would be sensible to understand more about the barriers to Prevent in education so that they can be mitigated against and overcome. Barriers are always essential to understand so that an initiative can be efficient and make a difference. Any future research could consider Prevent as an individualised program per sector, as has been shown in HE within this research. The present study introduces new ideas to an emerging area of research and can help to form a baseline for future research which can suggest implementation methods of reducing radicalisation in cyberspace.

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## 7 Appendices

### Appendix 1 – **Email to Prevent leads of HE institutions**

Dear \*Name\*,

I contact you as the Prevent lead for \*Institution\* I am conducting postgraduate research at the University of Gloucestershire in the area of the Prevent duty and would welcome discussions with as many universities as possible as part of my primary research.

The research title is 'Exploring the capabilities of Prevent in addressing radicalisation in cyberspace within Higher Education'. Some of the themes that I would like to address include:

- Knowledge of Prevent
- How Prevent links to the national counter terrorism strategy
- Knowledge of Prevent requirements in HE
- Prevent and cyberspace
- Future directions for Prevent

I am undertaking semi-structured interviews to gather this information. The interviews will take a maximum of one hour and aim to gather expert knowledge of Prevent in the HE sector with application to cyberspace. Every participant in the study will remain anonymous as well as the institution that they work for. Each interview will be recorded and transcribed for the appendices of my thesis.

If you, or a colleague would like to take part in my research, or have any questions please do get in contact by responding to this email.

Kind regards

Liam Sandford

## Appendix 2 – Interview Planning Preparation

### Knowledge of Prevent

- Links to national counter terrorism strategy – Protect, Prepare and Pursue and the Channel process
- Schedule 6 bodies - criminal justice, local government, health and social care, the police and education and childcare

### Requirements of Prevent in HE

- Chaplaincy/IT policy/Staff training/external speaker policy/compliance group and local partnerships/risk assessment

### Prevent and academic practices in HE

- Freedom of speech
- Academic freedom

### Efficiency of Prevent

- Opinion on how it is working at institution/nationally from point of view of role

### Prevent and cyberspace

- Cyberspace defined as ‘the place between’ two electronically connected communication devices, or even, ‘the indefinite place out there, where ... two human beings, actually meet and communicate’ – Sterling, 1992

### Social media and terrorism

- ISIS use of social media for radicalisation
- Contribution through sharing of video’s/comments/opinions
- Fear

### Methods of preventing radicalisation in cyberspace

- Monitoring
- Filtering
- Counter-narratives?
- Any other ideas?

### Future direction

- Any additional compulsory elements?
- Like to see any further compulsory elements to Prevent?

### Appendix 3 - Interview Transcript, Participant 1 – University Support Staff

**LS:** B, it would be great if you could talk about your knowledge of the Prevent duty and what your understanding of it is.

**BG:** OK umm. I came across Prevent and was introduced to it by the student services director, SD, who invited me as the senior chaplain and the chaplaincy team to be involved with the Prevent duty. Originally it wasn't a duty it was actually the Prevent agenda and it was actually just some guidelines which umm the government had put towards Higher Education institutions to be involved in ... really looking out for the kinds of people who may be susceptible to umm radicalisation and to try and prevent that process from taking place.

**LS:** OK, do you know how Prevent links to the national counter terrorism strategy?

**BG:** Yes, to a degree umm I mean as I understand it Prevent is part of a wider strategy; I think there are other elements to it. Pursue for example ...we actually actively go after those who are involved in, you know, planning terrorist attacks and those kinds of things but really my familiarity is in the Higher Education arena where as chaplain we are part of the governments ears and eyes, if you put it that way.

**LS:** Yes there are four different strands to the strategy, you mentioned Pursue, Prevent is obviously one and there is also Protect which is about securing the nation and Prepare which is about improving response to attack. So do you know anything about the process of Channel whereby if a student or somebody is referred into the Prevent programme, what happens?

**BG:** Yes, as a standard if for example if an institution refers someone, and I never have, but phones schools or other agencies within \*area\* they would refer that to a body which then investigates more closely and that is the Channel process where someone is obviously scrutinised and perhaps interviewed. In most cases, as I understand it, various things have often been related to what is happening with that particular person, whether that be home issues or family problems. You know for example they may in a school situation a student might say something which was, you know, potentially quite inflammatory, maybe kind of abusive or particularly racist or whatever and you know within our kind of area there are not so much Islamic terrorists, for instance but also the far right and that may be a comment made or heard in the playground and reported to them and that goes to the Channel process as I understand it.

**LS:** Just out of interest, what do you think the biggest threat is in terms of Prevent in Higher Education?

**BG:** Well in Higher Education at the moment I think yeah there are a number of threats. Obviously the media report more on Islamic terrorism and obviously that is an issue and could be an issue among students. I think in reality where we are and possibly in some other institutions, the rise of the far right in particular agencies we have heard of

umm what's it called... National Action recently so it sounds like there are, yeah, perhaps elements of that which are potentially more worrying at the moment than perhaps some of the Islamic terrorism. But you know it's hard to say what the most potent threat is, it is hard to say.

**LS:** So what is your understanding of the requirements of Prevent in the HE sector, so what do universities have to do to comply?

**BG:** They have to show a... well... a duty of care in the sense that they need to take responsibility for the welfare of the students and that's probably where I come in. My understanding of this is that it's to do with student wellbeing or where a student is being drawn into things which may not be the best for them and I think that as a university we should be certainly involved and have as a priority the welfare of our students and so seeking to umm you know, make them more aware of perhaps those things that are not particularly healthy for them to get drawn into. I suppose that is in essence where I as a chaplain sit with this and I on the ground take forward is the welfare of our students and I think that is the key thing for me. I think obviously at higher levels I would refer to our lead on this which is director of student services so yeah.

**LS:** You've mentioned about the safeguarding approach to Prevent. I don't know whether you speak to chaplains at other universities as well. Do you feel that this is an approach that is taken elsewhere as well?

**BG:** Umm I don't think so actually. I think sadly not. Some university chaplains have actually been quite negative towards Prevent and have not actually engaged with it in their university. That is similar to some Students' Unions as well at some universities who are unhappy with the kind of monitoring, big brother kind of approach which I know some universities take exception to. That's not really the case here. We have met with you know, S, about this and even externally from HEFCE and reality is that we don't take that approach and want to be supportive in the sense that we want to look after our students. So I think yeah it is one way of doing it. Other people have other issues to do with freedom of speech which we may get onto. I think ultimately it is to do with the welfare of students for here...it is difficult to know whether or not universities have taken that up as much as we have but I would hope they would do

**LS:** So you've mentioned about chaplaincy involvement and about a group who sit and discuss everything to do with Prevent at the university. Do you know about any of the other requirements that universities have to have?

**BG:** That's a good question. Umm I probably should know more about that than I do but I don't and I think the reality is that because there is a high degree of trust in this institution from the chair and lead of the Prevent steering group. I think there are other specific things that obviously come out of that. Obviously training for staff and for students and awareness raising across the university and I think particularly when it comes to our own responsibility to be reporting anything or trying to engage with some

students in the Prevent duty. Those are a number of things that universities have to be involved in.

**LS:** OK, a couple of the other things that universities have to do that you probably know about. You have to have a specific risk assessment, a steering group and links with local partnership boards, external speakers and events policy and obviously an IT policy about monitoring and filtering internet content. So do you think that Prevent is an efficient way of stopping or identifying radicalisation at a university?

**BG:** Umm... probably I would say yes and no. I think that if someone is well .... You know... particularly focussed on wanting to commit for example a terrorist attack, you know often that's not going to be something that the university will become aware of. It is the kind of thing that happens, you know, anyway despite the best work and intentions of all of the agencies involved so, you know, we can't prevent especially these lone wolf attacks, especially low tech ones that have happened recently in London. You know, those things will happen and I think in many respects those things will still happen. I think that's the no part. The yes part is that I think we need to do all we can to prevent these kinds of things happening. And I think ... to all intense and purposes even though it could be misconstrued as a blunt instrument it does in many respects do what it says on the tin in trying to prevent students being drawn into radicalisation... from a general perspective yeah.

**LS:** So you mentioned earlier about freedom of speech. Do you think that it is infringed upon or do you think that as part of the academic practices of the university that freedom of speech is adhered to even with the Prevent duty?

**BG:** I mean I think that's a difficult one. I do think that we do have... an important consideration here where we need to discuss and debate these issues to do with issues of, you know, extremism and I think it's important to talk about those things. I think when it borders on, you know, sort of words of hate and racism and specifically offensive views then that right to freedom of speech can be an issue because actually in what is said people can be, you know, quite badly offended. So I think we have to find a balance there and I sense that probably at the moment it is not bad in terms of the balance there. I don't see personally that Prevent as a duty does actually infringe upon freedom of speech. I think it lands in the grey area in the middle where some things may be construed by some and not by others. At the moment it is still being worked out.

**LS:** We are going to turn to think about how Prevent operates in cyberspace. Sterling in 1992 identified cyberspace as the place between two electronically connected communication devices where different people meet and discuss various things. How do you see Prevent working in cyberspace?

**BG:** Yeah, I mean this comes towards our IT department's domain. They have to be much more aware of these things than I would so it's not necessarily my area of expertise but I think we have discussed at the Prevent steering group the issue of

filtering and monitoring. I think that generally this is the direction of travel for universities. I know some universities are already filtering and monitoring through specific programs and these are more general, for example, child pornography or you know things that we wouldn't want students to be looking at anyway. So I think there are some issues there in terms of what you know the ethics are of with Prevent in terms of the things that we would filter and monitor. My sense is that some kind of awareness raising program needs to take place so that people know if they for example visit a certain site or they are about to that it can be flagged up which I think we've already discussed.

**LS:** OK, so more specifically in cyberspace, I've been thinking about the role that social media has to play with terrorism and radicalisation. How do you think social media affects our students and their risk of radicalisation?

**BG:** Yeah I think that's probably one of the primary ways in which a student could move down a path toward radicalisation is through the use of social media. I think, obviously, there are individual discussions that one might have to do with another member of an extreme organisation but I think because umm it's a umm a private affair if people have, you know, access on their own phones or home computers to particular sites the opportunity to investigate and to search particular words or particular actions I think that could be the area for those who are perhaps susceptible or vulnerable, who have a desire perhaps to pursue particular routes in their social media searching and engage with those who are involved in these things. In particular whether that be through some kind of umm conversations in social media through chat rooms or, you know, in perhaps less of Facebook, but I think in some of the other, you know, social WhatsApp, the conversation and group chats where you can engage with someone and not really have a small level of accountability because you're just finding out information and you can be drawn down a route if you're not careful and you have a vulnerability and a susceptibility to get involved in these things.

**LS:** Have you ever come across a student who has accessed material by accident and come to chat to you about it at all?

**BG:** Umm no.

**LS:** Interesting. So research does suggest that since the rise of ISIS there has been more terrorist activity within cyberspace and post attack there is always increased discussion on social media surrounding terrorism, the sharing of videos, changing of profile pictures, all of that sort of thing. Do you think that this adds to the fear of terrorism or do you not think it has a contribution at all?

**BG:** Umm I think it might add to it slightly. I think the difficulty is whenever there is one kind of attack or even now when the actual war on the ground such as the taking of Mosul and military action against the Islamic state in Iraq, for example, that's on our media screens, televisions and other news feeds, that will always be reported because of its nature of conflict. Similarly if there are attacks they are always reported in great

detail especially in our own national media when it's an attack in, you know, Britain that will always be reported and so does that lead to people getting more interested or feeling more afraid? Probably, to some extent but for others not. I think there is probably a slight incremental rise whatever stories in the news, you know, when George Michael dies, people search George Michael, that's what happens. That's just the way life is so yeah, naturally there is probably in this case as well.

**LS:** OK, coming to the end now... Where would you like to see the Prevent duty go? Do you think that there should be anymore compulsory elements to it? Would you like there to be any further compulsory elements?

**BG:** Umm I think actually at the moment it is probably enough. I think that just keeping the elements going which are probably acceptable to the majority so, you know, for example just having some kind of awareness of external speakers coming in, you know, training up your staff and your students so they are aware of the whole area of radicalisation and the Prevent duty. Similarly when it comes to, you know, the university as a whole providing ... evidence they are actually engaged in this specifically for example with filtering and monitoring with IT services and generally being aware from a welfare perspective of individual students who are vulnerable. Those things, if you take them altogether are I would have said perfectly adequate to cover the vast majority of things that would happen both in universities and other institutions and I think probably in the future you know there may be some more streamlining and tightening up of these things. I think obviously in our context here in Gloucestershire there is less of a threat because of the kind of place that it is, but if you're in London or Birmingham or elsewhere it would be far more, you know, difficult in some ways because of the kinds of larger groupings of people. My sense is that from where we are because we have a good track record here probably what we do is adequate and enough for the time being.

**LS:** Thanks very much, B.

#### Appendix 4 - Interview Transcript, Participant 2 – University Support Staff

**LS:** C, it would be great if you can talk about your knowledge of Prevent and how it relates to Higher Education.

**CP:** I guess if I'm really honest my knowledge of Prevent goes way back to when I was in a local authority in a children and young people services. I was asked to lead on Prevent for the director, or the then, director of education from a schools perspective because the duty is being placed upon schools a lot earlier than it came into the HE sector. That would be where most of my knowledge was acquired. I sat on a regional ... Prevent network with other colleagues from different local authorities across the West Midlands regional and as part of that work I was invited to attend five days training that was delivered by Recora. Recora is a pan national organisation set up to ... recognise and respond to radicalisation but its focus is really from a practitioner's perspective. So I had five days of intensive training around responding to radicalisation, delivered by Recora umm ... which I think, you know, I don't feel qualified to deliver training on Prevent particularly but I have ... knowledge that says you can do this. Umm it's a recent, I guess, addition here in HE. I sit on the Prevent steering group for the university because, one, of previous knowledge at an education sector and also I think because umm, I am the equality and diversity manager and there are, I guess, there is the potential for conflict between the Prevent agenda and how the university might choose to interpret that. Umm and pieces of legislation like the Equality Act of 2010 as well as the Human Rights Act which obviously came in in 1998. So I think that's why I sit on the Prevent steering group at the university and in terms of my knowledge, I have read all of the required literature that HEFCE have put out ... and I think I make contributions at steering group meetings around risk, wearing I guess, a hat as a equality and diversity practitioner. I have also been involved in developing an online module around umm Prevent for front line staff. Umm did you want me to say the specifics in terms of what I know about Prevent in a HE context?

**LS:** Absolutely, that would be great.

**CP:** Beyond the fact we have to have an action plan, a risk assessment. If I'm honest I think the challenge in HE that is different from the challenge in education at a schools level is that it is a lot easier for schools to apply firewalls to websites and manage and monitor young people's access to information online in a school environment. Here at a university, obviously young people and our academics are encouraged to research, to research controversial topics, certainly I would do, you know, research, not formal academic research, but I do investigations and explore topics that would certainly hit a flag and be blocked in education. I think the balance for us here at the university is around umm raising peoples understanding and actually getting across the message that it's not about spotting terrorists. It's really, and I think our approach is right, in that we have a responsibility around safeguarding and that is the kind of focus we took in the education sector is that it was about protecting and safeguarding our young people, our children. Also I think it was about building their resilience so they were



able to make better and more informed choices by enabling them to have the information and understand what it is they are seeing on the web, to recognise it for what it is and make a better and more informed choice. I think the other conflict there in the university is around academic freedom and certainly that came into play as quite a considerable discussion when requiring the equality and diversity policy. However I think there is a lot of clarity about what academic freedom is and isn't and it doesn't mean you can say anything any time that could cause offence to others. I understand what academic freedom is but I think part of the message around Prevent and our responsibility is around being clear, this is Prevent, this is academic freedom and that it's not antagonistic and the two can coexist quite well. I think educating our students is a huge ... challenge but also an opportunity for us and I think perhaps what we an opportunity we aren't realising is would be around building elements of Prevent and the government wider strategy around preventing violent extremism into relevant parts of the curriculum so it wasn't seen as an add on but in actually criminology, I don't know, perhaps psychology you could cover elements of what factors influence and lead to radicalisation. Because I don't think personally I don't think terrorism is any different to young people becoming involved in guns, gangs and youth violence. The attraction are still there and some of the steps that young people for to are the same it's just the end product is different so I think if we could build it into the curriculum I think that would be good.

**LS:** You've spoken a bit about academic freedom, do you think that Prevent has affected the academic practices of the university or is that something where there is a gap in your knowledge?

**CP:** I don't think it's affected it. I'm not an academic so I say that as a non-academic but certainly I nothing has come my way as the equality and diversity manager in terms of conflicts of interest or issues that people are facing or challenges people have had. To be honest I had more controversy when revising the equality and diversity policy. That is said as a non-academic and I accept that.

**LS:** You've spoken about the safeguarding approach that we take at the \*institution\*. Do you know how Prevent is rolled out nationally or other institutions specifically?

**CP:** I was in another university in the East Midlands ... umm and I don't know, I think there was perhaps slightly more ... uncomfortableness around the Prevent agenda., I don't think they were embracing it quite as openly and fully as we do here at the university and I think some of that was because they didn't necessarily ... adopt a perspective from a safeguarding stance to be quite honest.

**LS:** What stance did they take?

**CP:** I think they were quite resistant and reluctant to do it at all and therefore the feeling that I got was that it was one of compliance. There were trying to make the best of a legal requirement.

**LS:** We are now going to move onto talking about Prevent and cyberspace. Sterling in 1992 defined cyberspace as the place between two electronically connected communication devices where people can discuss various things. Do you think that it is possible to stop radicalisation in cyberspace? And what is your knowledge of how this university has tried to implement measures to comply with the prevent duty within cyberspace?

**CP:** My knowledge of any of that would be little to non-existent. I was surprised when I came here having come out of a local authority that the university does not monitor emails. When you work in a local authority or local government that is the norm, that was part of my induction and it was made very clear to me. Umm there is far more freedom here though around using the internet for personal use where you don't get in the same extent in local government. Beyond the fact I know we don't really monitor I don't know anything about what we do in cyberspace. Do I think that you can stop radicalisation in cyberspace? No. well no I think that would be very difficult given the number of players in the market and they tend to be private sector and therefore they are not all in this country so therefore it's very difficult, I would imagine, to assert any degree of governance over the, and it comes back really for me, I think the really important area where we can influence and make a really big difference around educating young people and making them ... better informed around what Prevent is, what it isn't and actually how they can help themselves and their friends.

**LS:** So you've mentioned earlier about filtering and blocking content. Do you think that is something that should be done as part of the Prevent duty?

**CP:** ... At the university or my general views on filtering?

**LS:** Your views on filtering.

**CP:** ... I ... think that there are appropriate times and places where information should be blocked and or filtered and certainly in a school context it is wholly appropriate to prevent young people being able to access materials that are perhaps reasonable people might find offensive, inappropriate for whatever reason. Some of the reasons for that is that because content is accessed in an unsupervised way and the other thing that strikes me is that ... I have two sons and their attitudes towards Google. If they Google something, what Google tells them and certainly Wikipedia they take it as fact. They don't necessarily challenge it or look somewhere else to find some other source to cross reference, what they have been told. It's just accepted as a given because 'I've found it on the internet'. Information is on the internet that is not substantiated or validate in any way shape or form. I think it is power and influence is huge. Also you know as an equality practitioner I think that some information should be censored because ... by any reasonable persons standard I think its wholly inappropriate, obscene, offensive so yeah I think there is a place for filtering and blocking information.

**LS:** You mentioned, and I think it's quite interesting, that your sons take what is on the internet as fact a lot of the time. I'm guessing that they use social media? Research is suggesting that terrorist organisations are using social media more and more to post videos about their ideologies, about what they are trying to do and that's really difficult to police and to take down. How do you think social media affects radicalisation in higher education?

**CP:** I think that its scope of influence is huge. I mean I'm not going to sit here and say that my sons are representative of all young people and accept it as a given. Although interestingly I delivered some training to a group of managers here at the university and one of them had seen something on Google... that challenged something, some writing that I'd put out so before he'd even entertained or participated in the training that challenge came and he'd seen this on Google and therefore thought it was true. So I don't think it's just young people... did you ask me about the powers or influence of social media?

**LS:** Yes that's right.

**CP:** I guess maybe what we... the police, and I don't think it's a role for the university but if young people are accessing social media and I think it's a given, we know that young people are and we know that groups such as ISIS are accessing social media very successfully and you know a number of the incidents of younger age people, school age people umm who have gone to Syria, they ... were motivated or encouraged by stuff they had seen on social media, those five girls, those young girls that went... actually maybe the authorities should use social media more effectively to counter some of the narrative that ISIS is putting out and I think ISIS is more effective because they're more agile ... and ahead ... you know they are always going to be one step ahead and we are constantly playing catch up so maybe we need to be taking a different approach and being more proactive and we, the authorities and I don't think the university, I don't think it's a responsibility for the university particularly, needs to be more agile and proactive and be putting out ... maybe the other side of the narrative that these young people are hearing. So that actually a more realistic view is portrayed to young people rather than us constantly countering all the good stuff which is kind of countering in, so therefore, the authorities starting point is negative and I don't think that's the best way to approach any discussion or kind of point of view is to start on the defence and be negative about it.

**LS:** Do you think that's down to the media coverage surrounding Prevent?

**CP:** ... Umm ... I don't think that the media coverage is always ... balanced, I think it's very sensationalised umm I don't think it, I know that because of knowledge I have around Prevent that it's not always accurate ... and yeah I don't think that's how it would fall at all but also I don't think authorities, I think there is so much more that the government should and could be doing to be quite honest. You know, to be more positive and like I say put out a bit more facts about Prevent, about ISIS, about ... you

know, that they want to build a caliphate, that they want to create a state where everyone is equal. Well you know ... that's one part of the story, isn't it. But actually if we put out the whole story then maybe some of these young women, you know, will think that their life is not necessarily going to be so much better, you know, ... but I just think we constantly put out a negative and a defensive and I think the media doesn't help and I think the media are absolutely vilifies Islam and Muslims to the detriment of the British society, not just Islam.

**LS:** Just a couple of last questions, what do you think the biggest threat to radicalisation in he is?

**CP:** The biggest threat to radicalisation.

**LS:** The biggest threat to young people being radicalised.

**CP:** Oh ... ignorance ... I think ignorance. I also think, I don't think here at our university students are very proactive. I don't think they are very engaged; they are not very well a little bit reticent actually. I think some of that poses a danger, you know, is detrimental to young people because I think sometimes it's very easy to go with the flow and go with something that sounds quite interesting umm and, you know, if you don't really turn the time, effort and energy to look into it then I think ... young people can drift. I think people of any age can drift but I think young people can particularly because they have inquiring minds at this stage. They have come to university to learn, to explore, to develop umm... so I think we need to kind of recognise that and, I guess, our role therefore is to put out, you know, some facts, accurate information around Prevent umm... that's kind of balanced and proportionate. I know when I did works on gangs in the city where I worked previously, you know ... young people felt that there was a gang member on every corner trying to stab them. That doesn't help either does it, terrifying young people.

**LS:** Do you think that there will be any further compulsory elements introduced into Prevent? Would you like to see any more compulsory elements introduced or would you like some of the elements that are there to be taken back?

**CP:** To be honest I don't think its huge on the HE sector, I think the challenge for us is more the monitoring web, electronic information but I think that's more of an IT ... you know is more of a technical practical kind of thing. Culturally I, you know, I was surprised that we didn't monitor so for me the norm would be that information is monitored because some of that's around safeguarding and protecting me, and my data and my information as much as the knock on of x, y and z. Would I like to see more compulsory elements... no because personally ... you know, with my equality and diversity head on I would know that legislation puts in place a framework, it puts in place minimum standards, it forces compliance, it changes behaviour because of the threat of sanctions, it doesn't change hearts, it does not change minds and I think people view legislation as ... its compliance, I think if you can sell to people the benefits of why we're doing this that's so much better in that it is so much stronger... they are

then able to explore and have the discourse about why they don't feel comfortable with it. Only that way, my own personal belief is that you can only change attitudes because the only person's attitude that I can change is my own. ... You know, the university can force a change in behaviour, my behaviour through a whole range of policies in compliance; does that change my mind or my attitude? No, does that make me more belligerent or begrudging about things? Most probably, so no I won't want to see anything else, anymore legislation. I think I'd like to see a different perspective and maybe it would be good for people to be taking a step back and actually moving forward putting out some of the good practice and the good things that are happening around prevent and showing the breadth of ... you know, what Prevent means, how it's being interpreted to provide reassurance to universities and staff at universities ... umm those that are occasional but those who are doing the bare minimum and going through a tick box exercise because they know somebody's coming to monitor them and that's all they are doing it for so they aren't making any real difference or any real impact back in the institution. They are not making any positive change on the lives of either their staff or their students that they have responsibility to serve towards legislation.

**LS:** Do you think there will be more?

**CP:** ... Umm ... no not in the short term, I can't imagine, I can't see that there will be in the next 12 months, no. I might be completely wrong but no I don't because I'm going to sit here and say I think that umm ... it's not been in very long for the sector, I think that the government should, will give opportunity for us to actually, umm, do what is being asked, umm, to kind of start mainstreaming and make it actually part of the way we do things around here. I also think that the government will be far too busy looking at a whole range of other things, not least the implications of Brexit.

**LS:** Thanks very much, C.

## Appendix 5 - Interview Transcript, Participant 3 – Trade Union Representative

**LS:** Hi J, it would be great if you can talk about your knowledge of Prevent and how it links to the national counter terrorism strategy

**JS:** So my knowledge, I'm not going to Prevent to be particularly knowledgeable on the ins and outs but it is clearly an official government program. I remember it from when it came in; I mean we've had Prevent for ages. I couldn't tell you exactly when, probably about 10 years ago it came in ... it must have been around that time because I was working in student support and I attended one of the workshops. When they rolled it out, when they rolled it out I think they didn't roll it out as a compulsory thing in Higher Education but I know that's different now, there are certain requirements. I guess back then there must have been some sort of funding available for some groups, including universities and so I attended a WRAP, the session it was delivered by SD, one of the student services guys. Even back then it was extremely problematic so I attended that training umm ... so more recently was it a couple of years back, it became, there was a, they rewrote the legislation and wrote in a requirement, a compulsory element for various institutions to actually comply with the program and so we have that as a university. Not entirely sure I could delineate what we have to actually do ... I remember it was an issue. I remember the vice chancellor writing that we are compliant with Prevent, it's probably something done by SD again but we have a requirement to report perhaps in a manner that we weren't before. So frontline staff, well any staff, have a requirement, particularly looking at student facing staff have the requirement to report suspicions of radicalisation among students that are coming radicalised as we foresee it to report through probably SD in the first instance, the control or something or other and he feeds them through to special branch. So that's what I understood it to be but it's probably more detailed than that. That's about all I know in terms of that

**LS:** You mentioned that you had training initially when Prevent was introduced, have you had any training since then?

**JS:** So no. we haven't had any offered either. So that training ... goes back a long way and I must admit I sort of remember there wasn't any subsequent training but there was a session later around the time of Syria and fighters coming and the concern about people going to Syria and coming back and committing acts of terrorism. We had a session but again I don't think it was compulsory and this would have been before the compulsory element came in. I don't think there has been anything since the compulsory elements came in or no more training offered as far as I am aware. I think I'm quite a highly, I'm a well-placed member of staff to be invited to this training being the visa and immigration officer, so I'm scrutinising paperwork to give to overseas nationals to come in. umm so I might have thought I'd have known about it if it was going on. I would be surprised if you told me now that actually there have been a number of sessions going on.

**LS:** I know there is a staff training package being developed so you may be included in that. Just to give you a bit more knowledge around the national counter terrorism strategy. There are three other strands around Prevent. Pursue actively tracks down terrorists, Protect which is about securing the nation and Prepare which is improving response to attacks on the nation.

**JS:** That's right, I remember and it's all called CONTEST, isn't it?

**LS:** Yes that's right. That's good knowledge.

**JS:** Yeah I knew a bit.

**LS:** Yes, the requirements specifically involved in HE. You need the chaplaincy team involved, you need a specific IT policy whether you do anything or not, staff training is compulsory, you need an external speaker and an events policy, having a steering group and links to local partnership boards, you mentioned special branch and having a specific risk assessment for Prevent is essential.

**JS:** Yeah that rings a bell now. I remember a discussion at a trade union meeting where S came along and gave the new policy on external speakers. There was some debate on that.

**LS:** Where do you think your main body of knowledge comes from? You have the trade union perspective, the university perspective or does it come from elsewhere like the media?

**JS:** To be honest it comes from a personal interest ... so I have always been quite interested in this sort of thing. I have a master's degree in international politics and I think even back then we were discussing radicalisation, what it means, to what extent it is... you know, the whole issue of Prevent is that it is seemingly geared towards Muslims and Islam and I have had discussions with people about the extent to which radicalisation is about Islam an extent to which is about foreign policy. So I've always been interested in the underpinnings of it so yes it comes from the media a bit because I'm technically interested in any media bits on it and I have a personal interest on it. I read the particular books on it whilst I was at university. I read the book by Michael Scheuer, who was the American ... former lead on Bin Laden who has written a book. Jason Burke's book was good about Al Qaida so there is a personal interest. There is a trade union angle, the trade unions are generally speaking quite anti Prevent the way it stigmatises, worried about the influence on Muslim communities in particular. We've had motions at the trade union conference condemning, no that's not quite true. We've had a motion quite recently which I've mentioned before which wanted to work with the Prevent program. Two years back when they were introducing the new legislation there was a discussion at conference within the trade union about Prevent so it comes from the trade union as well. I am also a Labour party member so getting discussions from the Labour party people and the Labour party particular recently has

taken much more critical stance on Prevent. So it's those three areas, personal, political, Labour and trade union.

**LS:** That's interesting you say that the unions are in particular anti Prevent. I am aware of various NUS campaigns including the 'preventing Prevent' and they have recently published a helpline where Students' Union sabbatical officers can call the NUS with any issues surrounding students that have had problems within the Prevent process. I just wondered whether your particular trade union has any kind of helplines?

**JS:** I'm not aware of any specific things like that. All I know in unison which is my trade union that the discussion, I mean I'm talking specifically about the Higher Education sector. Unison is huge, so it's probably a generalisation to say that unison is strongly opposed to Prevent, it's probably not fair because it would differ from sector to sector in terms of the executives. I think overall at the national delegate conference it's still probably critical or wary but my personal sector, the HE sector stays very critical. There was a motion two years ago about Prevent which was drawn up by the executive which basically said we need to comply with it, it is legislation, but we need to be careful as to how the motions couched. It's about complying but being careful not to ... tar Muslims with the wrong brush, this sort of thing. That got shot down at conference which is a democratic body of our section because it was considered to be insufficiently robust and critical and actually the narrative on the floor was that really we should be opposing and that we should be in line with the NUS and in line with UCU which at the time had passed a relatively critical motion. What happened then was that our sector shot that motion down, it didn't pass but we didn't, we were not able to pass anything in its place because of conference rules. You know how it is with conferences. At the moment I think our sector, unless something went this year, we don't have a particular, an official position on Prevent. We know from the previous conference that there was ... strong opposition to Prevent but we don't have an official positions so in terms of the trade unions, there is nothing specific that has been drawn up. I mean, maybe off the back off, had we passed that motion maybe that would have fed into you know, helplines or that sort of discussion but because that motion was shot down ... we have never, there has never been a discussion, there has never been a priority of how we would facilitate support.

**LS:** The trade unions don't at the minute have a specific stance but what is your personal opinion on Prevent?

**JS:** My personal ... opinion is hugely critical umm ... I think all of the concerns about it being way to geared towards Muslims are true so my original workshop, what does wrap mean again?

**LS:** Workshop to raise awareness of Prevent.

**JS:** Yeah so that original session which was admittedly a long time ago. I do remember the presentation that was given to the university by special branch, by whoever. All its case studies were Muslims because of the Islamic extremism and to its credit the



university did throw in its own examples of other types of extremists. I think we looked at the EDL, I can't remember what we looked at, a couple of others. Back then the focus of the government certainly was on Islamic extremism. Umm although it wasn't promulgated as such but that can all see what the focus was. So I think there is a problem and I think it still continues today and there has been a whole range of media stories about how the community engagement has gone very badly wrong and has turned into a surveillance program of Muslim communities has been very divisive. I think all of that is true, my opinion though is probably more deep seated than that because although it's been very ineffective and very divisive I think it's also wrongheaded and its wrongheaded because it works too much of the surface. My view is that ... terrorism largely is political, it's a political act and if you take the example of Islamic extremism although a lot of those acts are ... explained with reference to very religious imagery, with reference to religious imagery and religious narrative, they are still at root political grievances and I don't think Prevent really understands that and takes account of that. I think Prevent presumes that terrorism is about ideology and in particular that Islamic extremism is about problems with Islam whereas really a lot of it, a lot of terrorism is about political risk so even if you take someone like Bin Laden who is the doyen of Islamic extremism, is the original declaration of war back in 1992 which has been tracked. If you read it yes it's got all of the religious imagery but it's also got, its ultimately just a political tract which talks about very clear and to some extent reasonable political grievances like for example the control of ... the presence of US soldiers in Saudi Arabia, the support of Israel by the United States, the sanctions of Iraq and an awful lot of political things that actually a lot of critical left leaning people would prescribe to. I think the problem with Prevent is that it just glosses all over that. It only deals with superficial things and what I think we need is a program that looks terrorism for what it actually is because ultimately if you want to change it, if you want to deal with it you have to deal with the political underpinnings and Prevent doesn't do that. That's my opinion. If you wanted a bit extra, I did an exchange many years back, it's on my blog, with Lord Carlisle, he was the terrorism tsar, he was the terror chief a few years back ... and I had an exchange with him which got a little bit shirty online where I basically asked him where he had said something. We hear all the time that how terrorists are trying to destroy our values and I've got a problem with that as well because I don't think that is true and I think that's what terrorists are telling us. If you look at most examples of Islamic extremist terrorism, they are quite clear about their reasons and they are always saying it's all about Iraq, deaths of Muslims in the Middle East. Really political grievances linked together with reference to and explained with reference to Islamism narrative for sure, but ultimately political. I had this chat with, this correspondence with Lord Carlisle that you can have a look at and where I basically said why do you think they are trying to destroy our values where they are saying to us it's not about that, it's about foreign policy and he got very angry with me. I forget exactly what he said, he said ... read Ed Hussain's book, this guy who was a former Islamist radical and I said well I've read lots of books, thanks, but this is what its telling me and he got really angry with me. I don't think he, I think he was head of, he must have rolled out Prevent to some extent or being very involved with it but these

thinkers behind it they never have a proper hand on what is driving terrorism. That's my view in a bit more detail.

**LS:** You mentioned the focus on prevent seems to be around Islamic extremism and Muslims in particular. I went to a HEFCE conference about a month ago and they stated that the majority of Prevent cases that get referred to special branch, including schools, HE, NHS etc. the majority are to do with right wing extremism. Do you think that that knowledge is transferred to the HE sector?

**JS:** I think if that's true, it should be clearer, they should be telling people, I didn't actually know that, I don't think ... and it's clearly a good thing that dealing with right wing terrorism, I mean generally speaking we know that radical terrorism is an issue ... and if the reality of prevent is that its ... dealing with a disproportionately right wing extremist cases as opposed to Muslim extremist cases, to some extent that mitigates against the argument that its based its premise on Muslim terrorism and Islamic terrorism. I don't think that's clear, I don't think they shout about it enough if that's the case. I don't think any of that takes away from the more foundational critique that it's not dealing with the roots of terrorism but it might perhaps deal with to some extent concerns about it being disproportionately focussed on Muslims. It's a perception more than anything. There's no doubt that the Muslim community have thought it's disproportionately focussed on them. I suppose the other element is that what are the other resources being spent on because if people are actually referring right wing cases as opposed to Islamist extremism that's fine, but that doesn't necessarily correlate with where the ... Prevent programme is allocated resources and I don't know the answer to that. If the answer to that should be predominantly right wing extremism that's being reported well then let's focus our resources on right wing extremism. Maybe they are but that's not the message I get, the message we get over 10 to 12 years is that the focus mainly on Muslim communities.

**LS:** We are now going to turn to look at prevent in cyberspace. In 1992 Sterling defined cyberspace as the place between two electronically connected communication devices where people actually meet and communicate. Do you think that due to the interconnectivity of the globe that stopping radicalisation in cyberspace is possible?

**JS:** Umm probably not, no ... umm I mean I don't, we are talking here, in terms of radicalisation, about how, I mean there are a range of things that happen in cyberspace. There is the plot, the arrangement or facilitation and preparation for an attack but were not talking about that, we are talking about the process, because you know, radicalisation the process is eluded to earlier is largely about political grievance which is then made sense of by certain people, in particular narratives, Islamist narratives is one example, or right wing narrative is another one but they all feed off political grievance so to the extent that so unless this process, if you're just going to throw resources at trying to stop people putting out particular narrative online through cyberspace you, there will be some headway but until you start taking away the

foundational reasons as to why that narrative resonates its not going to get very far, is it, I don't think.

**LS:** Well in that case, it sounds like the tools of monitoring and filtering web content is something that you wouldn't be supportive of.

**JS:** Well I'm not very supportive of monitoring, I know it's a bigger issue, a connective issue and in the home of GCHQ it's a big issue here. I'm very much supportive of individual freedom and privacy and its very very important to protect that in a democracy but I do accept that there is a need for police work and investigation and intelligence work but I think if that's the focus particularly on countering terrorism, if that's the focus we aren't going to get very far. I don't consider a focus, the narrative of these different things to be an important element I think it's about removing political grievance.

**LS:** If for example, an individual is vulnerable and comes across content which could be said to be extremist, they decide to chat to an individual who has like minds with the content and gets in contact via social media, which research suggests is very easy to do. Do you think that there is a big risk there that if the content wasn't there in the first place, they wouldn't be radicalised?

**JS:** Yes, of course there is some potential but it's all about the focus again, I'm sounding like a broken record now, for me that situation is more about, the way you deal with the situation, we took as a given there that the person is vulnerable so my question is why is that person vulnerable? That's my predominant focus so I would rather focus on that element. That doesn't mean we completely dispense anything about narratives that are wrong headed ... to some extent that does need to be counted, I think one good way it can be counted, of course if Prevent wanted to counter some of that and I don't think this necessary comes though again, they should hold events that allow people to air controversial views. I think part the reason that those things have traction is that there is no other way for people to be discussing them, be hearing different points of view so in the Higher Education sector has a very important part to play in that and I know this is a broader point, one which we are moving away from but if the HE sector is so crucial for us to get it right in this sector because we are a centre of learning and or people forming their opinions so going back to the issue of speakers, it is very important that Prevent doesn't shut down the opportunity to hear radical speaking all be it on controversial subjects. I think it links into this because when people are vulnerable for a variety of reasons I think some of the research does say that generally speaking there is a good correlation between vulnerability and violent acts ... I think dealing with that is a major way of dealing with terrorism generally but we can all play a role possibly through a government program that allows for democratic discussion about the correct way to respond to a particular situation. That would be my view.

**LS:** Finally, in terms of future directions for Prevent. What would you like to see as further compulsory elements? Any development at all to the program or are there things in Prevent you'd like to see removed or maybe completely eradicated?

**JS:** There's a general ... I am in agreement with my Labour party colleagues and it needs to be reconstituted and rethought and I would take it back to the drawing board to be honest, there is too much evidence for it being counterproductive. There is a lot of conceptual problems, theoretical problems with it, some that I have outlined in terms of it being, what is the radicalisation process, it presumes too much about the radicalisation process so I would take it back to the beginning to see what we can reasonably and realistically do ... to deal with some of the narratives about extremism. I think there's a limited amount that we can do and a bigger focus should be on being honest with ourselves and looking at to what extent our behaviour and our countries behaviours on foreign policy there's a few radicalisation factors and we need to look at that part of it in much more detail. That's wishful thinking, a government, a particularly right wing government are never going to do that but my job as a left leaning person, a Labour person, a trade union person is to try and push that as far as we can. I don't see any particular, any value in ... promoting Prevent as it is, I would like it looked at again. I'm not saying there can't be any possible benefits for example if part of Prevent was about bringing in, providing a space for particular, people get very upset with Israel and Palestine is a big issue for me as well. I think there, for me, is a part of Prevent, a strand of Prevent, the main bit of Prevent that says close that down, we don't want any controversial speakers on that issue and for me it's wrong. To provide a space for people to discuss because that's the way ... if you provide an outlook for people you prevent a shift into a more radical perspective, I don't mean racialists, I would consider myself a radical, we don't want people pushed into a violent perspective. I think it would be good if Prevent could do that but other than that, lets overhaul it.

**LS:** Thanks very much, J.

**Appendix 6 – Interview Transcript, Participant 4 – Students' Union Staff Manager**

**LS:** Hi L, it would be great if you can talk about your knowledge of Prevent and how it links to the national counter terrorism strategy.

**LF:** Sure, so umm ... Prevent was in place I think before the 2015 act but the 2015 act I believe enshrined it into law so the I think it was the ... counter terrorism and security act 2015 made ... gave an obligation to public sector bodies, so social services, universities, FE colleges, schools to inform the government agencies if they felt that someone on the premises was being radicalised or was at risk of being radicalised or was exhibiting signs of radicalisation. Whereas before it was not a legal duty, that's my understanding, before it wasn't a legal duty to report ... I know that schools in particular had a lot of training programmes prior to when the act was implemented in order to spot the signs ... also I believe any family that, any child that said a family was going on holiday to Syria, they had to report that as well. As the Students' Union is a charity I had already been to charity commission presentations where the charity commission had touched on the ... Prevent duty's, what we could do to make sure we weren't exposing students to the risk of radicalisation in unwittingly inviting hate speakers on campus, so we were doing the external speaker form for about four or five years now with our charity hat on rather than our Prevent duty hat on because the prevent duty doesn't cover charities. So we do not have a legal obligation to report the same things that a university or a school or an FE college would. It was a subject that I ... had taken on, on behalf of the Students' Union with the implementation of, with registering as a charity in 2010, as it was part of our charity commission requirements ... we always had to serve; we always had to follow the charitable aims. We had some really interesting presentations and then it became legislation in 2015 and ... the ... prevent lead at the university, SD, has been the South West Prevent lead for as long as I can remember, 5 years or more probably. We had started a group probably about 6 years ago and we branded it 'Don't Hate' which was our attempt to raise awareness of what students could do if they felt one of their course mates was being radicalised or they were concerned so rather than branding under the Prevent umbrella which we felt would promote a message that would be scary for students ... or give the wrong message we branded it under the umbrella of don't hate ... which the idea was it would encourage students to look out for homophobia or racism or hate speech or prejudice of any form and it was very difficult to get off the ground and students weren't really that interested as it was a difficult subject area. I think at this university we are kind of quite rural compared to a city university and ... we don't from my understanding, we don't ... SD doesn't refer very many students through channel or ... umm we haven't had any incidents of students who have invited the hate speaker on campus, any societies that have caused us concern. The only ... incident I can remember was the vegan society a few years ago put some quite extreme animal rights links on their SU webpage and we had to ask them to take them down as they were basically encouraging violence. We felt that the message was encouraging students to think about using what could be defined under the law as terrorism to carry out their aims

which was to stop animal testing, to prevent hunting or other related issues. We are lucky in a lot of respects that we don't have hot beds of terrorism. I know that the current chief executive who worked at Westminster had quite a lot of issues at Westminster with students who were promoting a ... far right message or ... supporting ISIS so he had quite a difficult time over there.

**LS:** You mentioned that the SU doesn't have to comply with Prevent like the university does. Does the view of the SU differ from that of the university?

**LF:** That's a really interesting question but it's not my call to make. I have my own personal questions that I keep quiet at work because it's not appropriate for me to me to influence. The decisions are made by the exec as you know. The Students' Union is led by the exec, it's their final decision. If they chose to follow the NUS stance that is Prevent is a racist, it has a racist agenda, if the exec chose to adhere to the NUS message I think things would be very different for me as a permanent member of staff. They could quite easily say the SU is not going to sit on the Prevent steering group, we are going to actively campaign against the Prevent agenda. At this university, SD has been good, he has explained a lot of the law ... and the obligation from a welfare point of view to the exec and currently as it stands the exec are currently, I wouldn't say supportive of the Prevent agenda, but are happy to be a part of the Prevent steering group and keeping an eye on the universities possible intention to start ... not monitoring but flagging up if a student or staff member is going to hit a website that might be deemed to be ... related to terrorist activities.

**LS:** What do you think the national stance of SU's in general are? Do they go with the NUS view or do they stand individually?

**LF:** I don't know the answer to that question. I haven't seen any news articles of campaigns that have been run. There was some trouble at, ah I can't remember what university it was, possibly Warwick ... there was some kind of protest against the Prevent agenda and the university came in quite heavy handed with security but it blew over very quickly. I do think that if you go onto the NUS website I do think the NUS are producing quite a lot of materials for officers to challenge any practices on campus that might be linked to the Prevent agenda but we ... I ... don't think it's a huge live issue at the moment for SU's across the country.

**LS:** Have you or anybody you know used the preventing Prevent hotline that the NUS have bought out at all?

**LF:** No ... I did ... flag it up to SD because I raised it in a meeting and you were there, when we are looking at the risk register with regards to Prevent that we have to submit to the government, I think we're going to have to do it every year, we did the first one fairly recently. In my mind one of the things that the university need to consider is that the SU exec might decide to campaign strongly against practices that relate to the Prevent duty. Clearly if another act is passed, if more legislation is bought in where universities and FE colleges and schools are obliged to monitor, that may happen, I

don't know how likely it is, it may happen and there is nothing that exec can do about that. The university has to do that and I think that would cause issues ... but that's not happened yet umm and I imagine it would take quite a few years to pass that legislation.

**LS:** What are the big things about monitoring and filtering that would cause those issues?

**LF:** Academic freedom I guess, it all boils down to freedom of speech and academic freedom so if someone looks to research child abuse, which they may well have to do for example on an education course or a social work course umm if they are prevented from ... accessing that it will impinge on their right to source material and sorry what was the question again, Liam?

**LS:** What are the issues? You mentioned freedom of speech and academic freedom, around filtering and monitoring web content?

**LF:** I can't think of anything else to expand on really, academic freedom to be able to utilise the source material that's online, to develop the minds of our students and for staff that are doing research but I can remember a long time ago, the guy from The Who, his name escapes me ... Pete Townsend, was trying to access child pornography and his reason he gave for doing that was he was abused as a child and he had had therapy and the therapy opened this up and he wanted to ... he felt he needed to research it in order to put some demons to rest and I think he might have got off actually, it's such a long time ago, right at the beginning of the internet, when child pornography was a big deal on the internet. But you know, whether someone has the right to, I think ... universities should always be ... in principle universities should be a safe space for free speech for freedom of expression because lots of social change has been driven from young people who have challenged and gone against the system because they have had their minds expanded at university and I really want to hold onto that but I can also see that there are some students that might be vulnerable to radicalisation. My opinion is not relevant for this organisation, but the ... that's the exec are mindful of the academic freedoms of students and staff and I think ... most staff would feel that their academic freedom was being somewhat curtailed if there was blocking. The kind of benign message we are going to get at some point which says are you sure you want to access this website is somewhat a waste of time really because if you have mal intent, if you want to access a website that shows extreme terrorism, that's glorifying terrorism, a message asking if you're sure you want to its probably a waste of time.

**LS:** As it is right now, how efficient do you think Prevent is at this university?

**LF:** I don't know, I have no idea because the people who go to the Prevent steering group are well informed. If I came across a student who was going to Syria to fight, that for me, I know what to do, I know who to go to, I know that is a ... an alarm bell for umm a person who might have been radicalised or in the process of being

radicalised. For the personal tutor who has no ... knowledge of Prevent or hasn't been on Prevent training and I cannot understand why HR or the university senior executive have said that every academic should go through the students in crisis training because for me there is a very strong link between ... you know, the young men and women who are radicalised, it's mostly young men, they have mental health issues generally or they feel disenfranchised or they have not had the opportunities available to them, that another student, another person might have has. One could consider them to be vulnerable, in which case we have a responsibility to ... to support that student in this case, to support that student. So it is linked to welfare, for me radicalisation is linked to vulnerability and umm I personally believe that at least every persona tutor should A, do the student in crisis training and B, do the WRAP training or some kind of Prevent training, which teachers have had to do in schools.

**LS:** We are now going to think about Prevent in cyberspace. In 1992 Sterling defined cyberspace as the place between two electronically connected communication devices where people actually meet and communicate. Do you think that within cyberspace it is possible to stop radicalisation?

**LF:** ... Yes, but only if that person is connecting with someone who is informed and who has the right skills to be able to appreciate that that person who is exploring options to enter the world of terrorism may benefit or may be prevented from doing so by agencies that might or might not be available to them. If we are talking about a ... a student who is joined a forum for ... umm ... young people who are interested in travelling to Syria or other countries to fight ... with ISIS or with any other organisation of the same kind of fundamentals or fundamental values. In theory one would hope that discourse online, cyberspace discourse, would be the same as face to face discourse but the chances of someone being on a forum, that forum that I'm kind of thinking about, might interject and say have you thought about XYZ? Have you spoken to an Imam, have you spoken to anyone else is highly unlikely because they will have joined that forum to ... hear values that are the same as their own, to reinforce their own feelings of anger and disenfranchisement and of hate.

**LS:** How can that be managed from within a university under the responsibility of the Prevent duty?

**LF:** It can't because they won't use the university system. It's impossible. And the dark web as well. I have no idea what the dark web is but I know it's a place where radicalisation is, people are moving to the dark web to more safely explore ... topics that would be ... that are skirting around the boundaries of what is either moral or legal... tricky issues or, I can't think of the right word... perhaps illegal activity because I know a lot of child pornography is on the dark web and I understand that some radical websites of radical organisations are on the dark web as well and I understand that it's not possible to monitor these at all, that's my understanding.



**LS:** Research is showing that social media is becoming an increased tool used by terrorist organisations to radicalise individuals from across the globe. How big a problem do you think it is here at this organisation?

**LF:** I don't know, I can't answer that because I don't know. I'm not a great social media user. I know that on a very low level that bullying and harassment is far more prevalent from when I was in my early 20's. Incidents of bullying and harassment is daily and students come across it on social media and I can only assume that ... issues that are relating to Prevent probably are an issue on social media as well. ISIS use Twitter don't they? Mind you Trump uses twitter as well ... there you go.

**LS:** Students also use Twitter, students are using social media all of the time, research is showing. After an attack or an incident there is always increased activity on social media through the sharing of videos, through posting comments or opinions, why do you think that is?

**LF:** ... Because its instant and ... people who are avid users of social media like expressing their opinions in public forums so ... and it is so quick umm ... and it's so effective, its extraordinarily effective so you know, for news agencies ... you know, if something happens, something big newsworthy happens within minutes it has gone across the globe, whereas, you know, 30 years ago you'd have to wait for, you know, you'd have to wait for the phone call to the BBC or the camera man or woman to turn up. But you know we are humans, we are flawed, we have always fought and we have always umm ... felt protective about our own and that's something what ... radicalisation taps into, that kind of basic human desire to feel part of a clan, if you like. It is very powerful

**LS:** Do you see that the posting of opinions around terrorist incidents is a contribution to the terrorist cause?

**LF:** Yeah I think you can whip up a frenzy, yeah I think so, probably.

**LS:** We are coming to an end ... we are going to think about future directions of Prevent, if at all. Do you think any more compulsory elements will be added to the duty?

**LF:** I think if more terrorist attacks happen, big ones than yes. The government is quite reactive, if we had another one like the, the tube bombing in July 2007, if we have another one of those on a large scale, or lots of Westminster, or the Lee Rigby ... if we have lots of those the government will be cornered into making a response to that and I think I think it would almost be inevitable that the Prevent duty will be expanded to monitoring. I think and that's just my personal opinion and I'm not well informed, I just see what happens when ... when ... when bad things happen the government seem to have to respond quickly and sometimes disproportionately in my opinion. It just depends, I think on how many terrorist incidents, you know are ahead and if you believe the ... media umm ... you know, the security agencies are preventing terrorist

attacks weekly but we don't hear about, you know, we only hear about the fact that there are planned attacks that have been thwarted. We don't hear about the details so it's hard to know what to believe,

**LS:** You said you think that if there are lots of terrorist incidents occurring in a short space of time that monitoring will be introduced with Prevent. Do you think that the government would go one step further and introduce monitoring or filtering on a national scale like in France?

**LF:** I didn't know they had done that, how have they done that? How can they possibly monitor everybody's online activity?

**LS:** They are filtering content so that nobody can access extremist material and if people are trying to access that material they are able to find out who it is.

**LF:** Oh ok, I didn't know that, that's extraordinary, it's amazing, technologically how would that work? Yeah I can see that coming, I think it would have to be, it would be very bad for this country and I think it would promote the rise of groups like EDL and National Action, I think it would really ... I hadn't heard about until the meeting, I have asked our advertising agency if they had heard of them and they said 'drop it on the veto list' and that's not what I was asking. I was asking if they had training on people who are trying to come into universities under a guise of an organisation but she didn't; she just deflected and said, 'we will stick it on your veto list'. So ... umm ... I'm quite fearful of that happening because as we've seen in France it moves to the right wing and nationalism and all of the ugliness that could bring.

**LS:** Would you like to see any further compulsory elements introduced to Prevent or like to see anything removed from the duty?

**LF:** On a personal level or on a Students' Union level?

**LS:** Both would be great.

**LF:** On a Students' Union level, no I don't want to see anymore monitoring and filtering because the strength in Students' Unions is the challenge, the constant kind of we are watching you, we are making sure that you aren't taking away our students liberties, their freedom of expression. You know, that kind of voice from behind the shoulder saying, no you can't do that because that's ... is bordering on fascism and you can't suppress free speech and so that's with my SU hat on. Personally, I will reinforce that this is my personal opinion. I have absolutely no problem that if I found out that I was being monitored under the Prevent agenda, if I found out suddenly that everyone in the country was having their online activity monitored it wouldn't bother me at all ... because I'm not going to access an extremist, I'm not that, you know, I'm not vulnerable to radicalisation, I don't think I am. I would be quite happy if someone who was being radicalised online was being picked up and referred to the appropriate agencies to help them. That's my personal opinion because I ... see the devastation that terrorism can have on society and it's really evil ... and it has such wide, like a

pop ripple on a pond, you have an attack like Westminster and all the right wing idiots come out if the woodwork and use it as a justification for stopping immigration, for islamophobia.

**LS:** Thanks very much, L.

## Appendix 7 - Interview Transcript, Participant 5 – University Executive Member

**LS:** S, it would be great if you can talk about your knowledge of Prevent, how it links to the national counter terrorism strategy and the requirements in the HE sector

**SM:** So... Prevent is now a legal obligation on the university. All universities are required to assess the risks of students or staff being drawn into umm situations that may expose them to risk of being drawn into terrorist activity. We have been required through the Higher Education Funding Council, which the government have asked to oversee the implementation of the responsibility in Higher Education, us and all the universities have been asked to put together several reports, now, explaining how we go about discharging this responsibility. In this university ... like most others we have come at Prevent as being primarily an issue about safeguarding. What we are seeing is a risk that ... members of our community, staff as well as students, could be drawn into activities that could be dangerous for them as well as for other people. We are privately seeing Prevent as a matter of safeguarding, safety and security for members of our community.

**LS:** Would you be able to talk about how that links to the national counter terrorism strategy?

**SM:** My understanding is that Prevent is one component of a broader home office program umm that has, is it four different segments of it, of which Prevent is one. Prevent is the bit that avoids people being drawn into extremism. The other strands are about the tackling of ... extremism and extremist events.

**LS:** Yes, you have Pursue which tracks down the terrorists, Protect which is about securing the nation and Prepare which is about minimising casualties post attack.

**SM:** The way I understand it is that is that one part of the strategy and essentially its looking at the early stage risk ... because if you can stop people being drawn into terrorism in the first place, obviously that pipeline that takes you through to incidents that take you to follow up is reduced. So Prevent is a gateway to stop people going through that gateway and subsequently picked up by the subsequent component.

**LS:** Where would you say your key source of knowledge has come from about Prevent? Has it come from working in the HE sector, or from the media or elsewhere, maybe a personal interest?

**SM:** It's all though the information I get in the job that I do, so no it isn't about what I've read in the media, as the \*job role\* if the university HEFCE send me quite a lot of material because it's my job as the \*job role\* to be confident that the university is meeting the legal responsibility so most of the material I see comes from the Higher Education Funding Council. Plus our expert in the university, SD is my go to person, and if I don't understand something about Prevent then SD has the expertise in the university.

**LS:** You mentioned that the university takes a safeguarding approach to Prevent. Do you know if that's what they do at other institutions as well, if not do you know which approach they take?

**SM:** ... The information I have comes partly from being on a HEFCE Prevent steering group and from the ... HEFCE open planning course that I attend, giving results of what of the reports that the universities have sent to them. From that the impression I get are seeing this as a safeguarding issue but that's not the same as saying that the university communities are all seeing this as a safeguarding issue. There are clearly some universities where staff, staff unions, Students' Unions don't think this is an agenda about safeguarding and think it's an agenda at its most extreme is about racism and exclusion and targeting particular groups in the population so I think there is a spread where some communities in some universities do not see this as a safeguarding issue. They do not believe it is the governments underlying rationale for this program.

**LS:** Do you believe that these communities exist within this institution?

**SM:** I've seen no evidence of it. I don't ... believe here in this university ... there is a significant concern for that. This whole program is driven in the way were implementing it by exclusion, racism or a concerned target to particular groups, I've not seen any evidence that people believe that.

**LS:** OK, that is good. Now thinking about Prevent and how it affects academic practices at the university. There are various arguments in research about freedom of speech and academic freedom. Do you believe that they are upheld while implementing the Prevent duty?

**SM:** Yes I believe they are because ... the way we and I think other universities have viewed this is ... umm ... about external speakers and events and a set of processes that we expect people to go through if they are setting up events with external speakers if they create risk. We are considering but have not yet acted on web filtering and screening ... we haven't seen reason to make a link from Prevent through to the content of our courses and the way they are delivered in the normal course of events in lectures and seminars. I'm not seeing here in the way we are doing it a significant threat to academic freedom.

**LS:** If the government said that the institution has to filter or monitor would you see that as an infringement on academic freedom?

**SM:** Potentially depending on the way it has done, but there has been a lot of discussion going on with JISC who run the university Janet system for all universities, what is a sensible proportional approach to web monitoring and filtering because the reality is that ... however tightly you try to manage the university system in a time when people have their own equipment and their own ways of accessing their own technologies and websites ... there's a real question how far the university can

manage this anyway through our own technology system. Umm, this is an agenda which isn't yet resolved by any means, what's the sensible and effective way of trying to screen and filter.

**LS:** As it is now do you feel that Prevent is efficient, or do you feel that there is a lot that could be improved upon?

**SM:** ... I feel that Prevent is trying to do something really difficult because it only takes one individual driven by who knows what personal motivations and experiences and beliefs and you could have a terrorist incident. What Prevent is then trying to do is put in institutional corporate organisational frameworks to pick up Identify and tackle the behaviours and beliefs of that individual and that's a really hard thing to do. You can screen your external speakers, you can filter your websites, you can do all sorts of stuff but inherently what you're trying to get at is very very difficult to identify and tackle through an organisation corporate systems approach. And that is my issue with Prevent. I cannot think of a better way of doing it but is this a, you know, a certain way of picking out individual behaviours, at least it can't be, it simply can't be. So we do the best we can with the systems approach in something that is actually very very difficult to get at through a systems approach.

**LS:** Thinking more specifically now about Prevent in cyberspace. In 1992 sterling defined cyberspace as the place between two electronically connected communication devices where people actually meet and communicate. Based on that definition do you believe it is possible to stop radicalisation within cyberspace?

**SM:** No

**LS:** What are your reasons for that?

**SM:** ... The way cyberspace operates umm it can be used by two individuals to communicate with information, news and beliefs and intentions to act. I think it's beyond the, any agency to control. Cyberspace is not controllable, it's not manageable, it's not as far as I can see, GCHQ may give you a different story, but as far as I can see it's not controllable. You can't stop two individuals using it to communicate in a way that creates a risk of extremist behaviour.

**LS:** Do you think Prevent should be used as a tool to stop radicalisation in cyberspace or do you think there should be a separate program or initiative to be able to counter radicalisation?

**SM:** I don't think there should be a separate initiative because Prevent works perfectly well within the constraints of what is actually achievable in this territory but it's a perfectly good framework to think about and act on what are our risks, how are we managing them, and that should include the risks of cyberspace so that's why it is a proper and active debate and how far could and should universities go in screening the way our websites are used, the way our staff and students use our technology and access to the web. All of that is a perfectly sensible thing to be doing ... but in my view

we have to remain realistic about the limits and the ability of anybody to control what then happens in cyberspace.

**LS:** I'm going to guess you have the same view on controlling radicalisation on social media.

**SM:** I would see the two as closely linked. I guess social media are ways in which people use cyberspace and ways in which people can communicate and they are inherently very very difficult to control, manage or know about.

**LS:** Research is showing that terrorist organisations are using social media more and more to recruit young and vulnerable individuals. Would you see that as possibly the biggest threat to students at a university?

**SM:** Possibly, umm in the sense that, yes, social media can give extremists and terrorists opportunities to try and make contact with and try to influence students here and in other universities, yes they create those opportunities. Our job has to be to do what we can to make students aware of that risk to understand dangers for them as well as for the wider community if they do respond to these attempts to communicate. I'm not sure there is anything we can usefully do as a university to stop other people outside trying to communicate with us, what we can try to do is then shape the response of the people within this community if they are contactable.

**LS:** In particular ISIS have been using social media to radicalise others. Their message tends to be 'don't come and fight in Syria, carry out the attack in your own country, smaller attacks and a lot of them are going to be more effective.' The sharing of these videos on social media has become something that is happening quite often, how do you feel this contributes to the radicalisation process of students?

**SM:** ... Umm sorry why would it contribute to radicalisation process of students? I don't think students in general, sorry I would hope that students in general, are ...well enough aware of these issues that they would see those videos for what they are which is an expression of a terrorist ideology band wouldn't want anything to do with, so it think students in general, are the issue. How this may affect individuals who are susceptible is a different matter and those individuals may be students, they may not be students, they could be anywhere in the wider community. As I say all we can try to do at university is raise awareness in our own communities umm ... of these ways that social media has been viewed.

**LS:** So, post attacks or big global incidents there tends to be increased activity on social media though the sharing of videos, through sharing opinions and comments about the attacks. Would you see this as a contribution to the terrorist movement or would you think that it wouldn't endanger vulnerable people to be radicalised?

**SM:** I don't know, I have no evidence on that and I don't know which way that would go. I guess ... I would see no reason to assume that the distribution of those videos and messages will have the effect of causing more radicalisation. In other words, what

I mean is that ... people who then pass on those videos and messages may do so for a while range of different reasons. They may do so because they are appalled, horrified or that they feel other people need to know something terrible has happened ... that's not expression of their own disposition toward extremism. It may be the opposite, you know, I've just seen this, it's dreadful. You could equally say it's a process of generating a collective sense of opposition to the extremist event that has just happened so the fact that this stuff is circulating in huge volumes could take you in several different directions but some of that huge volume is people expressing their dismay, their opposition, their sense that something dreadful has happened and other people need to know about it, or others may be distributing it for other reasons ...because they want others to know so they can follow, you know, that example.

**LS:** Interesting. So now thinking about future directions for Prevent. Would you like to see any compulsory elements added into the Prevent duty? Is there anything that you'd like to see removed from it?

**SM:** Umm ... no, I think the framework that HEFCE have put in place for Prevent seems to me to cover all of the major components that I can think of that you want to address, so I don't think there are big gaps in it and other things we should be doing. I do think that over time Prevent has to be able to flex with changes in where the real threats of extremism come from. I think one issue about prevent is that it tends to be over focussed on or over associated with a particular form of terrorism driven by ISIL ... that is only one form of extremism ... what we can't afford to do is focus so much on one particular source of terrorism that actually we just fail to notice something else is going on and something else is developing and growing ... and we fail to spot it and do anything about it. Umm ... so Prevent will have to be capable of adapting over time.

**LS:** Do you think that the original focus on Prevent was to, you said it seems to focus on one type of terrorism, do you think that the focus was on eradicating Islamist extremism or do you think it did take into account other forms such as animal rights movements, the far right etc.

**SM:** In a sense both, yes if you look at the Prevent framework it was always about the range of forms of extremism and we always said here in \*location\* that ... Islamic terrorism is only one of the threats that we are facing, there are others, there is far right extremism, there is animal rights extremism, there are other forms of extremism, we need to do in a place and a community like this is be aware of the range of the potential extremist threats and our implementation of Prevent needs to be able to cope with that. I think it's also true to say, though, that some of the media comments and some of the comments from particularly universities and their communities has been pretty focussed on this is all about the threat from ISIL and that form of terrorism. So I think both are true, that Prevent itself as a framework is designed to cover all forms of extremism. The way it's described and what people understand by it in some cases have been a lot narrower.



**LS:** As \*job role\*, do you worry about non-compliance of the Students' Union with Prevent, or that there could be a group of students at the university that could come up with something that is very much anti Prevent and supporting the NUS stance?

**SM:** I don't worry about that because we have regular discussions with the Students' Union and we have, that has never come up as an issue or a problem. I think ... our Students' Union here, and I hope all of the student body here feel that so long as the university honestly sees this as an issue about safeguarding and preventing people from being drawn into harm, that's ok, it's a proper thing for the university to be doing and we can all work together on that basis. In a sense I think there may be a different risk that we are in \*location\*, we are in \*location\* ... if there is a risk it may be that we underestimate the possibility of an individual anywhere, including \*location\*, getting drawn into extremism and taking it through to committing a terrorist act. You could never be sure.

**LS:** I think that's it for now, thank you very much S.

## Appendix 8 - Interview Transcript, Participant 6 – UK Government Department Prevent Advisor

**LS:** Hi S, it would be great if you can talk about Prevent and how it links to the national counter terrorism strategy as well as what the requirements are in the HE sector.

**SK:** Prevent is part of four P's, so we've got the counter terrorism strategy which has Protect, Prepare, Pursue and Prevent and Prevent is the fourth strand. It is the only strand that operates in the pre-criminal space so basically before someone committed a crime and turned to terrorism this one tries to divert them away from the path of radicalisation. It's about safeguarding and a duty of care. In terms of the HE sector since September 2015 there are seven specified authorities that have to comply with the Prevent duty, the HE sector is one of those seven which means they have to have 'due regard' to protect people from being drawn into radicalisation.

**LS:** More specifically, what do HE bodies have to do to meet that 'due regard'?

**SK:** They have, I believe six or seven different areas that they have to do things around Prevent, so for example staff training, they have to come up with a strategy around who they are going to train what members of staff, what kinds of training they are going to receive. They have a duty to do welfare, referral pathways ... I'm trying to think now, I can't remember the list ... chaplaincy umm ... what are they?

**LS:** What I have down is an IT policy.

**SK:** Yes, student welfare, including referral pathways and engaging with the student body around Prevent and try to kind of tell the students what they are giving around the Prevent duty.

**LS:** I've also got the external speaker policy.

**SK:** Which is one of the arguably most important things at the university because they need to do some work around that.

**LS:** Links around local partnership boards as well.

**SK:** I've been on leave for a few days and forgotten all about it.

**LS:** What do you think the general feeling is about Prevent in the HE sector?

**SK:** I think it's changed over the years. To start with I believe that there was a resistance from the HE sector around the Prevent agenda because some of which, rightly so, challenging whether that should be an academics responsibility to stop people being drawn into terrorism and radical ideas. I think some have seen it as a security services job and it's not our role to do that, we are here to teach. You could argue that staff, academics and universities have a duty to safeguard their students from ... lots of different issues, you know, radicalisation is seen as another issue that unfortunately need to consider and try to protect our students from being drawn into

that. I think the feeling, I mean there are still some academics. I think it's really healthy that people are challenging, I really do, because if people just accepted that's what it is then there is something seriously wrong and I think it's really healthy. I really really value and I like it when people challenge Prevent as long as they are willing to listen and really understand the duty because I think it's wrong to expect academics to spy on their students and if that's what they think I would like to challenge that because I don't think that's what Prevent is asking them to do. So historically I have personally I have dealt with those who are resistant to engage and I think it's probably safe to say over the past three or four years it has definitely, I think academics and staff at universities think they are better now at understanding what is expected of them and once they have implemented the duty in 2015 it has started to make sense a little bit so we do need to have an IT policy for example but it's not a big deal, we are going to protect our students against it, do you know what I mean? For a start people didn't really like it and now it's probably less people that has reduced.

**LS:** You mentioned a common perception is that Prevent is spying on students; do you think that perception is still out there and do you think that others believe that it is targeting specific groups?

**SK:** Absolutely, I think It would be naïve for me to say it wasn't. the perception is still there and there was a minority that would think that Prevent was targeting specific groups, which is Muslim people and I think that we have to take that into account and we have to take the extremity risk here because unfortunately perception is really what matters to people and if that's what I think then that's what I'm going to believe so unfortunately it's out there and there are so many examples I could give you where people did think that or people did voice that but the reality ... and that's me as a professional working in the environment, especially since Brexit we have had a really sharp increase in our figures around extreme right wing narrative ... I mean without quoting figures or anything but we had about 90% of referrals in February were relating to extreme right wing as opposed to Islamic terrorism and people don't know. They think we are in our offices trying to target Muslim people but that's not reality, its perception and its only when you talk to people and try to understand that they know its factually incorrect but the perception is out there and we have to respect that and try to change it.

**LS:** You said that the majority of your referrals in February were right wing extremism related, was that the case before Brexit as well?

**SK:** It was a mix, depending on what is going on in the world for example, if you do have a terrorist attack somewhere else in the world involving a Muslim person or someone declaring to be a Muslim ... you have an increase in right wing activities in this country because people do go out and attack any Muslim walking down the street saying you're a terrorist because of what happened yesterday. Do you know what I mean? It's really relating to what's going on internationally and globally it has an impact on our referrals. Before that it's not necessarily, I mean, like I said we've seen a sharp

increase which means we had less right wing referrals before but we were certainly working across the board if its right wing, extreme left wing, IRA related, Islamist terrorism, animal right activists, and that's the things that really come to our attention.

**LS:** Do you think that institutions are getting on well with Prevent or are they struggling with Prevent?

**SK:** Umm I mean for example 100% of institutions in this country have responded to HEFCE which means that they are responding really well. I believe, and you may need to check these figures if you're going to publish it, but I believe only two were non-compliant which actually says quite a lot. So they are engaging with it, nobody blatantly refused to engage and submit their return. I think it's a positive sign and to be honest the response of the sector was far better than I anticipated. So you do have people who are academics and members of staff who are resilient but as institutions ... they I think they are engaging well with it.

**LS:** You've probably seen that the NUS have published a 'preventing Prevent' hotline and are generally quite anti Prevent, do you think that that is a barrier for institutions when implementing the duty?

**SK:** Absolutely, I think that's one of the biggest barriers because the SU are not covered by the Prevent duty so whilst the institutions are legally, the Students' Unions aren't and I think sometimes that's unfortunately the HE, I mean universities are in a really tricky position because they have to comply, they have to do their diligence checks and the SU aren't necessarily a part of that and its challenging to what the universities are doing but some of the good examples of what I've seen is that actually the Students' Unions get invited to the Prevent compliance groups so at every university they have established Prevent compliance groups which have members from across the institution and discuss how they are going to comply and whilst some of the SU's said that they don't want to engage or welcome Prevent they are willing to sit at that meeting and I think that is really helpful because it's important to understand the concerns of the students and that's what HEFCE is saying, you need to engage with your students and I think it's a barrier when they don't turn up to those meetings or they don't like Prevent and won't sit at the table, I think that's quite dangerous.

**LS:** Interesting. How do you think Prevent is working? Do you think it's going well or are there things that could be improved?

**SK:** There are always things that could be and should be improved and its wrong for us to say it's perfect and we won't change anything because it's wrong and counterproductive so there are lots of things that could be improved. Like you said the perception, and we need to work hard on that. Has it been working? I think it definitely has. We have prevented 150 people travelling to Syria and if you think about that, 150 people, 150 families, brothers, sisters, mothers, daughters you know all of these people who could have been affected by someone travelling to Syria, you know, dying in Syria and we have seen cases of this. Has it been working, you know, just take that

figure alone, 150 people travelling so for me it is actually quite successful. Could it be improved? Yes absolutely and I think for me really ... the lack of terrorist attacks doesn't necessarily mean that Prevent is fantastic but at the same time having a terrorist attack relating to students at university doesn't mean Prevent has failed, you know, it's a balance because the university might have done everything possible and that person didn't show any signs at the institution so for me the work that I do, the support I have personally and in my team have provided to be, for families has really, its factually incorrect to say it doesn't work because it does, we've seen families, we've seen people with recent supporting of hundreds and hundreds of lay people so yes it is working.

**LS:** That's good. You have said about perceptions, how do you think we can change the negative connotations that surround Prevent?

**SK:** I think umm ... one of the key issues, I guess, with the Prevent strategy is that we aren't really willing to talk to people very much. So what we say for example, oh were dealing with extreme right wing narrative but we are never willing to tell them figures and that is just really really hard to convince people who aren't necessarily given the facts. Part of the Home Office strategy, Home Office owns Prevent, have realised that this is an issue and for us we need to be more transparent. We need to talk to people more often and tell them about the work we do and that's how we challenge perceptions and for example, I don't know whether you've seen this but there was something at Westminster yesterday which said that Prevent had caused the burning of the Quran, the Quran is the Muslim Bible, I am Muslim and it was so offensive when I heard it but actually it is factually incorrect. Prevent has never ever done that and that's the problem, by the time we challenge that there are so many people who have read it and instead of saying we won't comment on that we say let's go out and challenge that statement because we can't leave it. I think it's really about being honest and transparent and being more outward with our figures, being more honest with our work and try and publish some of the successful cases as I think that would really really help, for example I was at a conference recently where we had someone who was about to travel to Syria but didn't and for him to come and talk about his experience, you cannot challenge that and he could talk about how Prevent has saved his life is something that cannot be replicated. You literally have about 150 people in that room silent listening to him for about 45 minutes, how Prevent got involved and supported him, how they got him to realise it was the wrong thing and showing how it works. It's harder for people to challenge it but like I said it should be challenged because we don't always get it right.

**LS:** We are now going to think about Prevent and cyberspace and the role that Prevent could play if it was extended to being compulsory within cyberspace. In 1992 Sterling defined cyberspace as the place between two electronically connected communication devices where people meet and communicate. Based on this definition do you believe that it is possible to stop radicalisation within cyberspace?

**SK:** I don't think so, I mean this is an area which is probably out of my knowledge but ... I think what you look at here is not as I say Prevent because Prevent is more, we don't really work, we have to work with individuals so I don't know if you've come across this but Prevent deals with three 'I's', it deals with institutions, it deals with ideology so someone is born into a specific ideology and it deals with individuals. The only way that Prevent could operate in cyberspace is by dealing with these people and identify somebody who is potentially vulnerable to radicalisation. From my perspective this is not really Prevent, it is more the Pursue strand because this is where the covert, managing intelligence and things like that so I think because the way we work in Prevent is refer someone potentially to Channel and engage with them in person, face to face, so I don't know how Prevent could be linked to that. Does that make sense?

**LS:** Yeah it does. So a lot of people think that cyberspace is simply social media. That's not the case but it is becoming an increased tool by terrorist organisations to recruit individuals who tend to be vulnerable. Do you believe that it is a big risk to the HE sector that students can access social media wherever they are?

**SK:** So what you're saying is should the HE sector stop students from accessing social media?

**LS:** Should the HE sector be responsible for what their students are seeing on social media?

**SK:** No because I guess students could see what they want to see on their personal devices and I think the HE sector shouldn't play a part of policing the internet, if that's the case. I certainly think as someone with the work I have done, actually when you think that someone could have been sat at a university, a student who wanted for whatever reason to blow up a Mosque, and he does all the research online, he is in the university, he buys everything he needs for the attack online and commits the attack and kills 200 or 300 people, it's about what about the reputation of the university? Do you know what I mean? So I don't think they should be responsible for everything the students say but using their devices I think the university have a duty of care and have to protect their reputation because that's not going to sound very well in the Daily Mail for example where the university student has planned an attack and all of that at the university campus, killing 200 or 300 people and the university didn't even know, so I think it's a balance and I think we have to protect the academic freedom because that is really important. Prevent should never get in the way of that, it shouldn't be stopping people, it should be encouraging research, it should be encouraging people to be radical and things that are controversial but it is a fine line.

**LS:** I know that some institutions have looked at monitoring and filtering web content; do you know any specifics on how many institutions are looking at those methods?

**SK:** Every institution has to do that, so everyone will be looking at it. The difference is, so HEFCE would say, so the legal duty is for them to consider having an IT policy for filtering in place, not all of them have done that some of them have, and some haven't

but those who haven't, they have to remain it in their risk assessment and the risk assessment needs to be dynamic, proportionate and contextualised and my advice in my role is to keep it on the list and review it as and when, because I mean it does cost a lot and it's about, the risk assessment is proportionate and you think is it proportionate to have it, do you know what I mean? I think all are looking at it.

**LS:** Do you think that these methods stop radicalisation or are they just something that works well in schools and the FE sector?

**SK:** That's a good question, it's tricky and it's not a black and white answer. Can it stop radicalisation? It's not going to stop radicalisation but it can help and we've had referrals where people are looking online at certain illegal material and we've managed to get there quickly to talk to the person and so far give them a word of advice, to know that National Action who have the same values as a terrorist organisations, actually you can be arrested for being downloading their material so sometimes it works but these processes are not going to stop radicalisation, no. Radicalisation could happen looking at something quite innocent but nobody would ever refer it to Prevent or otherwise, do you know what I mean? It could be something so so silly that could be just watching the news around Westminster attacks and someone thinks they could do that.

**LS:** Do you think that at some stage having monitoring or filtering is going to be compulsory for the HE sector?

**SK:** Hard to answer, personally, not from personally, personally I don't think so but I don't know. This sits with HEFCE and I guess as a government what we have to do is review things across threat changes and if it does we may feel we have to do more. As we are at this moment in time I don't think it will change because things have been working ok and I think universities have given us what we want and we think they are taking the duty seriously and I don't think there would be a reason to add more work to it.

**LS:** Interesting, I know that in France they are filtering on a national level, do you think that if there was an array of terrorist attacks in a short proximity that it is something that could be bought in nationally here?

**SK:** I don't know about France, I don't know a lot to compare us to France but we've got internet referral units, I don't know if you've heard of them, but they, I can't remember but there was someone who came to my conference and gave a presentation and said something like 45,000 comments a week are taken down. The problem is terrorist organisations such as Daesh, for example, they use Twitter and you can never stop us using twitter because actually it would be infringement of free speech and academic freedom. They use, unfortunately terrorist organisations use these simple platforms to do this so I don't know how the UK can stop that or how they should stop that because it's too much infringement on our human rights.

**LS:** Are there any elements that you would like to see removed from the duty, or anything that you would like to see added that hasn't been considered?

**SK:** Umm ... I haven't thought of that question, as a professional I think you just put your head down and ... I don't think anything needs to be removed, I think what could be added is like I said earlier it's about us being more transparent and maybe have a way of regularly sharing with key stakeholders, some of the success that we do, I think that would be really really useful. I think it would help, having maybe a newsletter around external speakers, do you know what I mean? Some of the issues people are handling at the baby stages and I don't think anything needs to be deleted and I don't think Prevent needs to be renamed or rebranded or some of the comments that have been said. I think it's healthy for us to review it and when you asked me this question I thought, oh, because I have worked in this for so long and I think it would be good to add fresh people in to ask 'why do you do it that way?' then you would set up the success and I think it would be really useful, and I think the government does that well really, but just I've been involved in it quite a few years, looking at what you're doing and is it the right way. I think we need more of it and do it more regularly, we need to listen to people we need to abstract how we are going to challenge the perception as I say perception is really really important because it can become reality in people's minds. I think reviewing it regularly and in terms of the HE sector I think it is becoming more what they do on a daily basis, it used to be a big deal but I don't think it is anymore, people understand their duty and they are just doing what they need to. I mean, referrals I have been receiving referrals from university's that didn't used to refer and I think having that trust and relationship and I think keep it that way with trust.

**LS:** Thank you very much, S.



## Appendix 9 - Interview Transcript, Participant 7 – Prevent Lead

**LS:** Hi S, it would be great if you can talk about your knowledge of Prevent and how it links to the national counter terrorism strategy.

**SD:** OK Liam, no problem. I have been involved in Prevent related work since about 2008 in different ways from representing the university at the local county board partnership boards, group committees that have different names as we've gone along. Since that period and over that time I've been trying to see what we can do at the university to put in place, let's call it "stuff" that is good for students, good for us, follows some of the national expectations, moving through to recently of course where it's not just 'it could be nice if you do that' but we have to follow a Prevent duty so my knowledge is hopefully pretty good. I deliver training on it, I chaired the county board for a few years, although not at the moment, so hopefully I know some stuff that is helpful.

**LS:** How does that sit with the rest of the counter terrorism strategy?

**SD:** In terms of my knowledge or how I see Prevent as part of it?

**LS:** How Prevent is a part of the strategy.

**SD:** I suppose the other three defined areas I wouldn't say I'm an expert on those but they all seem a bit more, perhaps more obvious to the lay person as to what they mean so when I do training I put funny pictures up ... when you put the Pursue one up and there is a picture of the police looking excited, I think people understand what that means and they are glad that is there when we talk about Protect and Prepare, again. Not an expert on those but when you talk though what that work is about there is always a level of mystery as to who, what and where they do it but people are glad it's there and it makes good sense. When you talk about Prevent people are more ... isn't it Pursue with a funny name, does it really work? Is it targeted at certain communities, ages, faith groups? So I think it really does work and I think it's pretty vital otherwise the risk is all we would be doing is pursuing and arguably pursuing ghosts... but it's not simple for other people to understand just it doesn't go down as easily when you train lay people as the other three pillars because they get that and it's good. Prevent I think often feels weird. At my level I think it does make sense.

**LS:** You said that the perception is around targeting certain communities. Within the HE sector do you think that certain communities are targeted?

**SD:** ... Right, so at \*institution\*, no I don't think so because how we have interpreted the stuff locally in the institution I think definitely not. Talking to colleagues who are also running HE or FE institutions in \*location\* I think they aren't either. I think there is risk in the HE sector that they are in the wrong hands. Probably by accident than by ... planning or conspiracy it may well lead to that or have the perception that it is but you could argue that Prevent that institutions like our own haven't complied with such stuff in itself it is targeting students by the government... by whoever puts it all

together, by whoever wishes it most that we have to follow the Prevent duty, so that is a school of thought that what my day job I don't have time to focus because have to get on and comply but arguably students, by definition are intelligent, mostly young folks are arguably targeted a bit and it's how, what filters are there to stop it feeling so dreadful, because there is a need for it to be but I'm sure in the wrong hands, and therefore will happen in the HE sector, there will be some folks that feel targeted.

**LS:** As Prevent lead for the institution, what do you think has been the most challenging thing since prevent became compulsory?

**SD:** ... There is a right range really, I think because I don't know if I could rank them... I think one is the duty, the responsibility that you should be engaging with the student body about it and I think that is quite tough when the context is mild locally, you know, I would say and I would say before on many occasions our Students' Union, our students, our level of political debate in this place is low to moderate and therefore students are not knocking on our door asking what we are doing around fees, or the government plans on anything actually and so this is one of them so the debate is quite calm and low and ... almost non-existent it feels like at times. Therefore to engage with them and have a discussion and educate them when they aren't that interested, which is a horrible stereotype, I find that hard. I know you in your role this year, we have discussed many times, what is the best way, is there a best way how to do it? It is tricky. As it is with other matters that are non-Prevent related, it's a difficult body to reach, that is one thing. I think trying to make sure that the place understands what we do, how we do it, why we do it, why the style of what we do is how it is, we think we have it cracked and then we find a bunch of people who haven't quite got it. I guess that's like when you train anything some people who haven't received it yet so the ... the mechanism to help get people to understand it is tricky, academic staff is challenging but we think we have a plan although it's a long time coming, as you know and I think that will be difficult when we launch it. I think those are the two stand out things for me.

**LS:** Do you know how other institutions are getting on with Prevent? Do they like it, are they against it?

**SD:** There is a mixture, nobody likes it, I think that would be too nice. There are two bits, there is 'you have to comply' so we are nurtured to not like it then because nobody wants to comply with stuff they want to do things because they believe in it or its right for them. I'm yet to meet many people in jobs like mine in the sector who love having it but there are plenty who see the value in elements of it. Folks who look after student services, student wellbeing, student welfare, if they are in charge of it they feel moderately comfortable because it's in the right place. When they aren't in charge of it and it's gone down the head of security or head of facilities area, they struggle a bit with that because it immediately feels like policing and targeting and it probably isn't but it's how they feel and therefore the resistance is greater. I suspect in those situations the university or college management group decided who has the ability to

do it but that can give a perception that doesn't get people to sign up as easily. At the ended level, hatred is a strong word but there is irritation about it in the sector.

**LS:** There are various requirements that each HE institution has to abide by, would you be able to talk about what we do at \*institution\* to tackle some of these compulsory elements?

**SD:** Yes, first of all what I would say is that we haven't developed all of it in a rush ... when the Prevent duty went live we weren't starting from scratch. A number of things we have in place have been so for many years and so we take student wellbeing seriously so folks for example chaplaincy, for example is not here just about active worship, following a particular faith ... its around student wellbeing, student pastoral care so for the chaplaincy team and the spaces they run to then fall in line with what we do in the Prevent duty it wasn't difficult. So some things are quite simple, do all of our student services staff understand Prevent, know about safeguarding and understand that we are using it in a way that's around supporting student wellbeing and safeguarding as opposed to student targeting that was already in place for some years but linked to Prevent. Those things weren't tricky, the things we have put in place ... I suppose actively, since the duty came into effect was our policies and procedures because there was no need to have them before, it was sub sided by our general policies with student activity and student safety and now we have distinct stuff which hasn't been difficult to do but we've had to do it and that's across student welfare, IT and also developing the risk register and action plan. There are things we've had to do that are defined and really, for me, that was about making sure we are compliant as opposed to doing loads of things to do with the way we live our student wellbeing to meet the duty. I don't think we have changed our approach because of the duty but we have documented it because we had to because of the duty. I think what is interesting is that it's given a ... torch onto how we do things like that for people in executive management and the governing body because actually would never have gone to the governing body, what we call the council, and given them a training session on how we do student safeguarding because the interest wouldn't be there but we have had to so I have. Actually that was a decent conversation and they are genuinely interested. Some things have been interesting out of it but we haven't had to develop loads of stuff as a service offer that wasn't here already.

**LS:** Do you know if that's the case at other institutions as well?

**SD:** No I think plenty have had to do a lot of stuff. They may well have been doing student safeguarding very well but certainly when I went to one of the first briefings about the launch of the duty or ahead of it being launched by a few months, there were three other ... folks who do similar jobs to me in bigger universities than ours that had never heard of Prevent. It wasn't that they couldn't be bothered with the Prevent strategy to think it was for them but they had never heard of it but we better go to this thing because a duty sounds like it's something they have to do. They may well have been doing good stuff for students but just hadn't been doing training and formal stuff

in place like we had for a number of years so lots of them had to do an awful lot of catch up to get their student facing staff at a level where it's not about targeting or policing, it's about morphing into everyday work and linked to the earlier theme we mentioned and therefore it's been more unpopular in those places where its felt like a massive change, it probably hasn't been but it has felt like it.

**LS:** So, do you think that Prevent is efficient? Do you think it works in the HE sector?

**SD:** I think there are elements of it that are excellent so actually if well trained staff notices the students are going down a road leading to a life of chaos, upset, causing upset for their colleagues, housemates, course mates and partners, where they've taken their steps to extremist or radicalised route for us to be able to think about that I think it's something we know about, and make a referral as appropriate and turn them around hopefully it would be better safer and a more positive journey and finish their studies...do what they want to do when they stepped through the door that's great. It's no different to seeing someone who has a drug addiction or gambling and noticing and helping but its interesting and good and its very overt now, it's out there and we know we can look for those things and there's a place to get assistance. Five or six years ago it may have been a bit opaque so that is good. Is it efficient... did I need the Prevent duty to do that? No. so does it feel like in a place like this from my job a bit over the top...yes it does because I think we were doing the Prevent strategy already but I guess if other weren't, it must be a reason why they have done it. It has not been publicised for me to understand but others can't have been doing it well enough for universities to have to do it. It is weird though that ... the Prevent duty covers such a multi sector, at the same time with an equal relevance or hierarchy or expectations for us to be in the same band ads prisons, probation, does feel weird so I'm not sure how efficient it can be. Certainly from the government ... you know, between the various government departments I would say that the communications have not proved efficient at all so ... you know, DfE publications on it, guidance, updates, briefings are rare and often they seem a bit late compared to other departments and so I know because talking to head teachers and there has been a lot of training and briefings on it for them , there was hardly any notice whatsoever and had to do stuff fairly quickly and it came out at times before the summer holidays and the next before the Christmas holidays and there was a small window to respond. There are efficiencies to be made and that is a real, that's why people feel under pressure because they cannot respond in time and people respond negatively even if they are not that offended by the actual ... theme or action they have to take.

**LS:** Now we are going to turn to think about Prevent and cyberspace. In 1992 Sterling defined cyberspace as the place between two electronically connected communication devices where people actually meet and communicate. Based on this definition do you believe that it is possible to stop radicalisation in cyberspace?

**SD:** ... Stop, probably not, and certainly well ok...certainly not as a university or a director of student services. I think it is the same, isn't it, as ... it works the same as if

I meet someone in a dark alley or in a pub or in my house and I have a conversation with them, no one might know and that conversation is unlimited ... and if it's about radicalisation and extremism and leading to, the unlikelihood is that we won't know straight away. It feels to me if we are taking about conversations but not locally, but through the internet, social media, emails, I'm not sure it can be stopped. I think it would be, well I don't know what so say, I can't believe it could be stopped.

**LS:** Do you think there are measures that could be put in place to help prevent radicalisation in cyberspace?

**SD:** Yes, and there are bigger minds than mine. I'm sure there folks really on the go at government agencies, GCHQ and wherever else, we know there have been conversations about Facebook and other social media providers where they are tolerating nastiness and what are they doing and are under pressure to do things ... I'm not sure they know what the can do, it feels to me that with WhatsApp conversations are they able to anyway. They will now be focussing on can they, and what means are there. I'm sure there are things that can be done... but it's hard to see it being rolled out at a university and everybody being watched and monitored in such a way because that means because ... I can't believe there is a capacity to exist to watch every conversation, that is massive.

**LS:** So you don't think it is possible to stop radicalisation within cyberspace?

**SD:** I would be shocked if it could be.

**LS:** In particular research is suggesting that social media is being used by terrorist organisations to recruit particularly vulnerable individuals. Do you see that as something that is a risk to the HE sector?

**SD:** Yes ... not to the sector, to the people that are vulnerable so yes of course. No different to any other sector I would guess but I would imagine the NHS would be more worried than ourselves about it but yeah absolutely there is evidence that such groups are using it but as well as other groups that would target ... so we have heard of far right groups that perhaps aren't looking for ultimately terrorist action but nasty action and spelling their nasty beliefs to people. They are certainly using social media and animal rights groups also do and that's great but when it goes one step beyond, it isn't. So it's targeting interested, moderately intelligent people, that's for sure and the targeting vulnerability is fairly vile really. They won't be the only ones doing it and I think that's why there is pressure on Facebook, twitter and WhatsApp and what is fundamentally key is that if they allow it to exist on their sites ... you are saying to people who are vulnerable that it is fair game to look at it and that's a big issue. I don't believe that the HE sector is at risk more than anyone else but if you are at the eye of the storm, of course any organisation or sector where there is a case where someone has been recruited and they have gone and done something awful, that place, the PR machine will be working overdrive and it would be easier to say, well you know, it's the Prevent strategy and this sector has been targeted, but I think its life where people

deflect what they can. Ultimately people who are vulnerable you have to try your best to help their vulnerability whatever that vulnerability is which is tricky.

**LS:** I know that other institutions have looked at monitoring and filtering. We don't do that as an institution here. What would be your reasons as Prevent lead to start monitoring or filtering?

**SD:** ... I think that if we are, if we were ever to start properly doing it I think that would be because we have been told to and I don't mean by the boss, I think a change in the Prevent duty legislation that says you must. I don't think we have the appetite here to do it, I think that's one key thing. When we do it, it will be because we have to, not because we want to or choose to. Academic freedom is really important and the recognition of limitations on what could be monitored so we can monitor things on our network but if someone has their own ISP though their mobile or laptop then you can't monitor that. I think as a non-IT person in the current climate you would be monitoring, we would have to make people aware we were doing it, we would therefore be monitoring the safe conversations or people doing credible, positive, appropriate research in this area which we would have allowed them to do. If folks would be targeted, if folks would engage in hat conversation and they know we are monitoring I would suspect they do it away from our network so we would never know. It would be rubbish at the end if it didn't happen, 'we monitor but we didn't notice because it was done off our network', that would be a rubbish conversation. The people who are sharp will not therefore use a monitored communication tool.

**LS:** Do you have the same view on filtering?

**SD:** I am more relaxed about filtering...I think you know from our conversations previously ... hard work filtering, if we ask the IT department are they filtering this, that and the other, a fairly small people working there wouldn't be able to do that. I know we have been working with JISC buying, let's call it a 'module' that does something for us that we can ... utilise umm and that is able to put filters in but still gives people the freedom to visit sites, so a filter coming up saying 'are you really sure you want to go to this dark web website' or whatever, and they all have the ability to do it if they wish but they have been given the prompt of 'this doesn't look good to us, why are you doing it?' and I think that is a good idea, I think people stumble across things they don't mean to particularly if they are vulnerable, around gambling, drugs, drink, pornography, child abuse etc criteria of extremism or radicalisation, across different levels. For me I think that's probably quite a good thing. Have I got proof it works? No I haven't.

**LS:** If we were to implement either monitoring, filtering or both, what implications would that have for the institution?

**SD:** Umm ... depends what we do, there is the financial one, about can we afford to do it, what purposes are in place, there will be a resources implication there. There will be a potentially a PR issue that students are questioning why are we doing it but linked

to my previous answer, would they notice, are they that worried, I'm not so sure they would be because I think lots of folks think they are being monitored anyway so thanks for telling us. I'm not sure it would be a big worry that way but there would be one or two who push the envelope on that and good for them ... and I suppose it's then what do you do if ... so if you start monitoring and someone has looked at something that could lead to a right old industry on who are my officers to investigate, what do we do about it anyway, is it our business? Who are we to judge? I'm not just talking about Prevent here; once you start monitoring you start monitoring stuff. If you don't take any action at all what is the point? A resource down that road, are they really stones that we need to lift because people are probably just living their life and that could just be a liberal views but certainly for me who has responsibility for students, it could be a right old industry to set up and I'm not sure what we would achieve.

**LS:** So finally I am going to think about future directions for Prevent. Is there anything you would like to see added to the duty, anything you'd like to see taken away or maybe something to put in place instead of Prevent?

**SD:** Put in place of, no I don't think so. I think everyone knows it now, not everyone, but the sector understands it and people are comfortable with its use and the multiagency approach and I think that's good. It has its knockers but if replaced with something else so would that. You'll never get the NUS to think it's a good idea whatever you call it so I ... I'm relaxed in that it sticks around, in some ways we've done a lot of work on it because we've had to do a lot of work about it and it'd be a waste to put it in the bin or to rebrand it would be irritating actually. I would like some clarity because I feel that there is clarity sort of at the moment around IT filtering and monitoring and all of that stuff so I under the duty its very clear we have to show we've discussed and make a decision about are we monitoring and filtering and we've made that very clear but we get questions on are we going to filter and that's not what the duty is asking us to do. they want everyone to go down a certain road without saying it, they need to say it if that's what they want us to do, tell us because we could probably do it the next step is once you do that what happens and I think that's interesting ... so I think they need to get over themselves frankly, I don't know if that's the government or HEFCE and I don't really care because its hinted that just talking about it to reach a decision is not good enough but that's what they ask for and that irritates me so I'd like that to be resolved. I don't think there's anything I'd like to add because it's complicated enough and it could already be seen as over burdening some. What I wouldn't like to see is that it in any way ... it toughens up and isn't around safeguarding but is actually around something else...I don't think it will because for me that was never tasteful for a sector like ours but maybe in a prison, not having worked in one or been in one, but it may be that it should be slightly different but for ourselves, schools and NHS it feels about right. To add more ... nosiness would be difficult.

**LS:** Do you think that there are likely to be compulsory elements added?

**SD:** It feels like a gift that keeps on giving so I suspect that there will be and it may not be aimed at HE ... the Westminster attacks a few weeks ago is a reminder that there is stuff going on and so governments want to be seen to be doing more to make sure it doesn't happen again and other than ... using intelligence that they already have on people what else have they got? Umm there is public and they talk about things that aren't Prevent so I can imagine either more sectors being added, more area of life, or more being added to the duty for the sectors already involved. I kind of understand that particularly, do I think that would be good? I doubt it because I think it's, for HE we are doing quite a bit already when actually the evidence is that hardly anybody in HE is doing anything anyway so how far do you need to go? I would hope there wouldn't be that much more but I reckon they are bound to.

**LS:** Thank you very much, S.



## Appendix 10 - Interview Transcript, Participant 8 – University Academic

**LS:** Hi M, it would be great if you can talk about your knowledge of Prevent, how it links to the national counter terrorism strategy and also any requirements that Prevent has in the HE sector.

**MR:** Yeah I think as I understand it I think from Higher Education's point of view I think the Prevent duty is actually rather interesting because as I was saying before, what it appears that a large proportion of ... terrorists on the continent have been recruited through various clubs such as karate clubs, boxing clubs etc. Britain is kind of unique in a way that terrorists are being radicalised in mosques so the first question Higher Education has is why us? What are we supposed to do in relation to the Prevent duty and I think all of the articles about Higher Education are very interesting in that they coincide with another part of university life that you may well be very aware of which is freedom of speech and safe spacing, triggering etc and all of the discourses surrounding that. The Prevent duty has come out in an interesting time for Higher Education and I think looking at other areas of British public life umm university wouldn't necessarily have occurred to me that universities would be included on this ... but we are and obviously we have to respond to it...so looking through the documents as I say I think the idea that students want personal safety, that they want to feel themselves safe, recent ... umm controversies surrounding external speakers who have not been given a platform who have been banned etc. so obviously in Higher Education we have to keep a real eye on this because if we don't freedom of speech which should be subsequent in a university often isn't and if you look at a lot of Students' Union policies umm they are actually quite illiberal and from the absurd like banning blurred lines or sombreros etc can be dismissed as relatively absurd through to the possibility of banning certain speakers who may be considered dangerous and a number of these documents wrap themselves in knots around how on the one hand no no no we don't want to stop free speech, and in the next breath saying well well there are certain things etc. the list of characteristics in the Prevent duty that also mention age, disability, gender, race, sex, religion, sexuality, pregnancy, marriage which pretty much covers every single aspect of humanity and one wonders you know, I think as I said to you before the word extremist is used throughout the Prevent duty and they have aligned it very deliberately with the word terrorism as I have said previously, what does the word extremism mean? The word extreme means whatever the present government considers extreme...ifs a pretty naf point to make but there are many people in the current government who I consider being extreme or having an extreme view. I think it's an extreme move to leave Europe, you know, so it's according to where you stand politically as to who is extreme and who isn't. After watching the Dave Shappel comedy shows on Netflix, a number of people call him extreme for making jokes they considered offensive and so I'm making perhaps a facetious point but it seems important that we keep an eye on what extremism means and how it might be applied to students behaviour or actions. I think that is linked to certainly what I teach where there are some books on some syllabus' that could be

considered quite extreme ... I think further down the line, you know, we end up stretched, taking books from book lists for fear that somewhere down the line students might be offended or upset and I think there is a dangerous precedent. It's a very long winded answer but that I think, the key to it is how the Prevent duty has hit with questions of freedom of speech in safe spaces and triggering and non-platforming and just to finish off that point, at the moment it would appear that a lot of the most illiberal people on campus' come from Students' Unions who actively started to ban non-platform speakers even before any of this compliance which is kind of weird so Prevent comes in at a very, kind of fragile, moment for universities.

**LS:** Since Prevent has been compulsory in 2015, what challenges have there been in your role as an academic?

**MR:** No specific challenges as yet but certainly it's no coincidence that we have had some debates and discussions in class and outside of class about what is acceptable in terms of material that we read umm ... and again to kind of rip of the word extremism, there are walls, texts, films, theories that might be considered extreme, what certainly when they were first shared were considered extreme ... and again it's all about context, isn't it, that what we might in good conscience be reading out of text that is considered as controversial, or extreme and we don't know how that's going to be received by the students so again what Prevent, the work that, it's very clear in the word that they have used to prevent, to stop the curb before it gets going. Now, you've got shades of minority report going on kind of Tom Cruise stopping people before they commit a crime and its ... no coincidence that it's this topic in science fiction, you know it's kind of what they are asking us to do, is for Higher Education Tom Cruises and somehow they list some behaviours, certain actions noticing people in again, interesting to see, we have to spot vulnerability ... how on earth are we supposed to do that? Higher Education, it's very interesting to compare the Higher Education Prevent duty with the one for schools. The one for schools makes a bit more sense because teachers are much more involved with kids and so little 5,6,7,8 year olds it's possibly much easier to see and identify and teachers have that responsibility, they are in locus parentus and they are basically parents for the day. They have to look after these little kids and they are vulnerable and vulnerable in all ways. By the time you get to Higher Education you are teaching adults, 18 year olds and the levels to which you can be involved in students' lives is very limited, as it rightly should be because students are adults and so it's not our responsibility to look after students in the same way that students look after children, hence why I have sat here with many students over the years and it is clear that they are having a lot of problems, whatever problems they may be ... now there is places where I can ... show the students to go to the helpzone, go to senior tutors etc and I think there at this university one of things we are really good at is pastoral care but there is only so much I can do and I think most students, not all students, wouldn't want me to pry either. The question I have with this Prevent strategy and how it connects with what we do day to day is even if I suspect a student was and I'll go dot dot dot here, having problems at home, problems

with their folks, boyfriend or girlfriend problems, drink and drugs problems, whatever it may be, there's a limit how much I can involve myself because I have to teach, talk and do what we are doing now. So even if a student was going off the rails, vulnerable to radicalisation, vulnerable to extremism etc ... you know, then of course I would report it, I have a duty to report it and talk to people to say so and so. I can see how it plays out but it seems to me in the day to day relationships with students mostly of us recognise that we are not here to discuss those issues, we are here to discuss academic issues and I don't think students particularly see us as the ones to talk about those subjects with anyway. If you think about your relationship with lecturers, it just isn't like that, we can be friendly and warm and can talk about telly and football but at a certain point I can't imagine that many of us either A, what to share our private lives with lecturers or lecturers want to share private lives with the students. That anticipatory nature of Prevent is problematic for us in higher education, I think it's much clearer as a teacher, as a lecturer it is less but I can see as I mentioned earlier, I can see a problem in relationship to us making certain assumptions based on ethnicity, race, perceived religion, even class as to certain students and as it were thinking to ourselves after day one that he, she, they look a problem, based on what? What are you basing that on, their surname, the way they dress, the way they pray or don't pray, the community they come from etc etc. What are you doing then? You are red flagging students based on racist assumptions, based on islamophobic assumptions etc. Again, at least one of these documents does start to engage with some of those issues, saying we can see why people have an issue with it but absolute worst case scenario could be, doing Prevent, oh hello he looks a bit foreign and straight away before even meeting anyone, due to a surname, you can't judge on a surname. Do you see what I mean?

**LS:** Is this really a danger in Higher Education?

**MR:** Massive, because you can't, you can't legislate and that's what this is all about, you can't legislate for individual responses and what we know about racism and sexism and homophobia etc is sometimes it's well intentional people that accidentally say something, I'm tired and didn't mean it, or make an assumption about gender or make an assumption about using a particular pronoun and these are all live, hot subjects in universities for good reason. I think lecturers, more than anybody need to keep on rebooting our sense of the language that we use, the ideas that we put forward and I think it could be the case that the most well intentioned, most I just want to do my job and do this and make sure I am doing the Prevent stuff etc and suddenly three months down the line they are doing that. They just made that massive generalised assumption about a student based on, you know.

**LS:** In my research so far I have come across two general perceptions of what Prevent is. The first one is a safeguarding approach which is all about welfare and looking after our students and the second is a targeting approach which you just mentioned now. Which do you see as the primary view of academics as to what Prevent is?

**MR:** I would say that it would probably be, there will probably be more suspicion at the very least than collusion, academics by their training usually don't just go along with things, they will come and question it ... I think where it might be an issues is those in managerial positions who feel pressure to make sure we go along with this. It's kind of an academic a few years ago talked about two universities, one was the official university that you see on the website, the open days and through the vice chancellors speeches and it's all positive and says we are doing great. Then there is the hidden university which is what we know, in the classroom, in the library, in the SU bar, in the pub, which is the much less formal and I think there Prevent is being discussed and debated and satirised, taken apart, discussed etc and for me the best of the university which is doing what we are doing now which is speaking freely, honestly and respecting views whilst at the same time feeling free enough to say what we think and most of us are ok with that and we do it and with my students all the time we talk about intense, difficult, problematic issues about history or politics and I like to think they accept that I will speak my mind and they will speak their mind etc. I think at its absolute least worst the safeguard principle works on the same way that, you know, you would have a word with your senior tutor saying you've had a word with so and so and he is in a bit of trouble or he's not getting enough sleep, I don't know, maybe he ins boozing a bit too much, maybe just email him and say, hi do you want to come in for a chat? At that level it is fine, looking after students and making sure they are ok. I can see the safeguard element and as I say its common sense and if a student stands up in a classroom and shouts very aggressively invective, that is either racist, sexist, homophobic etc and you would deal with that and you don't necessarily need a government eject to do that. You would take that person out of the classroom and say it was hurtful, offensive and for the most part post the internet 2.0 most students are very nervous about speaking in public and offending people and I have noticed a generation, the millennials, are very kind and polite and rather respectful of each other, it's when they go online that they go crazy, that's when they go nuts and it may lead to that but my experience is one on one, looking into someone's eyes and most of us don't want to offend and upset ... I think from the most part most of it is common sense that most pf us recognise. Debates and discussions about what can and can't be said is really intriguing. We have recently had a debate about freedom of speech where at the end I joked with students about largely it was only me speaking because they were anxious about speaking about free speech and most of them left the room thinking, I did a vote at the start and a vote at the end and at the start most said they believed in free speech, by the end of it, it was only me with my hand up and it kind of changed their mind a little bit. They said that you can't say anything, there are limits and I think again, you know, anticipating talking about the digital world is that probably is the key to everything and in fact I suspect being in a few years' time we will look at these documents and think they were a bit old fashioned and why were we worried about extremism and kindergartens because that's not going to happen and it was probably we needed to look on social media, you know, if that answers your question.

**LS:** Let's think a bit more about Prevent and cyberspace. In 1992 Sterling defined cyberspace as the place between two electronically connected communication devices where people actually meet and communicate. Based on that definition, do you believe that it is possible to prevent radicalisation in cyberspace?

**MR:** I mean, my initial answer is no. I am very interested in the history of the web and the internet and ... I think I think control of the internet has been the key discourse about its history whenever you date its inception, some say 1983, some say 1989, when the first email was sent. It is very clear to me there is two distinct eras of the internet. The first iteration of the internet which was free which was like the wild west, probably looked like 4chan looks now, nobody made any money out of it, nobody even thought to make money out of it, it was all a bit haphazard and a bit wild and I think we liked it because it was democratic and there were no gatekeepers, no big corporations making money out of it and whenever you want to date it, 2003, 2004 when Facebook started up we have internet 2.0 which is the internet we now have which is basically owned by 4, 5, 6 multibillion geopolitical companies owned by a small tiny group, mostly men umm ... and we have become the people who work for them and maximise profits for them and that's essentially what the internet is now. Who controls that over the last 5, 10, 15 years seems to me to be a key question, probably most of us shrug and say it's probably Google and probably Apple, Amazon etc and I read recently that someone said the most economists look at companies in six month cycles and without amazon and google the wealth is so inestimable, we think what's Google going to be doing in 30 years' time, that's how big it is. We can assume anything is good that is coming up, virtual reality, driverless cars, you know, it's just going to be who owns that. The idea that the internet is democratic is kind of almost over. The only place where it exists is in social media in the sense in which people can communicate with people in the ways they couldn't before leading to things like the Arab spring in that, if nothing else got people to tell the square, quicken in relationship to terrorism and to go back to your original question, I cannot see a way in which countries, nation states, think of course Google and amazon are basically nation states anyway, they have the wealth and power of nation states and have the ear of those in power. We also know that, we also know that google and many of those companies gave into the national security agency and gave into GCHQ and gave access to Meta data, to our data. Many of us don't seem to care which intrigues me. Edward Snowden said the one thing he feared more than anything else is that nobody would care about his revelations and it appears no one does care, nobody read terms and conditions, if we did read terms and conditions we wouldn't be where we are now. Just because we can get Ed Sheeran's or Justin Bieber's album on Amazon tomorrow, because the pleasure is so intense we turn a blind eye to everything else and there's not a lot we can do about it so I read recently a book called liberal terror where he talks about terrorism always reflecting the society that it is in. for instance, most interesting to you that the internet is totally free for us, we can contact each other Skype each other, get books off Amazon etc, watch game of thrones for free, we can do all of that and its brilliant, we love it. That's the very same freedom that allows terrorists to communicate with each other, allows

terrorists to put up propaganda and allows terrorists to groom young vulnerable people and get them together and we can't have one without the other I'm afraid and we kind of know that and terrorism is always there as a kind of, as a virus in our system so we can't ... there's nothing we can really do about it and I don't think many of us trust nation states to trust people to stop it. Whether or not, if a government comes out and says if we've been working for x number of years and we can now regulate an internet system to disallow certain people talking to each other that will have a big impact on all of us because we like skyping our mate who lives in a different country, we like all the benefits that the internet gives us and we like the idea that we self-police the internet and we like the idea that if someone comes onto a chat room or a blog and start being racist or sexist, whatever that we are the ones that gets involved and tell them to shut up. We don't want people doing it for us because we like the freedom of it. We might have to put up with some stuff that you really don't like, you know. In the deep dark web and 4chan etc well you want Ed Sheeran's album tomorrow, you know, you won't see it but that takes an awful lot of work paid by 'dumbo' people on zero hours contract to get Ed Sheeran to you tomorrow at 9am which you must have, right. Likewise if you want drugs or guns or whatever else you can get on the dark web, it's the same freedom in a way and I really don't think we can have one without the other I'm afraid, I just don't think, as much as I would like no jihadist, awful, English Defence League racist videos etc, I just don't see there is any way we can stop it.

**LS:** It's interesting you say about policing the internet because in France on a national level they are filtering extremist content so nobody in France, on the open source web, is able to access extremists, terrorist related material because terrorist organisations are increasingly using social media to recruit for their groups. If the government said that all Higher Education Institutes need to start implementing filtering, like they have done in France on a national level, do you think that it would be a step towards preventing radicalisation?

**MR:** That's a really interesting question. My initial response would be reasonably benign because I don't know. Umm I think what you've just said that's a really fascinating example of the nation state involving themselves directly in it. I suppose the rather tedious academic question would be well what constitutes extremist? Again, our laws do cover a lot of these issues, incitement to hatred, incitement to violence are laws already in place so if someone ... does shout ... dangerous umm statements about violent extremism we've covered that. In relationship to the nation state demanding Higher Education Institutes to do that it is a very problematic edict that would come down from the government and I think umm, I mean you say they have done that in France and again that intrigues me and again what might be the case there my instinct is that the French have a different relationship to the nation state than we do. It's also not unconnected that France has had the worst terrorist attacks in the last few years and so I might be answering very differently if I was an academic in Paris where I think the feeling is very different. The French definitely have a different attitude and a more engaged attitude to the nation state than we do and I suspect most

British people don't even see Britain as a nation state, mainly thanks to the fact of the Queen and the church is still involved unlike in France. If it is possible to implement like you say and the government can come up with a good working definition of what extremism is I think most can probably come up with one. I think what I would do is it sounds like semantics but semantics are important and I'd drop the word extremist and I think what the English Defence League and the National Front do are acts of terrorism and are acts to incite violence and I think that you know, I think making this difference between that far right wing groups can be happily put in that category and I think a bunch of fifty drunken yobs draped in union jacks marching through racially mixed areas like Birmingham, I'm quite critical there but it's terrorism. They want to riot and cause trouble, vend and hurt people so I think that. Again the wishy washy answer would be yeah ok, as long as we are clear what they are doing and it's done transparently but my more slightly miserablist answer is that I wouldn't trust the British government to do anything particularly skilfully or with any sensitivity ... and I would be deeply suspicious of that and we know that after every single terrorist attack politicians who want more security and surveillance etc they use this. Those of us who don't want that, our first thought is, oh no I hope nobody is hurt followed very quickly by here we go again, our freedom is going to be curtailed.

**LS:** If monitoring, filtering or those types of methods were implemented within every university how would that affect academic research?

**MR:** That's another really good question, really good question ... I think it will affect researchers who are researching into what would be perceived to be sensitive subjects, I mean the obvious is, you come from social sciences, clearly anyone doing any work looking into, let's say Islamic communities, looking into the reasons behind radicalisation, interviewing people, I think instantly there, there is a lot of problems you will have in relation to the information you receive, anonymity and then what you're supposed to do with this information in relationship to Prevent, I think anybody on the cutting edge of looking at academic research into terrorism, obviously someone like yourself in many ways ... there is a lot of work at the moment as I'm sure you know, about looking at networks, looking at networked communities, looking at the reasons behind terrorism, asking questions that politicians themselves don't know, for instance whether British foreign policy has anything to do with the rise of radicalisation. That's a question that no politician wants to ask because it's a very dangerous question and we don't want to enable terrorists with a political agenda, we want to say they are mad and evil and they do these crazy things and it has nothing to do with us. It might do but you know it might do and there are certain cases where I think terrible disgusting, awful, traumatising acts they may be but they also have a political agenda to them so I think a lot of researchers and a lot of academics who work in areas that could be sensitive and ... nervous about putting certain words into search engines, often we self-censor ourselves before we realise we have even done it and I think we want to stay away from certain subjects and I think people who are really at the cutting edge looking at these issues, I think they would be very anxious and they would be wise to

keep a wary eye on what government policy is because, for instance, as you know, it's very important that we find out what these, nearly always men, but some women do these things, I think it's very important to find out why the 7/7 bombers did what they did because their biography's and backgrounds are fascinating to find out, as you said earlier, the speed and velocity in which these men turn is extraordinary so it needs psychologists to look at individuals and communities, anthropologists looking at various community groups etc. it covers, if you read books on terrorism if you go to the back of the book and look at the papers and books this person has used it is extraordinarily broad, looking at terrorism covers so many bases so you have sociology here, anthropology here, history here, you know it's fascinating and for those of us interested in it, it is part of the appeal. You can read a paper on the psychology of terrorists one moment and the next looking at specific parts of Belgium which have covered it from a Mosque. I think the short answer to your question is yes, and the long winded way is that any of us looking at these areas would have to be cautious I think and some of my students are interested in 9/11 and terrorism and I often the last thing I say to them is be careful where you look online because you might accidentally, again going back to Prevent, you might accidentally or inadvertently find yourself on a website and two hours later someone is knocking on your door when they didn't mean to and it can lead to an area of paranoia and everyone thinking ... that the wolf is at the door.

**LS:** Finally, the last thing I would like to ask you about is future directions for Prevent. Is there anything you would like to see added to the duty or anything you would like to see taken away?

**MR:** I think what is intriguing about this most recent document is that it has, I mean for instance they are talking here about maintaining trust with staff, creating a culture where people are confident expressing themselves, not to undermine fundamental rights not to stifle free speech so the documents have changed in two years I think, to assuage some of our fears and they are much more accommodating of ... I in the early documents free speech isn't really mentioned at all and now it is so I think it's an acknowledgement. I think what I said when I first started talking, as far as I can see, in empirical examples, not very much has happened. It hasn't been that, it hasn't been a big massive deal in many places. Again the main reasons for that, if I'm absolutely honest with you I suspect like a lot of government documents, it will die a death. People won't end up doing it that much, managers won't monitor it as much as they do, and everyone starts saying yes yes yes let's do it and a few eager bods will keep it going but the things will take, I think take their eye off the ball etc. I think, yeah, what's good about it is that it raises issues to talk about as I said to you earlier it coincides with a really big debate about freedom of speech in universities and that's a really important debate we need to keep having because if we aren't careful it may seem trivial that Katie Hopkins isn't allowed to speak, you know, it may seem trivial that blurred lines is banned or whatever. You know it is I the scheme of things but it's also important in the end that I said to the students a few weeks again, if someone like Katie Hopkins



or Piers Morgan or whatever controversialist say we invited and let's say there was some students that didn't like what they said about so and so I'm afraid I would be on the stage supporting Katie Hopkins' right to speak, not that I want to, I hate everything she stands for and I think she's an idiot but I think in a sense my ... overall point is that a lot of the stuff is kind of already done either by good practice with lecturers and students and common sense, rules that are already in place about excitement of violence etc. I think there is an important caveat is that a lot of it makes sense for teachers but less so for academics, so I think it's a relatively benign document that has got potential problems and worst case scenarios down the line and I don't think it will seem quite as important in a few years' time but it is ... fascinating to read and I think, you know for those people lucky like yourselves that are studying it, it's incredibly important to read government documents as well.

**LS:** Thank you very much, M.

**Appendix 11 - Interview Transcript, Participant 9 – Students' Union Staff Manager**

**LS:** Hi T, it would be great if you can talk about your knowledge of Prevent and how it links to the national counter terrorism strategy for the UK

**TN:** So my knowledge of Prevent so ... I am \*job role\* of the Students' Union, career wise I have known about the Prevent agenda for many years in other roles as well. My loose understanding is that I am nowhere near an expert in it but in terms of ... means for us as an SU in our role I have a relatively good understanding. The counter terrorism agenda and this one strand of it is about preventing radicalisation in universities and I believe also in schools, prisons and some other places as well. So, umm ... in terms of my understanding this is kind of a central government agenda and it's kind of, there are coordinators in the regions that will work alongside universities to look at this and our university has a Prevent board or action group which is a cross sectional committee made up of university staff members, officers, SU officers, SU staff members and some other people as well and that board of committee meet regularly and talk about various things around the Prevent agenda and looking at how we can combat the radicalisation of people in various things. I think the other, sort of, thing is that the press will focus on certain elements of the Prevent agenda when actually it can be quite a broad subject area umm and you know, our university will have a different set of issues to contend with because of the regional range and the locality we are in for example a London university will have a different demographic and that sort of thing. That's important to note and that's kind of my loose understanding of Prevent. There have been some campaigns that have been thrown out of that group and I think it's used as a sounding board and a bit of an area to come up with things as well, like little projects. Some things that have come out are don't hate campaigns and in terms of regulations that we have to adhere to as an SU...so umm we are a separate organisation to the university, we are a charity and are governed or regulated by the charity commission and as a charity we also have to adhere to certain elements of the Prevent agenda but it is not a statutory duty of the SU to be following it however compliance wise and charity commission we have to be seen as being, doing certain things within it but it is the universities responsibility as the institution to lead that work and report anything and we should be working in partnership on certain things ... so things like external speakers and having a policy in place which looks at ... is that external speaker coming in, what are they talking about, what view are they representing, can we balance it with an opposing view to make it a balanced talk, are we giving people a soapbox, are we closing it off? All of those things are important and that's part of the SU's responsibility as a charity to make sure any talks we get through we are putting through some sort of process in partnership with the university. My understanding is the ultimate responsibility for the requirement falls down to the university as the institution but as I say the SU are funded charity within the institution also have a responsibility to make sure we are adhering to the Prevent agenda especially for, you know, events that can be conceived as having some sort of risk associated with that sort of legal requirement. So yeah, that's

kind of what I know about it. In terms of, I don't sit on the Prevent board, my colleague LF does and our President and Community Officer does and that's refreshed every year.

**LS:** How involved are the SU in implementing the requirements?

**TN:** I think the minimum requirements we have to adhere to is to attend that meeting and make sure any activity we do is appropriately assessed and when I say activity I mean talks, events and anything we run on campus and making sure we balance that with freedom of expression and that universities are a place where ideas can be argued and discussed and any idea is ok umm but it's done in an ... environment where it is upfront and we are learning and can challenge things as well ... and I think the SU probably does the minimum level, we go to the meetings and make sure activities are appropriately assessed. We meet regularly with the university, not only as a Prevent group and we add value to that, I think, in terms of we will bring ideas and take actions up as well umm ... the challenge with elected officers is that they have their own view and are elected and are not an employee so it is different to umm what a university staff member would be bringing but we also meet with the university senior management team and vice chancellor on a monthly basis as well where other risks can be bought up as well. We don't have a massive culture at this university where student groups bring in external speakers however we will have activities that will potentially fall under the Prevent agenda and we do need to make sure that we are in dialogue with the institution and we are open with them as well. I think that's kind of how effectively the SU is engaged with Prevent.

**LS:** You mentioned about elected officers, where do you think their body of knowledge comes from to form their opinions? Is it the media, the NUS, the university?

**TN:** I think it's a combination of all of them. They come in with preconceived ideas and many, from this university will not be particularly engaged with the agenda before they arrive. They will have other priorities they want to look at. I think where they learn things, so the sort of journey of an officer is that they go on some NUS training and do sometimes pick up messages that the NUS are giving out, the NUS has a stance of being anti-Prevent and I think that was voted in at an NUS conference maybe two years ago, so they will, that will be their campaign and that campaign will involve things on social media, training events, all sorts of things. Our officers can go to those events but our officers don't tend to get involved in those sides of the organisation and are more interested in improving the lives of students here ... and often umm that doesn't involve that sort of hyper politicised environment of the NUS. I think they will pick up things in the media, they will potentially be studying a course, we have an officer who is a criminologist currently, they will be aware of certain things through their curriculum and what they have learnt and read. Often they don't come massively well versed in the Prevent agenda and so they will generally pick that up when they go to the Prevent board and they will start learning what it is and they will pick it up from their handover, so one officer handing over to another and that often leaves an impression, positively

or negatively on certain things. They will cover the different meetings they are on including Prevent and there are a few ways they will get it and the headline for our officers are is they don't really come to us particularly ... knowledgeable about Prevent.

**LS:** You mentioned some of the campaigns that the NUS run; have you or anybody else that works for the SU, that you're aware of, used the preventing Prevent hotline?

**TN:** I don't think so, I would confidently say no, I don't think it's been used and I wouldn't have expected so. I do know that the campaign is 'students not suspects' and I think that's probably confined to ... more politicised unions and universities and I would say ... that probably its confined to London unions and probably umm your bigger universities like Birmingham, Manchester umm I think it depends a lot on ... the makeup of the students, the different student societies that are there and the appetite of the elected officers to engage with that campaign.

**LS:** You said about 'students not suspects', research suggests that there are two approaches to Prevent, the first is safeguarding, which in other interviews has been discussed in regard to the approach taken here, the other one is targeting which I have not come across any university using. Where do you think the stigma of targeting individual groups has come from with regard to Prevent?

**TN:** I used to work at the University of Westminster which had a really high proportion of students who identified as Muslim and there is a wider issue around islamophobia in the UK umm and that community feels that they experience discrimination on a daily basis and so I think Prevent probably feeds into that narrative as being something where certain groups are disproportionately targeted by the government in terms of being felt as a risk of being radicalised ... so I think a lot of it stems from, there is a wider narrative in society, not just in the UK but probably in various countries around islamophobia and I think if you tie it in with probably certain things going on, Brexit, those sort of things ... the risk of populism, nationalism and those sort of things, they probably feed into that culture of umm ... sort of mistrust between probably ... people and the establishment so I think, that's all this sort of distrust of the establishment has been around for a long time and I think that is part of it and I think it's important to sort of look at it as a wider picture so there are other campaigns that the NUS run such as ... stop and search is another area they are proactive in that space and that stems from this umm ... umm idea and often very much a reality of students being targeted unfairly and I think that stems from a ... wider social umm outlook of many young people who have grown up in this country who have experienced this discrimination.

**LS:** As the \*job role\*, are you for or against Prevent and what is your opinion on how it is working as a program?

**TN:** Good question, I think I am obviously for the prevention of terrorism and crime of that nature, absolutely subscribe to that. I think what we find ourselves in is a situation where we have a group of people who feel like they have not been included or listened

to in the agenda, in conception of the anti-terrorism work and I think that's really important to ... be aware of that and acknowledge that it is an issue so I think that is really important so I would say that I am absolutely, we have to have, we have to be pragmatic as there is a risk of terrorism and radicalisation and I think often with Prevent people immediately assume it's all Islamic terrorism, extremism but actually ... it's a spectrum, there are other ways to be radicalised. I worked at another institution where we had the risk of students being radicalised probably the opposite of Islamic terrorism and that is English Defence League sort of stuff ... which is completely, people don't often pick that up and it ties into the previous question where some groups become anti-Prevent. I think it's important to ... as part of when you're answering this question whether you are pro or anti, I don't think it's as simple as black and white and there is a grey area where you have to do something about radicalisation in this country but the application of that policy is something where I think we can do more work on and I think its ab out bringing communities together and working with them and looking at that. Personally the solution to various ... radicalisation is often umm quite systemic and were, there are other causes for someone being prone to being radicalised and so they might be from a single parent household or a low economic background or a certain area of the country, they may have experienced someone horrible in their life and there are many reasons why someone might be radicalised and I think that's where we need to be looking at... so yeah absolutely subscribe to that we have to have a umm agenda around this work ... do I think we are doing it in the right way and that we can do more? Absolutely I think we can do a lot more as a country, as a university, as prisons, as schools to be working with the communities that we need to work with to be better focussing our efforts in anti-radicalisation and I think that probably is a really long answer but I think It's a nice balanced answer to what my view is but you know, I don't subscribe to often what the NUS work which is kind of anti it and we are not engaging in the conversation at all as that won't get progress. The idea that if you don't agree with us, we don't want to even enter the conversation, that's not helpful and I think we need to be pragmatic, although I do understand where that attitude comes from but I think ... the students not suspects, the preventing Prevent sort of stuff, the anti-establishment narrative that overtakes those sorts of things and that doesn't help to get a solution that will work for people so I think I kind of sit in that sort of space where I think we can do a lot more to work with various communities that we need to work with to be able to make them feel included and involved as part of the problem in the first place.

**LS:** Is Higher Education the right setting for it?

**TN:** ... That's a good question umm ... I think you know, from my understanding the point of Prevent is to be at all of those touchpoints where someone could make a transformation in their life, absolutely early years, education, school, Higher Education that happens as well. Higher Education is different because of the exchange of ideas in a place as you come to university and are expected to have different ideas and be exposed to different things. This is a really challenging environment and the idea of

freedom of speech and no platforming comes into the mix because traditionally universities are seen as beacons of freedom of speech and any idea is fine because it is in the confines of an educational establishment and we are here to have new ideas, shape things and have discussions and you know, that's academic. I think it is the right place but I think the application of it should be done in a nuanced way which fits Higher Education as an institution and what its designed to be for and it is designed to be for free thought and free expression are core and essential to why Higher Education exists, why it is essential and why it is important and I think on the flip of that we have students going through transformations, moving away for the first time and at risk of being on their own or being isolated or having different ideas or whatever ... that would be wrong to say it doesn't happen because it absolutely does and there is a place for it and I think its about getting it right and the application of it is done in the right way.

**LS:** We are now going to turn to think about Prevent and cyberspace. In 1992 Sterling defined cyberspace as the place between two electronically connected communication devices where people meet and communicate. Based on this definition do you think it is possible to stop radicalisation within cyberspace?

**TN:** Umm interesting I mean I think ... from what I know and from what I see on the news ... things like WhatsApp, the rise of social media, Twitter, I think the other telegraph, I can't remember what it's called, there are lots of social medias with encrypted messaging where obviously things are happening and communications are happening ... I think the companies that run these spaces part of their mission is that they absolutely don't want, you know, there to be umm the ability of the government or whoever to have the access to this content and you know the idea of the internet is that it is an absolutely free place to express whatever. I think, and it's new and the growth of the internet, has exploded with the introduction of social media in the last 20 years has been huge since that definition in 1992. In 25 years, 1992 is different to now and there are lots of ways that we have never expected and I think that important to consider when we think if we can do things to prevent radicalisation in cyberspace because I think we can, yes ...and I think, you know, the internet feels like the wild west when that was around because it's not governed and there are no rules and I think we need to get to grips with that as a society and realise that young people will be experienced from an early age and are digital natives and there will be times where whoever, parents, teachers don't know what a young person is looking at on the internet and won't know the different conversations and content looked at so it's a real challenge and umm ... I think we need to be careful how we police it because what we don't want to do as a society where we get into a place where we are banning everything and have uncomfortable communications between people and I think it's the idea that, personally I don't want to be thinking that big brother is watching me and all of those things and I know I'm not up to, doing nothing wrong so I think there is that and it's a natural human way of thinking so I think we need to be really careful when going into this territory as a society in terms of saying that umm ... we are going to

police this and going to police that however I think on a fundamental level I would say, lots of people would say we need to do something because it's definitely a place where things happen, some quite scary things can happen and again it's the balance, it's like Higher Education, it's the balance of the internet being a force for good but it can be used for all sorts of things so its finding that balance in the grey area of how do we appropriately monitor and keep people safe online without becoming 1984 George Orwell, you know, again it's that balance that is really important and key ... I think people will challenge that massively and I think the tech companies that own the various things on the internet are quite adamant that this isn't to be, we work in a locker for the FBI to have, and it think its juts because it's so new and people haven't really had to challenge this yet so it's quite an interesting time but I think we absolutely do need to think about how we do look at online worlds, cyberspace and all of those sorts of things.

**LS:** Most universities are looking at the processes of monitoring and filtering. Do you think that watching what people are doing and blocking their access to content is a method of stopping radicalisation?

**TN:** It's difficult, we have students who study terrorism, we have a course here, we have a criminology course and part of their work will be to go on these websites and have a look at it and it is a real challenge and again, it ties in with the idea that universities are places for people to explore ideas, research things and look at things and it's kind of all open ... and it's a real difficult one. Again I feel slightly uneasy with monitoring absolutely anything and I think we need to be really carefully around that space because I think it can be, it can start leading to other things that are not what we want... umm it's a real challenging one, but then there is the flip side which is we have to, we do have a duty umm ... under Prevent to be reporting against any students who feel they are at risk and at the moment that is completely unchartered, we don't know what is going on in that space and we may think we are doing it brilliantly but actually when student A comes into their halls of residence and looks at things on their iPad we don't know what is happening and its about finding the balance and doing it the appropriate way. Again in the context of HE when we know we are dealing with adults who are in an education environment, absolutely we do need to have some sort of thing in place to be able to umm ... monitor is a word I'm going to use, but to make sure that if we have people at risk that we have a way of picking up on that because I think at the moment I don't think we have that appropriately in place, I don't think we have anything in place and I think there are proposals to look at it and I think it will be a legal requirement for universities to have. I think the decision might be made for universities so but I'm not 100% sure on that... it might be that we have to do this and the conversations about what people think will come second. It's another area where I would be wary of in that forcing things and not appropriately consulting people and those sorts of things are coming up with something that is not been agreed as an appropriate method of monitoring... that would be concerning so yeah that's a really challenging one because I think a lot of people feel uncomfortable knowing that but

then on the flip side it is a university provided service and you can't just go on anything you want, so I think again it's the balance and I think, but I think people definitely feel uncomfortable knowing their every move and movement is being monitored and I think its central for one to feel comfortable with things and I think it is appropriate that we recognise that cyberspace, the internet are a lot of things can happen which can radicalise an individual and it's really important we have methods and ways to monitor those things.

**LS:** You said you think at some stage universities swill have to either monitor, filter or both. Do you think that there will be any more compulsory elements added to the duty, anything you would like to see added or anything you'd like removed from the Prevent duty?

**TN:** I think we are in a place in Britain and in ... time where things are uncertain, there is ... the threat level is whatever it is, the highest it can be, critical or the one underneath and an attack. In the media there is this constant, we have fallen off the plot, all these sorts of things and so I think there will always be more tech that will come out and will always be more methods in which for someone to be radicalised in whatever way, there will always be another extremist group, whether that's white extremists or Islamic terrorists ort whatever, there will always be something and always new technology and there will always be a need for the government to react to that and change policy to fight against terrorism and I think there will always be new things coming out umm ... whether you know, it's the kind of thing, is it reactive, is it done unnecessarily, is it really required? I don't think anything in place at the moment is massively inappropriate but personally I would say we need to actively caution and that you know, we don't want to be sliding down that path where absolutely anything is monitored and there is ... there is a risk of freedom of expression and also feeling unsafe or discriminated against because we have to look at something so I think it is a real challenging space. I probably don't know enough about the guidance to say anything needs to be taken away or added in, I don't think that lots of our students, it massively impacts their lives and I don't think its something lots of our students talk about on a regular basis. I don't think students at \*university\* talk and debate about things surrounding Prevent so I don't know how much it affects their daily lives. It is also important to recognise that students and communities in other universities that it does impact and to a ... atmosphere of distrust which aren't positive and aren't good for society in general so that is important to note. I don't think students in this locality at the \*institution\* that Prevent is infringing on their rights and I think that is important to note but I think there are times where it potentially could and we need to take that seriously and as a ... the Prevent group need to be really umm understanding what the potential implications could be and I think yeah. I think it's not a huge issue for our students at all and I think from our point of view we have a duty to make sure that students aren't doing things or being exposed to things that are going to radicalise them and I think we follow and we work in partnership well in terms of the safeguarding approach so currently we shouldn't take things away but that's not to say there might



be feeling imposed on universities that they might not agree with certain things and we are in a grey area where it will be interesting to see what happens in the future, so yeah.

**LS:** Thanks very much, T.

**Appendix 12 – Interview Transcript, Participant 10 – University Academic**

**LS:** Hi A, it would be great if you can talk about your knowledge of Prevent and if you know how it links to the national counter terrorism strategy

**AL:** My understanding is that it is all about national counter terrorism in ... there are other aspects umm that get rolled into it but the concern with radicalisation of people and what they are getting up to that isn't necessarily in the national interest, however it is defined or communities interest comes down to the threat of violence by extremist groups and how we know what's going on there and how we prevent people being drawn in, particularly vulnerable people being drawn into it.

**LS:** Other than Prevent there are three other strands to the counter terrorism strategy, there is Pursue which is actively tracking down terrorists, Protect which is about securing the nation, and Prepare which involves improving the response to specific attacks. How do you see Prevent as part of that, or how do you see it leads onto those other three strands?

**AL:** How do I think it should or how do I think it actually does?

**LS:** I would say both.

**AL:** Damn. I would say it to be a part of a joined up whole so those other three are looking at genuine threats at the moment, responses to those threats, how to deal better with the situation when the threat stops being a threat and is an actual event and the Prevent aspect is about stopping and preventing people umm being drawn into being the target or being the subject of those other parts of the strategy. I think ... my perception is that its having that effect to some extent but because its umm ... quite a scattergun blanket type of approach it is also having a much broader effect and ... stopping people doing things or putting impediments in the way of people doing things which are perhaps not exactly mainstream but are not at all anything to do with radicalisation, umm one of the issues here is what do we count as actually ... a threat, a possibility of radicalisation and what do we mean by radicalisation and is it in comparison to some liberal idea of tolerance which is you know, we never have any opinions that anyone else can object to which isn't very realistic or you know, is there room for people to actually think other than the norm on issues such as religious freedom, freedom of speech, gender relations, sexuality etc, so I think that sort of, the idea of making it a broad general approach has many strengths but also there are problems there.

**LS:** Would you be able to talk more specifically about the requirements that the HE sector has?

**AL:** In terms of how it operates under Prevent?

**LS:** How it operates and exactly what HE institutions have to do with regard to Prevent.

**AL:** I think there is a responsibility for everyone in all institutions to be aware of the possibility of radicalisation and marginalisation of anyone but particularly vulnerable groups. Young people, young adults are to some extent a vulnerable group, certainly there are a lot of students who are more vulnerable than other people because of the sorts of ways in which they are having their thinking and expectations strained and stressed, people are moving away from home for the first time, mature students who have experience of the world come out of a ... 9 – 5 type earn your money to pay your mortgage and feed your kids and have more time and have expectations, assumptions, values questioned and so all of those things make students possible targets for victims of whatever you want to say, of marginalisation, radicalisation. There is definitely a responsibility there on the institutions and the people who work in the institutions about having a duty of care for the students and for one another umm ... but also being careful about what we communicate and how we communicate it, perhaps pushing peoples boundaries umm and challenging peoples values and assumptions in ... more careful ways than have been done in the past. Certainly when I was a student, back in the day, umm you know there was terrorism and marginalisation around then, you'd have lecturers who were intentionally provocative who went way beyond their position and were advocating violence as part of playing devil's advocate, as part of the pedagogy and I think now that wouldn't happen and if it did, people would be much more uncomfortable with it than they were in that time, and it has definitely affected the way that Higher Education works.

**LS:** In my research so far I have come across two different approaches to Prevent, the first one is the safeguarding approach which we tend to take here at the university and the other one is the targeting approach which targets various student communities. Which one do you see as the basic grounds for Prevent and which have you seen in your role as an academic?

**AL:** It has all been about safeguarding and I think that has to be basic. One of the reasons we have been able to prioritise that here though is because our student body is not all that diverse and so if you wanted to go down the road of ... profiling for example, the sorts of groups we have here in terms of profiling, because most students come from a certain ethnic group, from a certain sort of background, it's not like we are at the University of Wolverhampton, or London Metropolitan where they have much bigger student bodies and much more diversity and probably also because of the geographical location those student bodies are exposed to a broader range or cultural ideological and philosophical perspectives. That said us being quite lucky in a situation, but I think safeguarding is the key thing because I think if you go down the targeting route you are making assumptions about certain groups not being under threat, and ... everyone can be marginalised and everyone can be radicalised, you know, in my role as a senior tutor most of the people I see, or the biggest issue I deal with is mental health issues, some of those people on the outside and are looking for a sense of belonging and a lot of them and so anyone can draw alongside someone

that they don't have to be from a particular background, ethnic group or religious conviction to be marginalised and therefore a target.

**LS:** Has your perception of Prevent changed over time, or has it always been about taking a safeguarding approach?

**AL:** To the extent that I thought about it before coming onto the steering group ... I think most of the academic objections, or academics objections that I hear and would have been party to before and since being part of the group, work on the assumption that its targeting rather than safeguarding, that it identifies groups at risk or that are a threat and behaviours that are a threat and umm ... so it is seen as umm actively going out and identifying problem people, problem behaviours and addressing those and I think my understanding, the balance of my understanding has changed.

**LS:** That's good, other than that do you think that there are other challenges in terms of complying with Prevent as an academic?

**AL:** I mean I think a lot of it is about umm ... freedom of academic expression and what it means for both academics and students. The freedom to challenge peoples assumptions umm and the freedom to allow students to kick back umm and push back on what they are being taught and the values that they've grown up with, being instilled through their schooling etc. I think it also sometimes comes back in what we ask our students to read or resources they might draw on but primarily it is more of a freedom of speech type thing.

**LS:** Interesting, so do you think that Prevent is efficient? Do you think it works well or could there be a lot added to it or taken away that might improve it slightly?

**AL:** Does it work well? People are still being radicalised, it was never going to stop that completely, it's one of those things I am naturally suspicious of, philosophically I am suspicious of any central government agenda and of course this is a central idea being enforced and imposed upon institutions across the land and the government is saying look aren't we doing a great job at stopping people becoming terrorists and setting off bombs and killing people and attacking minority groups. Whether it is really doing that, I don't know... whether some of the provisions we have put in place in this university are making any real difference, such as the hurdle people have to now go through, it's not a hard hurdle, but in terms of room bookings for external speakers, is that actually making a difference? I doubt it. Does that mean it's not worthwhile doing? That's a different question because I think as an institution we do have a responsibility to know what is going on and to know that if ... marginal perspectives or the potentially inflammatory or contentious perspectives are being aired that we know they are happening I don't think it means we should stop them being aired but it's better to know the context and who is involved and you know, otherwise you are always pre-emptive that being prepared for any potential threats. So is it efficient? I don't know how to answer that other than to waffle.

**LS:** That is interesting; some of the other interviewees have had that take on it as well. I am now going to start thinking about Prevent and cyberspace. In 1992 Sterling defined cyberspace as the place between two electronically connected communication devices where people meet and communicate. Based on this definition do you think it's possible to stop radicalisation in cyberspace?

**AL:** Not stop, that reminds me of the NSPCC campaign to stop child abuse, that's impossible because humans are bad as well as good, parents are always going to hit kids and there will always be people who say bad things to kids and so similarly you know, people are bad and want to do ... damage and harm to other people and sometimes they understand that as being for the greater good, to bring in God's plan or to overthrow umm democracy or capitalism or whatever so they see a greater good there ... you're never going to be able to stop that and actually I think cyberspace makes that easier because a lot of it cannot be overheard and if you and I know the code that we are both working with and I can write to you with what looks like a completely benign email and we can say we are planning, attacking some gay Christians or whoever it might be, so I don't think you can stop cyberspace as an avenue for radicalisation.

**LS:** Do you think there are tools that can help prevent radicalisation in cyberspace?

**AL:** Well you can certainly close down explicit blurbs, websites, communications that are dangerous ... but you know, some of those aren't as dangerous as people might think.

**LS:** in Higher Education there is a lot of talk about implementing monitoring or implementing filtering or both, do you think they are a means of preventing radicalisation or are they just a tool that works really well in schools and in Further Education that the government think could be implemented into Higher Education?

**AL:** ... I mean, filtering and monitoring, I think monitoring is appropriate up to a point. Filtering of some material for example unless someone is doing research on pornography I don't see why people should be able to access porn through university machines, you know, it doesn't, it's not, we aren't required to as an institution, to provide people with any sort of sexual titillation or release. Obviously there is porn and there is exploitative, some people would argue that porn is exploitative but there is child porn, violent porn etc etc. I think anything that is, using the jargon, not safe for work, saying this site has images, don't access them at work, they could just be filtered out so unless someone, I know that there are ... criminologists, sociologists, scholars of religion who are doing work on pornography and the effects of porn on those involved and those who view it, why would we allow people to see that? Of course if we are going to filter that out, why would we not filter out some other things, but when you get into those areas for example some of the religious sites, you can look at my books, we do religious studies and as part of studying any religion or any religions

response to the modern world you have to include some awareness of the most extreme responses and umm I'm not sure I've answered your question.

**LS:** Some interesting things have come out of that discussion actually. So you talked a little bit about what implementing monitoring and filtering means for academic research, in particular, as an academic teaching the students, how would those methods impact you?

**AL:** Umm ... I mean I don't think they would particularly. I guess if I knew that I was being monitored I might think twice about going to some websites about religious extremism umm ... and I might have that conversation with students as well. ... but it's not as though that's where I spend an awful lot of my time online or in my teaching and a lot of the violence that I do look at is cached in terms of human rights or in a historical context so it's not about how to build a bomb to overthrow the Muslim idealists or whatever, you know, its about what happened in first century Palestine, or how certain biblical texts are being used to oppress women or ... justify slavery so it's a different sort of level of violence.

**LS:** You mentioned when we first started talking about this that monitoring is good up to a certain point, what is that point?

**AL:** I don't know ... I think that's something that the institution would have to have a conversation about and say look, what are we comfortable with people looking at and what ... do we have to say there is a good reason for them looking at it. When there is the other aspect which isn't quite so serious, in terms of teaching and people are sat with their laptops or mobile devices. When I teach I'm not one to stand at the front of the room and I know when I walk around some people are very quickly getting off Facebook and off Paddy Power or whatever it is during seminars and lectures, you know, so ... you know from that perspective if they were aware that monitoring was happening and there was a possibility someone would say when you are on the university network you spend a lot of time on gambling websites, or whatever websites there might be, it would be good for student achievement but that's not really the point.

**LS:** Do you think that students believe they are being monitored anyway like they are at schools and colleges?

**AL:** Some assume they are and some assume now they are in this environment where they are doing independent learning that they have freedom to do whatever they like. It's a few years ago now but I remember an issues with a student who was looking at porn in the library on a library machine in front of other people and he said he was an adult... but I think most students don't even think about it.

**LS:** An example, in France they have implemented filtering on a national level so nobody can access terrorist or extremist websites. Do you think that is something that the UK government may do or impose on the HE sector?

**AL:** I would be surprised if it wasn't something that happened soon. I would hope it wouldn't be on a national level and would be done more locally so if there were good ... academic research reasons for accessing those websites that you wouldn't have to apply all the way up to central government but there could be a conversation that could happen at a local level and there would be a report that the university would have to justify why they have given access and I think that makes sense. The issue of course is that any sort of filtering like that tends to be broad brush and so, you know, are there sites that are telling people how to build bombs or are they sites that are telling people that other sites will tell you how to build bombs and other sites that mention the word bomb and the danger is that you will cut off an awful lot of online material from students and academics that actually isn't problematic at all. If it's a simple process of saying look I need access to that it's not a problem site, you know, it just says because of the title of the blog, 'God is da bomb', it has God and bomb there but is just a confessional site about you know... Salvation Army, you know Army could be blocked. If the system in place is quite flexible and responsive I don't see a problem there but otherwise if it isn't going to be there I think most academics and students would oppose.

**LS:** Even if those filters are in place extremist content could still be live on social media. Research is showing that terrorist organisations are massively using social media now to recruit vulnerable individuals so do you think that is a problem for students in Higher Education?

**AL:** Yes, I think the ... use and ... misuse of social media is a problem umm and students often think that their conversations are much more private than they are and we had an issue earlier in the year where a group of students and I sat in the back of a very boring session and they had a snapchat group which was private and they were mocking the lecturer but one of them tweeted that, and one of those conversations and immediately it's not private anymore... they hadn't realised what they had done so social media is not the safe place that a lot of students and a lot of people think it is. I mean I think one way we could help students get around that is to make better use of the sorts of social media that we have control of via moodle and those sorts of things but inevitably students won't want to have conversations that they believe can be monitored by academics ... we've had issues in the past, were you here when they were trying to use online methods for course and module evaluations? And we were told we can't use moodle because if academics really tried they could identify who was logged in at the time and therefore who said the bad thing about them and students are going to be suspicious but we could use moodle for a lot of conversations about course content ... that actually now happen on say, Facebook sites.

**LS:** Finally I would like to ask you about future directions for Prevent. Is there anything you would like to see added to the Prevent duty or anything you would like to see removed, or anything you think is imminent to be added by the government?

**AL:** I think it will be ramped up where it goes from you have a duty to looking after students, what are you doing about monitoring and filtering to you will filter and

monitor. I also think there might be a thing where any external speaker or member of staff from a particular group has to attend just to be, there isn't enough to just do the paperwork, but someone has to make sure it's the person who they said it was the vicar from St Matts and that they aren't saying bad things that they wouldn't say in church but feels comfortable with a group of holocaust students. A lot of academics are very negative about the whole Prevent agenda and while they might see what we are doing here at the moment as unproblematic they also think well its only unproblematic at the moment and it is going to be ramped up so that it is going to deny people freedom of speech and freedom of opinion umm, I'm unsure that will necessarily happen but that's the direction society is moving in.

**LS:** Thank you very much, A.



### Appendix 13 - Interview Transcript, Participant 11 – University Support Staff

**LS:** J, it would be great if you can talk about your knowledge of Prevent, how it links to the national counter terrorism strategy and any requirements of Prevent within the HE sector.

**JP:** Umm ok, so I have been here at the university for seven years and I guess as soon as I arrived here I was co-opted onto I guess what were the beginnings of our Prevent strategy here at the university. Back then it was under the label of 'don't hate' and it seemed to encompass everything, I guess one of my concerns back then was how broad it seemed to be ... we were talking about mental health campaigns under this 'don't hate' umbrella and I bought in ... a kind of project called the forgiveness project where we looked at the impact of trauma on people's lives and it was also done under the banner of 'don't hate'; and I guess what seems to have happened in the last three years in particular, is that it has got much more focussed in its approach. I guess that tallies with it being a bigger and bigger thing as far as government strategy is concerned. It has felt like we as a university have been quite ahead of the field in Higher Education in a way that we are trying to address it in this university and I would say that is largely due to SD's leadership and encouragement really. Umm so I guess my engagement with it on a daily basis is umm through things like thinking about external speakers coming into the university which we as chaplaincy use from time to time ... so having now that security of having a policy that has been properly thought through and a system to go through it is quite reassuring but I know some of the academics may have issues around that for good reason but for us as chaplaincy and for me bringing in external speakers I quite like it, having a system that everyone should adhere to.... I guess the other thing is managing the faith spaces, being very aware that the way Prevent has been publicised in the media can almost be seen as a corner of shorthand for islamophobia in some ways is I have concerns about that but I think the way we do it at this university is in a very balanced way so we, in each of our faith spaces, including the chapel we have a list of guidelines about the way people use the space and also the way that people relate to each other which we were quite careful in how we put those together and again ... for me it's quite a liberating thing. The fact that we have the guidelines clearly displays in our faith spaces gives all of us a sense of protection and good practice in terms of how we should be working with students ... we have had just a couple of incidences with people outside coming into the faith spaces and wanting to propagate a particular doctrine or belief system and having those guidelines there means I have something to refer to that makes it clear they are not welcome to do that and it means that is the same for Mormons, Jehovah witnesses, political parties, people from Mosques in \*location\* who haven't got anything to do with students here, so the fact you can apply it across the board is really important. Is that enough of a starting ramble?

**LS:** Of course, where would you say your key source of knowledge has come from? Is it the steering group, the media, or maybe a personal interest?

**JP:** Umm, I guess the steering group has been really important but also going to a couple of external events like the one you and I went to. I went to one two or three years ago in Bristol which was really good and informative. It has been a really live topic in chaplaincy conferences for about five years so there has been lots of discussion but also within chaplaincy conferences they have bought in external speakers to give input into it. So from all of these different sources, the media less so because I'm generally quite cynical about what I read or hear, well not so much what I hear, I'm such a lover of radio 4, if I hear things on radio 4 I do generally believe that it is true. It's a bit of a confession, isn't it? Less so when I read things in print, so yeah all of those different sources but I think SD's really good in keeping us up to date with the latest developments.

**LS:** Do they talk at the chaplaincy conferences about the general feel towards Prevent?

**JP:** Umm yeah.

**LS:** What do they say?

**JP:** Well not so much the people who are bought into speak about it because that's just giving information and sharing information but the discussion among chaplains certainly in ... how long have I been going now? 4 years ago I went to a big thing at UWE where there was just a huge amount of negativity about it and basically the chaplains in the room and the way they were understanding Prevent is that we were being asked to spy on students and I guess it's a particularly interesting area for people in a kind of ministry, religious ministry leadership role because the whole thing of the sanctity of the confessional because that sense if someone comes to talk to a chaplain or a priest that information is held in confidence so I think there was something about that and the general view of the sanctity of the confessional and what the government was requiring of chaplains under Prevent legislation that caused people a lot of anxiety. Again I think the way that we do things here meant that I really didn't have issues with it at all because for me it was just another area of safeguarding, so like if a student comes to talk to me and is describing suicidal thoughts I have a safeguarding duty towards that student which means I would then break confidence and for me similarly, this one has not happened to me, but if a student was talking about something they had seen online which was making them quite excited and I genuinely feared for their or someone else's safety I wouldn't have any qualms about breaking confidence in that situation. It's probably worth saying I am a social worker by background so that safeguarding area is drilled into me from years back. So hearing the concerns of lots of other chaplains makes me think they were slightly misunderstanding what Prevent was for.

**LS:** Has the general perception changed over time?

**JP:** I guess it's less of a live topic now because umm because it's quite clearly a government requirement so I guess it was more of a topic when there were fears that

this legislation was coming in and what it was going to mean but now it's actually here and HEFCE are managing it there is no choice and we have to do it anyway. I'm not hearing so much, 'what's it going to mean' but I still think in principle some people have issues with it and certainly we had an event here, it wasn't a chaplaincy event, you may have been there, it was organised by the school of education where some external speakers came, it was in the teaching centre and there was a women, oh gosh I know her, from Soas ... Alison, it will come to me, who is quite famous for having, she basically believes that the Prevent strategy contravenes other legislation including human rights legislation so she just felt very strongly about we should just be saying no and we shouldn't do it. I can't remember what her surname is but she has written quite extensively about it. So those kinds of stuff are still there I think. Scott-Baumann, Alison Scott-Baumann.

**LS:** Do you think that Prevent is efficient?

**JP:** Umm, I guess I haven't umm I haven't really had an opportunity in practice in terms of following someone through who people have concerns about so I guess I couldn't comment on that level of efficiency.

**LS:** But does that mean it is working, if you haven't had to follow it though?

**JP:** Probably it does, coming back to the thing about having a safety net, just the idea that it is there and students are increasingly knowing it is there almost acts as a deterrent maybe in some ways, I don't know. It's a really interesting question.

**LS:** Do you think that Higher Education is the right setting for Prevent?

**JP:** Yes, yes I do. I did a session yesterday afternoon with some trainee teachers and we were talking about all kinds of things but I was talking to them about doing mindfulness in schools with young children and actually how informative kids are in all different ways both in primary and secondary schools but I also said to them when people are at university people are still incredibly formative and people are being exposed to new ideas and that's what university should be about but some of those ideas lead people down dangerous roads. It seems absolutely fitting, to me, that Prevent should be a part of what we are doing in this context because I think students are vulnerable to being radicalised, just because it's a time of their lives when they are not fixed. When you are 19, 20, 21, when you are 48, 49, 50 you are fixed in your views and that's the joy of being a student but also a vulnerability of it.

**LS:** Do you think that students are generally vulnerable?

**JP:** Yes I do.

**LS:** Do you think it's all students?

**JP:** Vulnerable to anything or just radicalisation?

**LS:** Vulnerable in general but with a risk of radicalisation.

**JP:** I think all students are incredibly vulnerable actually, not just to radicalisation but I think the whole way that technology impinges on people's lives these days means that people are vulnerable to ... when I think of the range of things people have talked to me in the last week, mental health which is fed by the things they saw online, pornography, sexual exploitation, anything else that's come up this week? No that's what has already come up for me this week which have a direct link to what people are looking at online and so I do think we are incredibly vulnerable because of that.

**LS:** In that respect let's think about Prevent and cyberspace. In 1992 Sterling defined cyberspace as the place between two electronically connected communication devices where people meet and communicate. Based on this definition do you think it is possible to stop radicalisation in cyberspace?

**JP:** To stop it ... I don't think so

**LS:** How about reduce it?

**JP:** I guess I mean I, I have to be honest and I don't know that much about it but I from what I hear on the radio is how unregulated cyberspace is at the moment and how technology is developing much faster than any kind of policies, or structural legislation around it and you hear it all the time with things that crop up on Facebook. ... as it is so unregulated at the moment I can't see how the government can get a handful on that without doing things, the student who was in before you, he had just come back from Turkey so we were talking about the current situation in Turkey, and as soon as you go into Turkey, quite a chunk of your social media is blocked, or switched off automatically. As soon as you cross the border it happens and I know it happens in China as well and other countries ... unless we wanted to go down that really draconian route, I just don't think anything can be done but again I'm no expert.

**LS:** Do you think that is likely to happen?

**JP:** That it comes that draconian?

**LS:** Yes.

**JP:** If you'd have asked me that three years ago I'd have said absolutely not but I guess I really am quite scared of the direction that things are taking globally at the moment and so all of a sudden kind of anything is possible. This student, we were having a long discussion of Turkey, and Turkey is just a powder keg at the moment and if Turkey explodes it will have massive implications on us in Europe in a way that people just aren't addressing at the moment, it seems to me. I think if something big were to kick off, somewhere close to home then suddenly censorship would come into this country in a big way in a way we haven't experienced since the Second World War. That's quite bleak isn't it?

**LS:** In Higher Education there has been a lot of discussion around monitoring and filtering web content. Do you think that if those methods are introduced they could stop students expressing their faith?

**JP:** Expressing their faith... umm ill come to that one in a minute, I guess when we've talked about it in the steering group, the idea of filtering, it just kind of seems largely ineffective to me because as far as I understand it, it only filters anything people are looking at through the university servers, so of course as soon as they go ... 100 meters down the road they can look at whatever they like, and presumably they can do that anyway on their own devices so I wouldn't have thought most students would be stupid enough to look at dodgy sites whether its pornography paedophilia, radical on the library on a university computer. So filtering that kind of stuff seems to me, I know it makes us feel better and as though we are doing something, but I can't see it would do anything to anyone's vulnerability to radicalisation.

**LS:** If it's not a method to stop radicalisation why do you think it's so widely accepted in Higher Education?

**JP:** Because it safeguards us and makes us seem like we are ticking all of the boxes and being responsible. Like I say I think someone would just look at it on their iPad or something, that's what I would do if I wanted to look at something dodgy... but your question was about do I think it would curtail people's faith... I guess if those filtering things were in place and it stopped people and it was a bit of a ... limited system so it stopped people accessing Al Jazeera for example, which is a perfectly legitimate thing for people to be watching and I know lots of our Arabic speaking students get their news from Al Jazeera, and if it was something that was a bit crap in the way it was filtering things, I could see it would have an impact on people there. I think more generally, no, I don't think.

**LS:** I thought it was an interesting question to discuss. You said you don't think filtering would make a difference, what about monitoring?

**JP:** Tell me what the difference is.

**LS:** Filtering is the blocking of certain websites under categories and monitoring is watching what people are doing online.

**JP:** Would that be more of a deterrent? That's really interesting isn't it? I think it would in some way because people hate the thought that somebody might find out what they are doing. We have talked in the steering group that actually, and I think I did this as well, they assume that the sites people access are being monitored in some way but that's been kept note of. I must admit I did think it probably happened and it was quite a shock when Nick said it didn't. I think quite a few people, that's why I don't think people would use library computers to access anything dodgy as people think they are being monitored in some way. If there was some way you could expand monitoring so anything that happened on the university campus even if accessing though their own

devices, that there was also the belief that that was being monitored, it may be more of a deterrent. Whether it's ethical or not is another question.

**LS:** Do you think that if monitoring was implemented there would be problems there would be a lot of fuss surrounding it?

**JP:** Probably not at our university. Probably at other places where students are a bit more politically active it would lead to enormous outcries, not just from students but academics as well. Here there would be more outcry from academics than students unless the SU really pushed to get the students to take it seriously.

**LS:** Why do you think the academics would make more of a fuss?

**JP:** Because lots of academics are trendy lefties, aren't they? They are all coming from the leftie hippy days and anything to do with monitoring or curtailing freedom of speech or the way they perceived it would be contrary to what we should be doing in a university.

**LS:** Do you think the government will impose monitoring and filtering on Higher Education Institutions?

**JP:** No, I don't think I do, umm ... I mean I guess I'm assuming that the conservatives will get back in at the election and I think it would be counter to that idea of, you know, the Tories aren't about big government and that kind of smacks about big government so I don't think they would impose that unless something happened, again, if there was a big ... attack somewhere than that could change and we went, what are we now, red or back or whatever in terms of risk? If we went into this highest category lots of things could come in on a temporary basis and that's a bit of a slippery slope as in France they are permanently in a state of emergency and I think that's the only way it would happen ... but you probably know more and you'll tell me it's coming in next month or something.

**LS:** No no no, I am not aware of any imminent changes to Prevent. Finally is there anything you would like to see added to the Prevent duty or anything you'd like to see removed?

**JP:** Umm ... well I guess one of the interesting reflections I have about it is as far as I understand it chaplains have specific duties under Prevent legislation about managing spaces and Prevent... but I went to a university which I won't name, not very long ago, and I have had a couple of conversations with chaplains who have nothing to do with the Prevent strategy at their university at all ... which I'm really surprised about because I can't quite understand how that is happening so part of the thing about the Prevent strategy is that it should be applied across the board in a fairly kind of balanced way. I don't necessarily think that anything extra needs to be added to it but I think it should be applied and adhered to in a fairly consistent way and I guess the whole HEFCE thing is that it is being monitored and so it should be a bit more, and I think it's the case in schools where it happens in an ad hoc way.

**LS:** Would specific guidelines on what institutions have to do be useful?

**JP:** Yes, absolutely, absolutely. I guess everyone is kind of learning as that go along at the minute and its very early days at the minute but I generally think it's quite a good thing. You know, we should be helping stop people becoming radicalised because otherwise, you know, 17, 18 year olds could fly out to Syria or Afghanistan or whatever and either get killed or aren't ever allowed back into the country again, don't ever get to see their families, so of course we should stop people doing that, it's as obvious as that.

**LS:** Is there anything you would like to see removed from the duty?

**JP:** ... No, not as far as the things that we have discussed in our steering group and the way we have implemented it here, there is nothing in how we have implemented it here that has caused me concern.

**LS:** Thank you very much, J.

## Appendix 14 - Interview Transcript, Participant 12 – University Academic

**LS:** Hi H, it would be great if you can talk about Prevent and how it links to the national counter terrorism strategy.

**HB:** So umm I first began researching Prevent umm in about 2011 when there was the letter from Michael Gove, the then education secretary to Dame Sally Coates who was the principle of the Burlington Danes academy in London and Michael Gove was writing to Sally Coates about the new teacher standards and I was reading the letters between Gove and Yates in terms of what the new teacher standards might be and the reason I was so interested was in the new teacher standards there was a phrase which said and originally it said teachers must not undermine fundamental British values and umm then it was changed towards teachers must uphold or promote fundamental British values and I was interested in where the term fundamental British values came from and that was when I started researching the area and discovered that the phrase fundamental British values come from the Prevent strategy, Home Office counter terrorism strategy Prevent and umm... that's when I started undertaking further research in this area.

**LS:** Do you know at all about the other strands of the national counter terrorism strategy? We have Pursue, Protect and Prepare.

**HB:** I do know about those as well and also channel. So umm ... I mean in my research I have been more interested in Prevent than any of the other areas so the areas that I have been encompassed in my research have been prevent and to a lesser extent channel... to a far lesser extent the other strands but under CONTEST I am aware of the other strands, absolutely.

**LS:** Would you be able to talk about any requirements that Prevent has specifically in the HE sector?

**HB:** Well my research is much more in schools but one of the things that I have experienced from HE is the need to have any speakers or any outside lectures or lecturers, their lectures ... at least understood by the university to ensure that they aren't inciting violence or hatred so that's my own personal experience where I have run a, in fact I run a conference on this area and then had to get more speakers presentations approved. You are very welcome to have the presentations; I will email them over as I have them all electronically. There is one specifically on Higher Education, so yeah it's been my personal experience.

**LS:** As an academic how do you feel about the Prevent duty, the Prevent Strategy in terms of academic freedom and freedom of speech within the university?

**HB:** I want to give a really big answer to that, so I think in terms of the Prevent strategy, I think there are a number of problems, I think it's widely understood in research that Prevent in itself is problematic so I don't think we are dealing with an unproblematic document, and that's the first thing. The second thing is that there have now been four



iterations of Prevent, it's not just one thing that was written and now we have it its unproblematic ... there have been four versions to date and each of those four versions has offered something new and rather different and a different slant on things so I think how it then is met in Higher Education depends on the version that we have, depends on peoples expertise in relation to the version they are offered,. I think at the heart of the problem with Prevent, and I don't think it's all problematic but one of the key issues is the notion of radicalisation. Now, radicalisation is a deeply complex process and is not well understood by many people, its deeply problematic in its own right and I think Prevent presents a rather simplified version of radicalisation and that's problematic when you've got a document that presents something straight forward and a process that's deeply complex and often individualised and I think that's one of the key issues that we deal with immediately. Umm I think from the four iterations the latest one offers us, what it sets out is, you know, there is a narrative of radicalisation out there in the world, out there in the world there are narratives of radicalisation and they are very powerful, you've talked about cyberspace and they are powerful in other media as well. This powerful narrative and the only narrative that Prevent offers us and the only counter-narrative that Prevent offers us is a narrative of fundamental British values which in itself is problematic, fundamental British values many people say Is reductionist and many people say it is ... in a post-colonial time, the notion of fundamental British values is problematic in its own right and so I think we are dealing with complexity, built on complexity built on complexity and when that meets in Higher Education, what have we got? We have a narrative of fundamental British values to counter a radicalisation agenda or a radicalisation narrative and that's insufficient I think because its insufficiently understood, it's insufficiently argued it's insufficiently engaged with by people, it's not a narrative that people regularly use, a narrative of fundamental British values is not a British narrative today, I would argue. Then we come to Higher Education and all that Higher Education stands for in terms of freedom of speech, in terms of values, in terms of a complex society and what we tend to think Higher Education to be and I think that's where we hit upon issues and we hit upon problems ... because we have a misunderstood process of radicalisation and I would say umm an ... insubstantial counter-narrative ... and that's the views about why its problematic in Higher Education.

**LS:** How does that differ from in schools, or is it the same?

**HB:** ... No I don't think it's the same, I don't think it's the same. I think that, I mean, well the things I have just said are the same, the process of radicalisation and all of those things but I think in a school, I mean schools are different things from universities, you have to be there, you have to go to school and its compulsory and what do school do if you like, it's a transmitter of values of any given society and that's understood as part of its function. I think universities are rather different and much more complex and a university is a wider space of learning and is a space which engages differently with the world and we aren't here to hold a mirror to the wall but rather to determine what the values are in the world and how we live together as

human beings, that we generate, you know, umm ... across society, we are the generators of knowledge and skills and the things that go with that, as the generators of knowledge I think we have to act rather differently in relation to our values and beliefs so I think they are different from schools.

**LS:** Do you think that schools are the right setting for Prevent? And the same question for Higher Education as well.

**HB:** Well I don't think Prevent is right, I don't think the premise is flawed to start with, I don't mean that against you but I just think Prevent is problematic as a starting point, umm so ... you know, should, and let's take schools ... I don't think that it's about Prevent being right for schools, for me the question is are teachers the right people to be upholding a Prevent duty? No I don't think the necessarily are... or if they are they need training in order to do it. From my research one of the things that has been absolutely extraordinary is that no teacher in any of my research has questioned the Prevent duty. In order to be a teacher you have to spend years at university and then do a postgraduate qualification and you have to get through your pre service and all of your placements and the rest of it and it's a tough call to be a teacher and its hard work. The teachers I know take master's degree and the rest of it and spend years and years studying in order to say they are a teacher and have their teacher number and is something they are proud of. Now, and then all of a sudden comes along the Prevent duty and something as important of the process of radicalisation and understanding, you know, what's going on with the young people in our care and you give them the Prevent duty training that I've had myself, you know, it couldn't be more superficial if it tried. I'm really shocked that teachers aren't demanding more and so at the moment I don't think they are the tight people because they aren't trained in the Prevent duty sufficiently and they aren't trained in processes of radicalisation and there isn't the time given to it. That's not to say that schools don't have a duty of care to young people and radicalisation in all of its forms, whether that be right wing extremism, we would want of course teachers would be the first to look out for young people but they are there to teach curriculum first and foremost and you can't expect teachers to be everything. Schools are there to you know, help young people develop into fine young citizens and at the moment teachers don't have the training and I'm not sure they should be the people to have the training to undertake the Prevent duty and I think its problematic. The same for universities?

**LS:** Yes, that would be great.

**HB:** I think the same goes actually. If you think how often you see your tutor, and your tutor is the same as a teacher and we all have external standards we need to achieve and ensure students get the best grades they can, we are all expected to publish and be out there in terms of our subject, and umm ... so we are all expected to be out there umm ... you know, as curriculum experts and then along comes the Prevent duty and I think the same goes that its whilst you see your students and you hopefully get to know your students, you know, as people really well because university tutors aren't

necessarily experts in the process of radicalisation because the Prevent duty hasn't afforded that ... umm I'm not sure we are the right people either and I think it's really complex and it needs experts all over it.

**LS:** Has that been your perception on Prevent since the start of it or has your perception changed over time?

**HB:** My perception has changed over the period of my research umm... at the beginning I didn't know what it was and so I went in with an open mind but the more I've read, and the more I've thought about it and the more I've researched and the more empirical work I have done, my views have changed on that because I think it's insufficient. It's so important and so serious that I don't think it's been attended to well enough. I think we do teachers a disservice in particular because the consequences are so great for teachers yet if they get it wrong the consequences of the young people in their care and their families are so great.

**LS:** Research is suggesting that when Prevent was initiated, there were two approaches that could be taken, the first of those is the safeguarding approach which we tend to take at this university, the second one is a targeting approach which basically specifies various groups to be monitored and be watched. Which do you see as the grounds for the initiation of Prevent?

**HB:** ... The initiation of Prevent ... Well the first thing I'd like to say is that there are problems around safeguarding. I think safeguarding is interesting to research as an area in its own right. It has emerged recently and everything comes under the safeguarding umbrella. I don't know if you know the book 'Hand Safeguards' but it's worth reading umm so I think safeguarding is problematic ... and targeting young people I think umm I think teachers and lecturers in Higher Education have insufficient information and facts for the young people in their care to be able to target so I wouldn't choose one over the other, I don't think it's a binary. I don't think you need me to say it's a binary but I don't think it is.

**LS:** As the school of education is Prevent in the curriculum to teach your primary education, secondary education students?

**HB:** They do have a lecture on Prevent.

**LS:** What exactly is covered within the lecture?

**HB:** I do not know because I do not do it, but I know what the general approach would be which is, this is the Prevent duty and this is what we are required to cover in our Prevent duty and as teachers we need to know this, this and this and it comes straight from the Prevent duty document.

**LS:** Do you know what the general feel of the trainee teachers with regards to Prevent?

**HB:** Not here because that piece of research is just about to start, I do in other places.

**LS:** What is it like in other places?

**HB:** It's not trainees, its teachers. Well very different. There are some teachers that think it's, well I've got a really interesting quote and I'll very happily send you this because it has been accepted for publication so you can quote it. There is one teacher who said, when I did some autobiographical research, one teacher said ... people should align with our values, this is our country and people from other countries should align with our values and the children in this school should learn what British values are, and so that person, that particular teacher doesn't have a problem at all with the Prevent duty and doesn't have a problem with it in any way and if there are problems with people trying to radicalise young people, terrorists or extremists, people should know about that and the powerful way to support them is to give them a strong British identity and at this particular school they learn a strong British identity through having a classroom named after British landmarks and all things like that... so that teacher didn't have a problem with it. Another teacher I interviewed said they thought that the phrase fundamental British values is reductionist and we want a wider understanding of values and need to be much more tolerant of other people and I think what's at the heart of the phrase fundamental British values, what Michael Gove tried to do was make it harder, less, David Cameron actually in his Munich speech that he wanted it to be less tolerant, liberal democracy where we live and the phrase fundamental British values was in the Munich speech of David Cameron. You have other teachers who say, like this one I was interviewing, yeah we ... it's not tolerant enough and we need a wider representation of what it is to be British and I just think that is very interesting so there is not one view for teachers because teachers are thinking different things because they are human beings and question the Prevent duty and that in itself is interesting. I mean, in this article, I use Foucault, and I use Foucault's concept of government mentality. What Foucault says is you know, free willing citizens would undertake the governments bidding, even in areas that they aren't comfortable with and you see it perfectly with Prevent and you see it with teachers and those in Higher Education where people aren't comfortable about it but they are still doing it. How on earth is that the case? Foucault's concept of governmentality helps us to understand how that happens in organisations like schools and university and it is interesting.

**LS:** Do you think that Prevent is efficient? You have touched on it a little bit but as a program to stop radicalisation, do you think it works?

**HB:** No I don't, I don't think its efficient ... I don't think its efficient because I don't think teachers know what the processes are so they can't really help fully and I don't think teachers, even if they did have somebody who was, from my research, what came out was when do you cross the line? If a teacher is scared that somebody is coming radicalised, where is the line? They don't know where the line is and why would they? They aren't psychologists, you know, they are people with expertise in, you know, social justice necessarily so they don't know the process of radicalisation and they

don't know where the line is or where the line should or shouldn't be crossed because they are teachers, they are not education psychologists so there isn't the expertise, they are curriculum experts, they really are and that's why they are employed and they have all of these other targets to meet. I don't think its sufficient in schools and I don't think the narrative of British values, fundamental British values is a mouthful enough narrative to counter radicalisation and yet that's all that teachers have then afforded and it's the only tool in the armoury as it were and I don't think it is an efficient one ... one because it hasn't been well developed as an argument, it hasn't been developed by politicians, it hasn't been developed by anybody and umm ... it's not even used in schools efficiently. The idea that, here's the ridiculous picture... in one of the schools I went into there was bunting, and bunting has gone up free fold so I have been told, to promote fundamental British values, so there is bunting around school and they are making cupcakes because the Great British Bake Off made people think Britain and they have bunting, baking, they've got British landmarks all around the school and in every lesson the teacher has to put up how this lesson in maths will align with our fundamental British values and that happens in every lesson, a PowerPoint in this. They learn about famous British people in their lessons ... how does that counter radicalisation? Bunting, it's just ridiculous and I don't think its efficient, no. efficient isn't the word I would use but that's not to say that people's hearts and minds aren't in the right place,. That the government isn't taking, you know the process of radicalisation is complex and serious ... terrorism and extremism are so serious and that's why I get so umm agitated about it because what we currently have isn't efficient or helpful.

**LS:** That's really interesting to see. Some of my other interviews have bridged on what you've said within Higher Education so it's interesting to see that's its similar in schools in terms of a lack of guidelines. We are now going to talk about Prevent and cyberspace. In 1992 Sterling defined cyberspace as the place between two electronically connected communication devices where people meet and communicate. Based on this definition do you believe it would be possible to stop radicalisation in cyberspace?

**HB:** No, no.

**LS:** Why is that?

**HB:** Cyberspace is too vast. If you take it to the level of a school then what schools have now are trigger words so across all, you know, electronic devices in any given school, across all media in school you have trigger devices and schools buy in software so it's much more difficult now to prevent, you know, any cybercrime happening, any cyberterrorism, any cyber radicalisation happening in schools. I assume the same applies to university but I don't know, where it would be much more difficult because it's such a large organisation out there in the world.

**LS:** Actually in Higher Education, in this institution, there is not any monitoring or filtering of computer content at all, trigger words aren't set up and I don't know whether

students know that to be honest. I think the general consensus among students is that they are monitored and have filtered web content in schools and it's the same in colleges as well and the assumption is that it might just continue to a university as well but actually it doesn't. Under the Prevent duty Higher Education has to have an IT policy which looks at monitoring and filtering web content. It can simply say we have discussed it and are not implementing it. Do you think that monitoring and filtering web content would be a method of preventing radicalisation?

**HB:** No.

**LS:** OK, why is that?

**HB:** Well if you are monitoring something ... in the university?

**LS:** Yes, in the university.

**HB:** ... I don't know, I need to think some more about it. I'm just thinking about Westminster University, I don't know whether you know Westminster University at all?

**LS:** I know a little bit about it, yes.

**HB:** Westminster University is where the man, I can't remember his name, the man known as Jihadi John.

**LS:** Mohamed Emwazi.

**HB:** Yes, thank you. It's where he studied and I was at a meeting recently with a woman who has the student services role at Westminster University and she was talking about, she is newly appointed, and she was talking about the things she was putting in place because clearly they do feel at Westminster University that more could have been done at the university.

**LS:** Do you think they feel they could have done more because they have had such a high profile case?

**HB:** Yes it's all to do with the profile of the case and it's also to do with the ... student make up at the university umm because I think it's to do with the demographic. I'm just torn between freedom of speech and freedoms that we have and ... whether here at this university, I mean I suppose yes, it is true, you could be radicalised online, we know that happens. What was the question again?

**LS:** Do you believe monitoring and filtering are methods to stop radicalisation?

**HB:** I'm sure there has been some research into this but I don't know... it's the monitoring; it kind of feels feeble and after the horse has bolted to me. I don't think monitoring somebody could stop the process of radicalisation umm I think it has to be other things, it could not just be monitoring. It's a bit like saying to children, the same thing is like I have a problem with children being tested, tested, tested because testing

doesn't teach someone it doesn't help learning anything and the same thing with monitoring for me ... I think if you monitor your citizens, it's not the role of the state to monitor citizens in every way so I worry about that umm ... I don't think that monitoring someone would stop them becoming radicalised but it depends who is doing the monitoring and for what purposes and what is done with that information. Having said that, I'm quite sure that the intelligence services, the security services do pick up an awful lot of intelligence from monitoring but not at the university, we are not GCHQ here at the university. Sorry, that's a very rambled answer.

**LS:** You've mentioned some really interesting things there.

**HB:** I might have to do some more thinking there and I'll email you with more thoughts.

**LS:** If monitoring and filtering were implemented into Higher Education, how would that affect academic research at the university?

**HB:** It would affect my research because if key words were triggered there would be people all over it. I don't know how it would affect it actually. It might inhibit people from being inquisitive. I think part of the tension with the Prevent duty is that you have a requirement as an education professional. As an education professional in Higher Education work or in schools you have on the one hand a requirement to provide opportunity to explore ideas to explore extreme ideas and they are learning, developing and playing with ideas. We know young people do that because it's part of growing up and on the other hand teachers are supposed to, lecturers are supposed to refer people onto channel if they have concerns so there is a sort of monitoring role there if you like, it's just not online. There is tension there because in order to work with young people and for them to develop ideas, whatever radical ideas they might be playing with, that's what it is to be a young person and to grow up and develop,. You need to build up a relationship of trust with that young person and also to be seen as someone who might refer them onto Channel, you can't have that trusting relationship already so there is tension there. What was the question again? Sorry I went off on a tangent.

**LS:** It was about academic research.

**HB:** Oh yes academic research... so ... I mean if we were working with our young people, if you want to know the views by young people and our you know, our students we need to be able to have the trusting relationships with them and I call that research, I think my practice is research, if I'm teaching I still see it as research. In all of my practices even at the university because I'm asking questions about my practices and so I would like to have trusting relationships with my students here or when I was a teacher, the pupils in my care. A total monitoring and surveillance role worries me because then you can't have, if you're seen as an agent of the state by your students I think that inhibits the relationship and I think in this country, you know, university lecturers are not perceived as agents of the state and I think the perception is rather different so you can have that more trusting relationship and I think that in terms of the

... if we had a greater monitoring and surveillance role, is that what you're saying, would that inhibit research? I'm just thinking of the international research network I chair, yes it would change the relationship I have with the learners in my care and it wouldn't necessarily and also with my colleagues.

**LS:** So finally, we are going to think about future directions for Prevent. Is there anything you would like to see added to the Prevent duty, anything specifically you would like to see taken away from it?

**HB:** I think the Prevent duty is on borrowed time. I think when you've got people like Eliza Manningham-Bullar, who is the former head of Mi5 saying it is insufficient, I think we have to listen, so that's the first thing. The second thing is that the Prevent duty offers a narrative, offers only a counter-narrative of fundamental British values and in order for that to be effective we need to understand what is meant by fundamental British values and at the heart of that I was disappointed in Michael Gove because there is one narrative that says the British, these are the battles we fought, these are the kings and queens, these are the flags we fly, these are the people we are, it's in our DNA, these are the values that we queue up and we don't push in queues and we hang up bunting, that's one narrative. The other narrative is that there is that, but it has been disrupted, by the Windrush coming into the country, by peoples from, you know, across the world coming into this country and that narrative has been interrupted, disrupted and interrupted and it's still a British narrative today, if you like a richer narrative, a much more complex narrative and in the phrase fundamental British values from the teacher standards and Prevent, we have never been given the opportunity to explore in the phrase fundamental British values, whether it is that narrative that I have just described, the battles of old, or this narrative, the new and British narrative. For Prevent to be effective I think we need a discussion around what it means to be British today. My third point is that if teachers are to uphold and university lecturers are to uphold the Prevent duty really well, they have to understand the process of radicalisation. That is what I think.

**LS:** Thank you very much, H.



**Appendix 15 - Interview Transcript, Participant 13 – University Support Staff**

**LS:** Hi A, it would be great if you can talk about your knowledge of Prevent and how it links to the national counter terrorism strategy.

**AM:** That's a very good question when I'm trying to, I don't have great knowledge of it but the majority of knowledge is through the Prevent steering group. I ... think Prevent is a good idea on paper, it's a great ... way of helping, I suppose securing the ... UK's national interests and making sure that we are in a safe community umm... I suppose in practice it is completely different, it's something else. In practice I think people's interpretations of what it is meant for is probably not quite what it should be. It's a good, its good in terms of as ... for me it works but it's only because I have a certain interpretation of what it is meant for.

**LS:** What is that interpretation?

**AM:** My interpretation is that it is to protect the community at large, protect the community at large from who? Anybody with any kind of extremist views umm people who talk about a whole group of people who label a whole group of a whole community for something, say for example, FGM right... FGM is prevalent in certain parts of the world so people assume that people in those parts of the world agree with FGM umm and I don't think that's the case. It might be prevalent in that part of the world, I don't want to say which part of the world, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, maybe Africa, but ... the interpretation or the feeling is that everybody in that part of the world agrees with it. Something else like I think most people in the world know that women in Saudi Arabia can't drive, so we assume that that's, I assume that that is an Islamic law that they are propagating, actually it is not an Islamic law, it's a cultural law. There is no law within our religion which says a women can't drive, there are certain things that say women should be with a chaperone if they are going a long distance, but that's not just women, it's all people and it's what we interpret, it's how we interpret it. So, interpretations, so in my interpretation I think Prevent could work and it could work better but what is lacking, what is missing is people understanding what certain things mean, so the ... the meaning of terrorism has changed, the meaning of extremism has changed and the actual meaning of what extremism is is now rightly or wrongly gone... been attributed to a particular group, IS for example. Personally I feel this kind of group, the fanatics that they are, they thrive on that kind of thing. IRA in the past were the terrorists and now if you think of a terrorist you think it's IS, or ISIS or Taliban because of the tactics they have used but they don't represent Islam. All they represent are their political agendas and you know, media definitely does, front page news whatever, you see it, it highlights these groups and umm I've seen in programs where they are talking about extremism and umm the program makers are very clever and they use certain terms... while they are using those terms they have pictures of a bearded man or a woman in a Hijab, or a woman in a Burka umm and the thing I've noticed is that whenever anybody is caught doing something wrong and they are doing it in the name of Islam, say, they are always saying a particular phrase which is Allahu

Akbar and Allahu Akbar means 'God is great' and now because of the link ... it's one of those, it's a Pavlovian thing, because of the link people have assumed OK, we have gathered that these people are bad and now ... its drummed into us on a daily basis because the media has so much power, its drummed into us on a daily basis that these people are terrorists. Now, they represent that on a wider scale, and now that is now linked so nobody denies that these people are bad, but then connecting the two, connecting the two is where people fill in the gaps and are left to, people are left to their own devices to fill in the gaps and so we do the rest by not educating ourselves and taking things on face value and it runs from there.

**LS:** Do you think that these media pieces and public perception were a part of the government agenda when Prevent was bought in?

**AM:** No, no. I have spoken to a lot of people about Prevent ... I have spoken to a lot of people about Prevent and they seem to think that it's a government agenda, I personally don't believe that. Personally I believe that its umm ... it's kind of gone out of their hands, the government with all due respect they we're trying to do the right thing by, the thing is there is so many people there giving, not orders, but their two pence worth that ... they are all kind of giving a little umm ... they are all giving a piece towards a pie, the ingredients, so the only thing we do know is there is a bit of paper saying this is what Prevent says but how that's been interpreted by different people. Say, for example, the Quilliam Foundation, they are ... interpreting what it means and that one group has given a feedback and there is another foundation, I've forgotten the name of it umm ... if the name comes back... it's the name of a person and they created a group. So there are two or three major groups that are helping to tell the government what Prevent should mean but there are so many unsponsored, unofficial groups that are saying this is what Prevent means and the problem is we have say, YouTube, we have so many vloggers and so many right wing, left wing speakers that and they are the people that UK public are listening to ... they are the people that are engaging with the public, the groups that are umm ... advising the government, they aren't very good at engaging with the public and all they are doing is putting their understanding to it but the guys that... the groups that are engaging with the public are looking at comments, seeing what people are saying and then feeding back to those things and so it's a very big beast in that sense which the government, it's out of the government hands but because they say government Prevent is a government agenda ... it was a government project, yes but the agendas are completely different... the agendas are all different things coming together.

**LS:** Have your perceptions of Prevent changed over time?

**AM:** Yes, at first I thought Prevent was a bad idea but I would have to admit that was because I just assumed Prevent was what we see in the news. At first I thought, I don't know if you ever noticed through the Prevent meetings we have been to at the same time; I haven't really said much because I thought it was a bad idea but why? I thought to myself the reasons why I think it's a bad idea is because of what I've seen in the

news, what I've seen in the media and because people talk to me about it but how much do I know about Prevent myself? When I didn't agree with Prevent and it was probably this time last year I know that my knowledge of Prevent was nothing ... so based on that I kind of get why I, and now I'm reading up and I listen to lectures and debates and both sides have got good arguments but nobody and every time umm the full Prevent people, they are arguing about the people, about the actions of people... the people who are against Prevent, they are arguing against the actions of people and they aren't actually going through what Prevent actually means. I then thought my own personal experience is that a lot of people say Islam is bad, or Christianity is bad or Judaism is bad because in their religion they have wars in Israel or there is Palestine. In the Muslim community, within groups of friends I have seen a lot of people who say Jews are the scum of the earth because of what is happening in Israel but I say to them, but what if it's not the Jews, what if it's not, what if they happen to be Israeli but they have conflicts of their own and what if it's not the Jews and what if even the Jews agree with what Israel does, and they are like well they do, but how do you know? Because of what you see in the media and that's all it is. If you speak to an actual Jewish person they will say actually I don't agree with what Israel does but nobody is listening to me... and for that reason I came to the conclusion that the actual source is OK, the source, the material and the original and I mean I've seen so many people take the Quran passages completely out of context and then I thought that is what is happening with Prevent. They are taking something and are taking it out of context and then they are blaming Prevent, they are not blaming the interpretation and that's what's happening. Most people who are for or against it, for or against the actions, what should be is there is a lack of education of the actual interpretation of it and so going back to your original question, do I agree with Prevent, yes I do. Now I do because I know about it.

**LS:** Chaplaincy in every university is compulsory under the Prevent duty, so how do you feel about having a compulsory role within Prevent?

**AM:** Umm, it gives me ... it gives me the ... it gives me confidence that I am in a position to be making a difference because ... a lot of my kind of life ethos is about impact. What impact am I making to my community to the community at large, to my neighbours and by implementing Prevent in a professional manner in I suppose if you know a professional role, it gives me more confidence to be able to do something, I suppose make a difference, so I feel quite privileged.

**LS:** Out of interest have you had any students come and speak to you about challenges they have experienced through Prevent or maybe along a Prevent line but not actually specifically to do with Prevent?

**AM:** I have not had students talk to me directly about Prevent but it could be indirectly. They are just incidents where they feel they have been victimised and I do get a lot of kind of, I get a lot of not just students, committee members as well. Telling me that this happened to me on the bus, or you know, they aren't all negative, they are positive as

well. For every negative story we have there is probably two or three positive stories but you never hear about the positive stories and it's always the negative ones we hear and it's the negative ones that stick in your mind... and you know, when I talk to people, when I read up on it it is always the negative that people talk about because people talk about bad experiences more than good experiences, nothing related to Prevent I would say ... I don't feel that umm ... people have had Prevent used against them in any way, but then you only have to see in the media, like something like I don't know if you heard about the cucumber, a child tried to say cucumber but instead said 'cooker bomb' and again it's an interpretation, a child who invented a clock but this was in America, a young boy he was either year six or seven, beginning of primary or early secondary had a science project and because of Prevent ... sorry it's not America because Prevent is only here, somewhere maybe London, he, he, he the teacher said it's like a time bomb, but it was just a clock and it showed what they are thinking that everyone is on edge and there has definitely not been enough guidance, there is a lot of guidance but how to interpret the guidance is missing. My personal agenda is to explain to people what to do and I hate to say this but one of this is in some cases peoples inherent discrimination is coming out, you know, they probably already felt like that but now they feel like they can ... its legitimised because they now have a green paper or a white paper saying its OK to point out a certain thing but if you point out this wrong, you need to point out that wrong but they don't look at that wrong, they only look at this wrong. I don't know if it's a Prevent thing but now I do find that I suppose when, because Islam is in the media and it's in the spotlight, when a Muslim person does something wrong, it is a big wrong even though everyone does it, I don't know speeding. If a Muslim is speeding or driving using the phone they are coming down on them hard because they are in the spotlight and that is what I feel most because everybody makes mistakes, because everybody...this is part of life and I'm not saying its ok to but what happens is that there is a disproportionate focus on those people and when they do something wrong it seems as though they are all doing the same thing. Last year or the year before there was a ring of paedophiles or something but a bunch of Asian men had a ring of young girls and they were being abused umm ... and I felt bad for the kids and umm what the papers were saying is that these people thought because they were white young girls they are fair game and I just thought that was such a disgusting way to look at things and I don't agree with it at all but they've played on that and made it sound so bad and now in some cases I think Muslim men are being given a bad name, a few bad apples doesn't make the whole everything bad but its ... I mean that's just my personal belief, on the whole its OK I think.

**LS:** How can we change that perception?

**AM:** I don't think that will ever change because peoples mind sets are ingrained. If we look at the support for someone like Marine La Pen, I was scared that if she won, thank God she didn't, if she won we would have had a revolution on our hands and something big would've happened because I mean ... she has some extremist views but we don't look at that. If we look at the history that her father who was the founder

of National Front, he was anti-Semitic and he was inherently racist and so in many ways he probably in his heart he probably agreed with Hitler, because of those who ... Marine La Pen has changed the view and is able to target more people. What is happening, for example Brexit, what is happening is that people are ... blaming their woes on someone and they are looking for someone to blame their woes on, what are their woes, lack of jobs. We all have lack of opportunities, lack of economic stability, lack of economic access, I don't even think I'm saying it right but basically, lack of welfare, there is a big problem in this country where we have a lot of people who are better off on benefits umm and that is a problem and David Cameron alluded to it a few years ago saying that 'Workers not Shirkers' and that was his phrase. All very well saying what he said but nothing has changed. I have spoken to at least two people, real life two people who said oh my sister has a car all paid for because her brother in law or actually it's not even her brother in law, it's her partners mum and they aren't married, its claiming disability for depression so they don't work but she has a car, I work full time and, sorry she has a car which is a brand new plate and insurance is all paid for ... I'm working all the hours God sends and I've just got a banger and I have to pay for that and everything so there is a problem there in the background but people don't see that. What they are blaming are the immigrants because there is an immigration problem, whys there an immigration problem, because the media have told them and there is a problem with them coming in, it's not a problem with them coming in it's a problem with the UK borders agency saying who can't come in because they aren't doing a proper job. There is a group, a community where people just say it's the government and it's not and that's the problem we are having I think. People are making umm taking the actual problem and blaming it on something else and that is human nature and it will never change. I know it was random, sorry.

**LS:** No, it's really interesting and is really relevant. We are now going to think about Prevent and cyberspace. Cyberspace was defined by Sterling in 1992 as the place between two electronically connected communication devices where people meet and communicate. Based on this definition do you think it's possible to stop radicalisation in cyberspace?

**AM:** Umm I would say going back to what I previously said, it won't change because people won't change their communications; in fact it will get worse. The reason why is where as before only the newspapers can say what they wanted and that was widely spread, now everybody has become a broadcaster and everyone can do a live stream and so what's happening is the vloggers are getting a lot of subscribers and they are the ones that are changing perceptions ... umm and people are feeding into that and because people are always thinking of I suppose I wouldn't say ... sorry that was wrong of me to say, not people are always thinking negatively but the ones who are thinking negatively they have a bigger audience and that won't ever change, no I don't think it will change. I was thinking maybe post-apocalyptic maybe but I don't think it will ever change because of people's inherent fear and we tend to fear what we don't know. Umm that is one of the reasons why Prevent is so much debated and I've sat, I

mean, I've been at Prevent debates live and I've listened to YouTube videos and every single one of them, they are all fighting or arguing against actions, they aren't arguing against what they are saying they are arguing against or for Prevent but are for or against the actions so that will never change,

**LS:** Do you think the focus of terrorist organisations using cyberspace to radicalise and in particular using social media, do you think that is a challenge to the Muslim student community?

**AM:** It is a challenge to everybody. The reason why is because it's one of those things, its freedom isn't it? You can't, you know how in certain parts of the world they block certain apps, what you are then blocking is freedom of speech and freedom of speech has gone out of hand now, freedom of speech is one of those things which has become freedom to ... offend umm and when ... it if that person has said an offence, its wrong, if that person offends it is OK and they are both offending but because of this persons background it is against the norm or it is anti-Semitism or anti-Islamic or anti this or anti that, but that person because they are an organisation that represents big newspapers or something so personally... umm it's just umm ... social media is just, you can't stop it, you know, if you do people will just find another way around it and you can't stop it.

**LS:** At universities there has been a lot of discussion about implementing monitoring and filtering of web content, so that people can't access extremist related material through the university, so the university can see if they are accessing it on campus. Do you think that these methods should be bought into the university?

**AM:** Personally I think it's a waste of time and money. The reason why is because from the ... the only people you will catch are people that are loners, people who are not calculated because if they were they wouldn't be using the university. If they were going to really do it, if they were really going to be planning something major, than they would be probably well financed, I'm sure they can get their own broadband connection. I personally feel it is a waste of time and money and the ones you will get they are probably going to be fanatics but they will be crazy's, they will be one offs and you can find any link because they have downloaded extremist right wing material, ISIS or whatever, they do that but they are the small fish.

**LS:** But is that not the point of Prevent, to stop those lone attacks?

**AM:** I would say it does ... it does what we need to do but we could do that anyway. We could do that by just talking to people and making sure that you know, you don't leave people to their own devices and if people are very umm, you know, very lonerist... if they keep themselves to themselves, if we have genuine concern about them, if they don't have any friends and we won't see that from their internet activity and if we do see it in their internet activity it is probably too late and they need some kind of intervention. I don't think they are people with problems but what I think is I think they need help to show them what is ... proper etiquette and how to behave in

social interaction and that's what it is. They have for example someone like Josef Fritzl, what he did was because he believed he was doing the right thing, and obviously what he did was very bad but he didn't think it was wrong. If he was given that, if he was given that umm support I suppose ... in some ways we will never stop people like Josef Fritzl because they will do what they want to do and in general people in prison, most of the people in prison people shouldn't be, they don't need to be there and it is a change of mind set and their mind set is that they've, the reason why they are there is because they did what they needed to do, the crime they committed and they are given alternatives, they don't have to be there like that and there are other ways then I think we would be able to get a lot of people out of prison, it won't take everybody out of prison because people inherently do the wrong thing but the majority of people will be out... so it is a mind set, it really is a mind set.

**LS:** So you don't see monitoring and filtering as a means of stopping radicalisation?

**AM:** I have gone completely off topic. Monitoring and filtering... it works to a point but it won't get rid of the problem.

**LS:** Would it help to solve the problem in Higher Education?

**AM:** No, it will see, what it is if someone is caught it will stop that person but it won't stop a group. If a group was going to plan an attack then they will still have their attack carried out. All it does is mirror, it, it, it gives, it attributes success to something which is never really related so what I find is that it just, something that is just going to be seen to work, something to show the public it is working. I think it's, I wouldn't ever say it at a steering group, purely because they people, sometimes they want to show they are supporting this. One of the reasons why we are so good in the university here is because its, we have those processes in place but we have the personal aspect and we know that we look at people and think OK, has this person got extremist views, and whichever they probably have and if they have there is no space for them and we don't give them the platform and that's one of the reasons why we haven't had many. Otherwise we could have easily had a speaker here and you know, it could have been an extremist speaker from a right wing group, it could have been anybody. Yeah monitoring works to a point but won't get the problem solved.

**LS:** Finally, would you like to see anything added to Prevent in universities, or anything that is currently in place that you'd like to see taken away?

**AM:** No, I wouldn't change Prevent. What I would change is, I would offer education to say ... I take it as my job to understand what it means so that I can go and speak to members of my community and members of other communities and even the steering group because it is such a big thing and that's one of the reasons why I've kept quiet during the Prevent meetings because I don't want to say something and I want to be sure what I'm talking about and it's a lot to go through so you know, it might not happen straight away but it will take time. I wouldn't change Prevent because I don't know

enough about it to say, I'll say it works but many people say it wouldn't work and I think there is a lot of work to do with what we have already before we change it.

**LS:** Thank you very much, A.



## Appendix 16 - Interview Transcript, Participant 14 – Counter-narrative Project Officer

**LS:** Hi L, it would be great if you can talk about your knowledge of Prevent and how it links to the national counter terrorism strategy.

**LP:** So, my knowledge of Prevent comes from working across our education programmes here at \*institution\* umm, in terms of what we do, we focus, our work focusses on a strand of Prevent that is encourages discussion around challenging extremist ideologies and equipping young people with the skills to be able to do that so we kind of work in that very broad upstream prevention space rather than the downstream ... perhaps more targeted, at risk approach ... so yeah that's kind of our focus really on kind of developing strategies for ... building skills and knowledge of young people so that if they come across extremist content or propaganda either online or offline they have the ability to be able to challenge it themselves without been told one thing or another so it is quite an empowering view of it in that sense. In terms of how it relates to the other strands, I would say our emphasis on a broader prevention end of Prevent is very soft in relation to the other strands which are more Prepare, Protect and Pursue are the others, and those kind of are more police led and more police involved whereas the strand of Prevent, I know in the media a lot of people focus on channel being a police led program and actually it's not, it is a multi-agency program led by, I think, different people in different areas depending on where you are in the country... I think in some areas it is led by social services, others it may be a bit of the police and calling by schools and taking the lead but it's not just them, it is kind of equal footing really and that's what we try and understand with our work, that bit of Prevent and even channel is more targeted, but that bit of Prevent is ultimately about safeguarding in a multi-agency way rather than in a more specific counter terror way so it is the softer strand essentially.

**LS:** Do you think that Prevent as a program to reduce radicalisation works?

**LP:** I think yes it does, I think it is hard to prove in this area, not just Prevent but prevention and countering violent extremism in general, it can be quite difficult to monitor and evaluate the impact of those policies, in particular when it is something that focusses on attitudinal and behavioural change it is hard to show that something you've done might have stopped a kid who could have gone to Syria in five years' time, in that sense it is hard but on the other hand it is great...you can show impact by carrying out an evaluation to show that you've educated people about extremism...that they display some behavioural traits that are in keeping with, I don't like using the term British values because it is restrictive but, in keeping with human values umm, so kind of tolerance, respect for everyone and they are pluralist values that I too I think, lots of different countries not just the UK, as it can show measures of impact in that sense as well. In terms of Channel I mean I hear anecdotal evidence all the time that Channel has turned the lives of young people around and I think maybe 1000 have gone through Channel, something like that and from what I hear from sort of other Prevent

officers or people who work within Channel, it really is a programme that ... in some cases you don't even really need to talk about extremism, you kind of give the young person umm a way to feel like they belong in the community, a mentor who spends a lot of time with them and are on the same page, umm a whole range of opportunities are provided to them depending on their needs, it is a very tailored approach and we do need more evidence beyond the anecdotes to show that it does work because I think the anecdotes are actually really strong and I actually think what we are seeing now in the national conversation, I think the Times recently put out an article which kind of spoke in depth about someone who had gone through channel and it was a really amazing article to show you Prevent and it's great that it showed Prevent does work, and the media have those anecdotes and try and come up with some harder evidence in some way and I know it has its limitations...especially if you are under 18 you have to protect the anonymity of the person that goes through and that persons family might not want to talk about what the child has gone through as well but I think there is a lot of important information that could be put out about it that shows it is necessary.

**LS:** Has this always been your perception about Prevent or has it changed since you have been working here, or since you've known about it?

**LP:** I guess I first learned about Prevent when I was doing my masters ... and we took quite an academic approach to it, so I did war studies at Kings and one of the modules was on terrorism and home grown radicalisation and so we kind of studied quite academically and I guess the evolution of Prevent sort of ... the creation post 7/7 and the accounts have changed since then and to be honest my perception has always been that it is necessary it is just a question of how you implement it and how much kind of, support you give to the people who have the responsibility to implement it as well so I guess the statutory duty coming in in 2015 ... obviously you have front line workers who became the front and centre of the conversation and they could have statistics saying that you know, over 500,000 online workers have been trained, as to the quality of that training it is patchy, and as to the quantity of that training it is also patchy and so I would say that from my work here, now working with, kind of, teachers and others working with young people on the ground the feedback we get on Prevent is that it is necessary and is a good thing but the teachers and other educators, so you can apply this to Higher Education in a slightly different way, they need more support in some cases umm ... in terms of delivering that policy but no I have always had a positive view of Prevent because as we've seen from Manchester and other things that have happened recently, it is necessary to focus on the softer side of the policy particularly if you don't want to continue with a society where some groups do feel quite alienated so you need that softer strand that focuses on a way in bringing everyone around to have that conversation but you need to support people to be able to facilitate that.

**LS:** My research so far has come across two different way of implementing Prevent. The first is a safeguarding approach which you've mentioned and the second is a

targeting approach. I haven't come across anyone, yet, who is using the targeting approach, have you?

**LP:** No, no ... I mean again because our work is .... The way that we sell our education program is to say it helps fulfil the safeguarding and Prevent responsibilities but it isn't funded by Prevent or linked to Prevent in that way. It is a way to focus on the bit of Prevent that encourages safe open dialogue and group discussion and that ties in with the Higher Education area with free speech and challenging ideologies and that kind of thing and we focus on that part of it rather than on the specific, if a person is at risk, what safeguarding policy do you have in place? We don't work as sharp as that, so we stick with the no n targeted approach.

**LS:** Would you be able to talk about some of the counter-narrative campaigns that either you've been a part of or the institute have been involved in?

**LP:** Yeah so in terms of our online counter-narrative campaigns, again they range from the kind of broader upstream non targeted approach so kind of targeting everyone ... and when I say everyone I don't mean an ivory tower, I mean for example fourteen to eighteen year olds in the UK, that's the kind of broader approach so they range from that end of the scale to more specific focussing on groups that might be at risk or very specific ... a fourteen year old, white person living in Dover for example, you come up with a specific campaign for that. In terms of how you can strike the counter-narrative campaigns you have to think about your target audience, so who you are trying to reach and again that could be broad it could be very narrow. You have to think about your messenger, so who is it that's delivering that campaign to the person and the most important thing there is to make sure the messenger is credible, which means they have to be authentic and resonate with who you are targeting, the audience. For example, this isn't a campaign that we've done but I know there was a comedian who basically kind of did a YouTube thing that targeted young Muslim men who felt alienated in UK society and doing it from ... from within his religion but in a very funny way to try and get the young people on board and I think his specific demographic target group, nobody other than him could have been the messenger so that's a really important thing to consider as well. Then the third thing that's important is being able to measure the impact you have with the campaign because a lot of them are done online it is fairly easy with analytics but you do have to be careful because you can see you've reached 3 million people but has it had an effect on those 3 million people. You have to be careful not to be lulled into a false sense of success by looking at vanity metrics umm and kind of go a bit beyond the reach and actually look at the depth you're having as well. In terms of a broader counter-narrative campaign that ISD has done, have you heard about Extreme Dialogue?

**LS:** Yeah I have.

**LP:** Yeah, so that was a series of online films and offline educational resources but the films have been used as a standalone counter-narrative product as well and they

are essentially a series of short stories about people who have been former extremists or survivors of extremism and they across ideologically, so we have in Canada a former white supremacist, a mother whose son was killed fighting for ISIS and a former refugee from Somalia and is now in Toronto as a youth worker, we have Adam Dean who is Quillium and works for them now and is a former member of Al Muhajiroun and we have Billy McCurry who is the former member of the UVF in Ireland and his father was murdered by the IRA and revenged by killing someone else and went to prison and I guess became deradicalised in prison through religion and he speaks that story there. In Germany we have a Syrian refugee who now lives in Berlin and in Hungary we have a member of the Roma community who was targeted by far right demonstrations on his town. Because it is such a broad range of voices they have completely different messages and as a result depending on who you are targeting you can choose the video accordingly if that makes sense, so if you are trying to kind of ... engage young men you might want to use Daniel the white supremacist from Canada because he speaks to the lack of belonging to society plus the sense of adventure he wanted when he was young and those themes that might be more relevant to young men, Chris the mother... that usually works well with women, or kind of more universally because everyone has a mother at some point and it's the family connection everyone can relate to. The refugee stories are really interesting and are a good way of raising these issues with people without people feeling alienated or isolated themselves. Some of the feedback we get from using some of these resources in schools for example, is that if you go into a school who has a strong Muslim demographic, for example, they prefer the stories that aren't about Islamist extremism because it's still a way to engage them on the issues but they don't feel blamed or targeted so it's a good way to talk about some of these counter-narratives and the issues that come out about extremism, in a way that doesn't make anyone feel particularly uncomfortable and it works the other way round as well. They have been really successful online, they have had a lot of traction on twitter and Facebook, we've done targeted ads to students and teachers around that so yeah there is a kind of broader ones. Something more specific is Abdullah X, I can refer you to this stuff after as well so you have the links. Abdullah X was made by a former Islamist extremist and is a cartoon essentially and he is called Abdullah and he basically every time there is something, so one of the videos ... I think it was after Charlie Hebdo, they put out animation talking about all of the grievances that those perpetrators had and there were people following Islamist ideology have but in a deconstructed way and in a way that was like, I have this grievance but I'm not going to go and shoot someone. It was trying to show the message that these grievances exist but violence is not the answer and ideology is not the answer essentially and that was specifically targeted at a certain audience and was further downstream. That was a range of what we have here. We also have a network of young people aged between 18-30 called YouthCAN or the Youth Civil Activist Network and they have like 100 and something members in 125 countries and it is young creatives and activists who go to our counter-narrative labs and then they come up with counter-narrative content themselves, so they will come up with a campaign. I think they put out a few after each lab but its quite a good

way to create content that is very context specific so it is based on the local, I think the most recent one was in Mombasa and its relating to local tensions and things that were going on there. These are really interesting and I can refer you to their website so you can get more sense of that, it is more of an international thing rather than UK specific but we have been to two labs in London last year so good content came from that and the handbooks I gave you as well will have this in there in more detail.

**LS:** You mentioned that in one of the videos a guy was deradicalised in prison after he murdered someone in revenge. How important is Prevent in the prison sector and should that be the exact same program as Prevent in education?

**LP:** Umm I mean my first response to that would be no because those of us know that if you look at the two groups you've just mentioned, Prevent in education, young people and students and then Prevent in prisons, one group being offenders, that is a much harder targeted group who require very specific responses because they will have a whole host of issues that those young people won't have. I was talking to a guy yesterday who his job was to go into prisons and give the prisoners lessons on how to use like, cameras to create counter-narrative content and stuff like that and to provide them with a way of communicating and making their voice heard. He was saying there was so many negative connotations about going into prison to do this work, because half of them don't show up and half of them, it's not even a priority for them because they are looking to their parole, they are looking to reintegrate into society and ... all of those things which you know, you could argue that Prevent seeks to do that as well but the real integration into society is a key part of channel and so there is definitely space for Prevent but it has to be done very differently to in the education sector where ... a lot of those young people won't be at risk, or at risk to others in the same way that perhaps some people in prison will be and as the example I used, Billy was in prison I think for 15 years or something like that, and he I think it's always difficult with the Irish conflict because I think it's a very different situation to the extremism we have now in a way because it is quite historical and was encompassing in their society in a way that it was easy for him to join a group in retaliation and it was more like a war situation where it was one group verses another. It's more asymmetrical now and his experience was unique in a way, he was deradicalised because he turned to Christianity and so he kind of forgave himself and tried to seek forgiveness from others through that kind of theological belief which kind of gave him comfort and I guess that happens in Prevent as well, but he replaced one ideology with a softer version like religion or something like humanist values, but yeah I think that Prevent in prisons needs to be done in a much more specific way, context specific way rather than schools where you can have a broader approach that teachers mould to the needs of their students.

**LS:** Is education the right setting for Prevent?

**LP:** Yeah, I think so because you're basically trying to ... build what I think are actually life skills in young people to be able to protect themselves from influences that are bad

and to be able to recognise those influences and see why they are harmful and to build skills so they know how to critically think when they are online so that they want to interact in society and their community and schools do that anyway. Schools safeguard anyway so it's a no brainer concept and policy really it's just that it's had very bad publicity which I understand that there might be some very honest grievances behind that and they do need to be ironed out but it does make sense that the education sector are responsible for that because they are responsible for protecting young people against all kind of vulnerable influences.

**LS:** Now we are going to turn to think about Prevent and cyberspace. In 1992 Sterling defined cyberspace as the place between two electronically connected communication devices where people meet and communicate. Based on this definition do you believe it is possible to stop radicalisation in cyberspace?

**LP:** That's a hard question... umm I mean ... do you mean completely prevent radicalisation in cyberspace?

**LS:** Stop or reduce it.

**LP:** Reduce it. I think you can work towards trying to reduce it and I think that, I mean, we are obviously seeing a lot at the moment and particularly after Westminster but a lot of focus of what social media companies are doing to counter and take down extremist content and they are coming under a lot of fire for it which I think is ... kind of fair enough in a way because they are massive companies who do have the intelligence and the skills and the money to ... do more than they are doing now. I mean I know they have kind of got units within their companies of people who are completely mitigated to doing this type of thing but it's not working very successfully at the moment but maybe because it is a newish focus and we need time for people to figure out the correct algorithm or the correct way to try and take down some of this content so that people firstly aren't seeing it but I think as well as a focus on like ... the online takedown content you need to focus on building skills and people who are looking at this content online so actually I think it makes more sense to look at social media companies to focus on that and for us and for people working on Prevent to focus on making sure people can inoculate themselves against the content they see and making, not just extremist content but also fake news and all of these things that are buzzwords right now and making sure you can go online and read an article and recognise that it might be hyper editorialised or biased in some way and being able to not only recognise that but also respond to it in your behaviour as well. That's really important so I think a lot of this work needs to be skills based, not just takedown based but I think the two need to learn to work in tandem as well and a lot needs to be done in both areas.

**LS:** When there is so much extremist material online can counter-narratives really help to prevent radicalisation of young people?

**LP:** So yeah I think a lot of the content you see online, to use the example of the propaganda that ISIS put out, its slick, its sexy, its high quality, its cutting edge, they have a marketing department and they take this very seriously, like half of their battle is online. As a result we need to make sure that the content we put out is of that high quality and actually more so again of the authentic quality because young people and adults will see straight through something if it is a marketed promo video in some way and it doesn't capture you in an emotional way in the same way that the ISIS stuff might so we need to make sure we are playing them at their own game. Again there is a lot of money to be able to do this kind of stuff through YouTube or any of these kinds of things so I think they can make a difference and have been shown to make a difference but there is a lot of work still needing to be done but I would say that the extreme dialogue videos are of just as high quality as ISIS videos, you just need to be careful about the reason why propaganda is so successful is that it captures the hearts and minds of the people that it is targeting and we need to make sure we are doing the same thing but we aren't going to get that by putting out a boring, or bland, or sanitised video, you will capture peoples interest and engage them with something that still tackles the subject so we wanted our videos to be gritty and not shallow or shying away from extremism or images or ISIS in it because that is what is happening and make sure that you are kind of umm ... making sure that the authenticity and engagement is at the heart of them and then I think you will be successful in doing it.

**LS:** How can you make sure that the counter-narratives are reaching the right people?

**LP:** You can target them through ads, for example, so on YouTube and Twitter and Facebook you can kind of ... they have quite specific criteria so you can make sure the demographic you want to target, it gets to them. Obviously you will always have people see it who aren't your target audience but most of the time I think that's a good thing because the more people who see it the better. It's quite easy to determine reach but it's not so easy to determine whether when someone has seen it they have been engaged with it, they like it, they dislike it or it has had an effect on them and that's where it is harder to prove what you have done. The counter-narrative monitoring and evaluation handbook will tell you more on that specifically but there are ways to do it and I think technology is ever growing and the analytical and tools you have now, even in the past year they have changed the interfaces and there are more options on them now and we've just seen that in the past year. Also, actually not just the online analytics but the comments under the thumbs and show a sense of engagement and you get a sense of what people think when you see them, not everyone because only a small proportion of people comment when they see them but it's a first step for sure.

**LS:** In Higher Education the talk about preventing radicalisation in cyberspace is all about monitoring and filtering web content. Do you think that monitoring and filtering should be implemented as a compulsory element in Higher Education and is it a means of stopping radicalisation?

**LP:** Well I think that with monitoring and filtering again it's something we are seeing in the national debate now with all of the content like twitter are responsible for taking down content on their site. I think from people here monitoring and sort of like, monitoring and filtering applied to Higher Education, that is where flags will be raised in some people's minds because they think Higher Education equals free speech and monitoring and filtering is not free speech umm but actually if you look at the broader debate, monitoring and filtering happens across society and it's not just students who get targeted, it is everyone and there is a reason why you can't get child porn online and all of these safeguarding issues like child pornography, sort of violence and all of these things are regulated on the internet to an extent and there is a sense that you do have to be responsible with the content you are seeing online and that's not just a Higher Education thing, it's a whole society thing. I think monitoring and filtering is definitely necessary but you need to make sure you're not, and this is why it's so hard if you have to do it, where do you draw the line essentially is that big question. I mean you don't want to be firstly sharing graphic content for the sake of it in the name of free speech because that is irresponsible and secondly when you are talking about extremist content there is an argument to be made that if you share it you are essentially doing whichever groups bidding for them because it is a piece of propaganda and that's giving it the oxygen it needs to be shared with people so you need to be making sure you aren't becoming a vehicle for doing that as well. I mean, from being a student at Kings and doing my masters in war studies there was obviously a lot of research and online stuff I had to watch to do that kind of thing so I think In the university space that's why this question is so hard because students do need the freedom to, if you are becoming an expert in something you need to look at that content in some way, then you need to have kind of open access to it and make sure you're using it in a safe way but I think when you're at university and you have the safeguarding duty you do need to filter or have some kind of policy in place where a student can come to you to say I am doing this topic, can I have access to this? I think it's necessary ... it's a grey area so I think there needs to be a bit of give and take, it isn't black and white.

**LS:** Finally, is there anything that you would like to see taken away from Prevent, or anything you would like to see added to it as a compulsory element?

**LP:** Umm I mean ... I think that we just need to make completely sure with Prevent that we are supporting those who are responsible for delivering it on the ground properly and there are people who feel like they don't have enough resources or training to be able to do that properly so I would like to see, I know we have WRAP training at the moment and I know in some cases WRAP training people like it and it is comprehensive for them and that is great and the have a good Prevent coordinator and they feel confident in delivering it. In other cases people don't feel as confident and they feel that WRAP is just an hour long session and it doesn't give them enough and I would like to see more resources and training in a compulsory way for Prevent because I think that will help the frontline workers feel more confident in tackling these



issues in the education setting they are in. in terms of what that would look like in a compulsory way and I know that there is being a lot of good content made, from us doing our resources and seeing other organisations in the UK making content. There is a lot of good content out there and I think it's just a case of adding more resources into it and I think that it's a conversation taking place now after Manchester and a lot of people are arguing that in different communities Prevent as a theoretically is good but the implementation isn't because they aren't getting enough to be able to do it properly so that would be the main thing that I would like to see.

**LS:** Thank you very much, L.

**Appendix 17 – Interview Transcript, Participant 15 – Prevent Lead**

**LS:** Hi D, it would be great if you can talk about your knowledge of Prevent and how it links to the national counter terrorism strategy.

**DH:** Right, OK so Prevent lead for \*institution\*, umm ... been in that role now for some three years umm, in terms of Prevent strategy obviously you're well aware it is part of the governments counter terrorism policy, policy, whatever you want to call it. It became legislative, slight delay in FE because of issues with external speakers but that is now ratified and legislative now. We are very mindful of the fact we have to meet those legislative requirements but also our inspection through Ofsted when the residential academic obviously Prevent strategy is scrutinised through that umm ... we have done significant amounts of work in terms of staff training, student inset, student awareness and that is ongoing.

**LS:** You mentioned that because you're a FE college as well you get monitored by Ofsted, do you deal with HEFCE as well as part of your HE compliance?

**DH:** Yes we do, I went to a conference a couple of months ago down in Exeter and because we are going through TDAP [Taught Degree Awarding Powers], we don't have through Prevent we have been missing a trick with guidance etc from HEFCE and that has now been rectified, albeit our university status is not yet confirmed but we are on the cusp of it. HE Prevent strategy within HE umm it is ... slightly behind our FE development but I'm sure that you know, within the next six months or so it will be bought up to speed as well.

**LS:** Could you talk about any of the requirements and what you have done to fulfil those requirements in the HE sector?

**DH:** Basically we have, our initial attack was through any new staff coming in will have a briefing session with me, that's a short 10 minute presentation just talking to them about what Prevent is, why we have to meet the requirements etc etc. as part of their induction they will undergo online training which they have all now done and they get a certificate for that and it will be logged with HR. We will on ... a couple of occasions a year, when they do have their inset, I will go on a presentation with all HE staff in terms of Prevent, what changes have been made and anything they need to be aware of, so it's not as in depth as our approach with FE but we are working on it.

**LS:** Are there any other requirements like chaplaincy involvement, external speaker policies that you have in place?

**DH:** Yes, we have got, we have obviously worked hard on our external speaker policy and we have worked very closely with Students' Union in that umm ... it's in place but ... it is ... HE is difficult because umm we've got issues surrounding legislation surrounding freedom of speech and you know, I was at a conference the other day and a guy said it is OK to be radical, and that's quite a profound statement actually and to be honest for the right reasons I think that is OK umm ... as long as it's in the

right environment with the right intentions umm because restricting people's views and not allowing them to make radical statements or have radical views should we say, it would cause more problems. In my delivery to students I do sort of emphasise the fact that it is not about restriction on freedom of information or freedom of speech and it is OK to have a view, however if you decide to act upon those views the chances are that you're going to get involved in something where the law of the land is broken, you're going to be hurt and somebody else is going to be hurt and that's when you need to start having a think.

**LS:** You mentioned the SU, are they on board with your approach to Prevent?

**DH:** Completely and totally, any external speaker that is coming in, the HE or FE staff have to complete an approval form and that then comes through our safeguarding committee and we discuss it and then it will contain three signatures who clear it by approving it... but the ultimate safety net for us is the fact that every external speaker that comes in there will be a member of staff there and if things did start to go down the wrong road that member of staff would intervene and shut it off straight away.

**LS:** OK, that sounds good. What is the general feeling of staff here, towards Prevent?

**DH:** The general feeling of staff is that they are under extreme pressures in their normal work umm ... I think the natural thing is whilst they understand and recognise and value Prevent and what it does, obviously it is not a priority and that said ... we I have had quite a few, a spread of referrals from staff over the last three years in terms of things that kids say, things they have seen kids do, so you know, it's one of those things where to complimentary service from what they do, they are aware of it and do the online training, have briefings from me, students do sessions with me which I can talk about later, but yeah, in essence that's it really. So it's not seen as a negative because it is all around us umm but it's something they, it's a tool they've got in their box and if they need to use it they will bring it out and if they don't, they don't.

**LS:** Is that the same for academic and non-academic staff?

**DH:** Absolutely, all of the staff. Included in our staff training, everybody from the Principle, the governors, the exec team, senior management, middle management, academics, facilities, staff, catering, ground staff, everybody and we will go as deep as doing awareness sessions for doing external coaches coming in to work with us and things like that.

**LS:** Would you say the general feeling among students is the same as staff?

**DH:** Umm ... it's very difficult to gage, we are about to embark on some kind of survey with our students whereby I have put together a short series of questions which is going to be driven by the youth worker in our common room, we are just going to do spot little three minute questions to individual students just to check they understand it, from within the sessions they have had with me.

**LS:** What would you say the biggest barriers have been in place in terms of implementing Prevent?

**DH:** Umm ... none with FE but with HE the problem we've got is to actually make it compulsory for HE students to come and attend an extremism and radicalisation session with me, you can't force the people. They are over 18 and it is their choice and with the under 18's it is compulsory, I do it during the day in their timetable and they have to be there. With the HE it is just, you know, getting them in that face to face environment in a lecture theatre is very difficult.

**LS:** In terms of delivering Prevent with your staff, what is the biggest challenge there?

**DH:** Umm ... there isn't any challenge really, you know, it's got to be done, its legislation and that is it. If there are challenged I have certainly not come across a great deal of them.

**LS:** How many students do you have here, out of interest?

**DH:** We have 1100 on site and I think it jumps up to about 3000 in total, including university and FE as well.

**LS:** In my research so far I have come across two different approaches to delivering Prevent. The first is a safeguarding approach which you have mentioned that you use here. The second one is a targeting approach where certain communities are looked at and dealt with in a different way. Have you come across any other institution that may have used that targeting approach?

**DH:** No.

**LS:** Are you confident that the initial premise was a safeguarding approach?

**DH:** Yes, well it is safeguarding.

**LS:** Do you have any specific case, obviously not mentioning names, which you may be able to share in terms of Prevent referrals.

**DH:** Yes, a university student of a particular origin, in a particular area of the world has presented indications that he is vulnerable to involvement in radicalisation and has been referred three times to the police by myself umm ... and that situation is ongoing. We have had a couple of other referrals... again an international student visiting a particular country and was vulnerable to pressures from a particular group in that country and could have sucked him into something which would not have ended well, that was sorted. A couple of referrals for international students, again, attending various mosques in the area and they checked out by Police and worked out fine. A couple of students who were vulnerable to potential extreme right wing through football and actually that one wasn't referred by a member of staff, the student came here after taking part in one of my extremism and radicalisation sessions and came in here and expressed a concern that he was following a specific football club and there were

certain individuals within that environment that were ... obviously extreme right wing and trying to influence younger people and that one was flagged up to police as well. We have been quite active but we have had nobody so far who has ended up in Channel which is good.

**LS:** That is really interesting. Do you think that education is the right setting for Prevent?

**DH:** I would say it is an ideal setting because you have a captive audience umm ... however it's not just for here it is for everyone, you know it is for everyone. You have to handle safety nets and we do what we can here but who's to say that one of our students in a local rugby club or a local netball club or a local scout movement wouldn't display concerns that should be picked up, so it's for everybody not just education. Education is ideal because it is a captive audience we have here.

**LS:** Prevent is across various different sector bodies, do you think that its right that Prevent is the same in prisons as it is in education?

**DH:** No, you have to take the basis of it and adapt it according to what your environment is, what your business it and the people you deal with and the background. It can't be one size fits all and you have to adapt it.

**LS:** Do you think that Prevent is efficient?

**DH:** ... I ... its ... from my experience, yes it is umm I have been a little disappointed in terms of some of the referrals we've made, one in particular where I flagged this individual up and obviously Police have got far more information than what I have, they checked him out and they said it was OK but I said it's not ticking right. I know they are restricted with what they can do with stuff but ... if one was going to, if anything was ever going to happen here and it was as a result of that individual, I would be going I told you so ... I told you so, you know when these guys do what they do, the first thing the media jump on is what about this Prevent and how was this missed and how was that missed, I mean Jesus Christ. The public are not trained Police officers and when I have this discussion with the Police, we are doing what we can here, these are school teachers, these are gardeners, these are kitchen staff, these are wellbeing staff, you know we are not trained Police officers; we are doing what we can.

**LS:** That is really interesting. Let's start thinking about Prevent and cyberspace. In 1992 Sterling defined cyberspace as the place between two electronically connected communication devices where people meet and communicate. Based on this definition do you believe that it is possible to stop radicalisation in cyberspace?

**DH:** No, in the first instance umm you know, you've got your organisations now and I talk to the students about these organisations where you know, your ... historically your IRA's your Ulster volunteer force, your Ulster volunteer unions, your Ulster defence leagues, all of these people were albeit 60's, 70's, 80's highly organised groups ... umm today's comparative groups, your ISIS, your Al Qaida's and people of

this ilk, they've gone to another level because of the finance behind them, they are structured like businesses, they employ tech people, IT people which take them to another level and you know, as soon as you take one site down they are in behind with another one, and you take this down and they are in behind that. Another issue with your cyberspace is, you know, like ourselves, we spend and I've had this discussion with our IT manager, we spend thousands on filters and firewalls and all of this to stop kids accessing certain sites but the reality of it all is that every kid here has a smart phone, so they just turn off their Wi-Fi, turn off the \*institution\* Wi-Fi and they can access what they want on 4G. While you have to do it and meet the requirements in terms of online safety, I totally get that, you are almost pouring money down the drain because it's like having two bridges across the river and you shut the one bridge and you just walk across the other one... what can you do? That is technology and it is down to government things to get into these technology companies, this 4G and all this and if there is any way it can be done, but that is what they do. It's like porn, they can't access porn through \*institution\* Wi-Fi but they just switch Wi-Fi off, go on 4G and there you go... it is like anything and when I first started doing this, on google, on YouTube sorry it would take something like six or seven clicks to get to an ISIS beheading and now it is three ... now it is three and as soon as they take one down they chuck another on there and chuck another. Kids are ... kids are they like to investigate and like to look for things and I've done it myself, I've seen how easy it is, just google ISIS beheading and bang, there it is and all sorts of horrendous murders and deaths that they film, it is just unbelievable... I saw one the other day with a guy where there was a tank, they made the guy stand in front of the tank and the tracks just rolled over the top of him... kids can see it.

**LS:** How do you think we can go about putting together a counter-narrative to challenge the views of ISIS?

**DH:** How long is a piece of string? You know ... I'm of no political persuasion or otherwise but I am a great believer in peeling back the layers and as horrendous as the mind set and behaviours of these people and their actions, I'm not condoning it in any way shape or form but I think peel back the layers and look at the reasons why. These people do not get born and all of a sudden, hang on a minute, I'm going to become someone who will kill and blow this up and fight this one and there are reasons why they develop those views and I think, you know, near impossible but some of these countries they are coming from, is it down to ... the intervention of other countries and necessarily for example in those areas, the people that ... we could discuss that forever and a day but I think at times the media portrays ISIS and all of this but what should happen is we should be peeling back the layers and get into the root of the problem and what ... why, what caused this group to form? what is agitating this group? Probably those are issues, those are nettles that some of us don't want to grasp but that is my personal view that is not a view that I would include in any deliberations or any part of our Prevent strategy, that is just a personal view.

**LS:** As well as filter, do you monitor?

**DH:** Yes, that is all done through IT and if there are any issues they will flag it up. There was one for example where one of our students was... successful in becoming an employee of the London Olympics as security and they went online and quite innocently started googling about how would you make a bomb, how would you do this, how would you do that, and that was picked up and dealt with.

**LS:** Monitoring has worked for you; do you think that it should be compulsory for all HE institutions to monitor and filter web content?

**DH:** If it is part of the Prevent strategy that the government have decided is legislative than yes, you have to meet those requirements. Maybe if you're not that can be deemed as a breach of your duty of care, safeguarding etc etc because albeit they are over 18 and there is a reduced duty of care but there is still a duty of care.

**LS:** Have you had any challenged with your HE students with regard to having monitoring and filtering in place?

**DH:** None at all.

**LS:** Do you think that there would be a big challenge from HE students elsewhere if monitoring and filtering were implemented?

**DH:** Honest answer, I wouldn't know.

**LS:** Finally I would like to ask you about future directions for Prevent. Is there anything currently in Prevent that you would like taken away from it or is there anything that you would like to see added to it?

**DH:** No, not really. I am a part of, I sit on the county Partnership Prevent Board and we meet periodically and the group is made up of educationalists, prison service, emergency services, air ambulance, police, social services, local authority and it is just a forum for sharing best practice umm so we do adjust and develop our approach to Prevent and our strategy through that and also we are part of a south west Prevent forum which is ... we have a Prevent lead, SK, I work closely with her and attend those but again it is for our FE, HE split in terms of supporting people who are involved in Prevent in education establishments umm ... you know, we get updates from Police regularly and we adjust the cordon, updating the presentation that I do for incoming first years, fine tuning it but that needs updating now and again because facts and figures change.

**LS:** Thank you very much, D.

## Appendix 18 - Interview Transcript, Participant 16 – Prevent Lead

**LS:** Hi M, it would be great if you can talk about your knowledge of Prevent and how it links to the national counter terrorism strategy.

**MA:** OK, umm so my understanding of Prevent is that it is the strand of the national counter terrorism strategy that deals with attempting to prevent people from becoming radicalised and turning to terrorism. It is only one strand of the counter terrorism strategy with things like contest, Pursue and Protect. I suppose the most specific argument I have is the application to the use in Higher Education and I will allude to it in that context and umm ... that is shaped with having to craft the university plan for the Prevent duty when it came to the fore on the back of the Counter Terrorism Act. ... we can talk in a bit more detail of the act and whether that relates to Higher Education but umm in that kind of context we have to balance the duty to prevent people being drawn into terrorism or radicalised with protection of free speech and protection of academic freedom and that's the kind of excess that Higher Education works in from a Prevent point of view.

**LS:** Would you be able to talk to the requirements that we have in the HE sector as well as what you are doing at \*institution\* to meet those requirements?

**MA:** Yes, so we've got requirements drawn up into quite a few categories. I am not working from notes here, Liam so it's just from memory at the end of a long day, so don't judge me. So umm ... we have got clear duty to have different policies and procedures for dealing with external speakers, the university priority events and from our perspective we deal with that by a policy which we have written in conjunction with our Students' Union, which our Students' Union are signed up to as well and they are one of the organisations that brings lots of external speakers on site, especially with societies. We have to be robust and also fair in terms of enabling freedom of speech and enabling discussion of difficult topics which may cause ... opposing viewpoints so up against one another but doing so in a way that is balanced and drawing the line and effectively challenging criminal acts in terms of victimisation on a set of characteristics. So we have got a strand of work around that, we have a strand of work around pastoral welfare support and I suppose if we try and apply it to Prevent we do see it as a safeguarding effectively and I'm sure you will have heard people talk about this too. We have written a safeguarding policy with specific mentions of radicalisation and Prevent in there, so we see the welfare work we are doing and the things we are doing to discharging our duties so where we think people may be ... perhaps at risk of being radicalised or demonstrating some distress or concern our first approach is to kind of take a breath and think about that around safeguarding and actually what we are doing is around expression of difficulties, mental health difficulties for example, that people may have had in the past or whether there are some concerning views that need discussing or challenging or considering that's something we can manage it or need support externally and whether that is Channel or initial conversation with our Prevent officer. We have got various strands of support where we pick up concerns



we have about mental health, counselling service who are trained up champions, we have chaplains who help with spirituality and pastoral care and we have advisors in the academic schools as well who are there to provide some kind of support for any student concerns as well and identify the individuals who we need to provide support to or intervention to. You've mentioned that we have the bit around considering the use of filtering technology umm ... the universities position is that we view it annually and we reviewed it with our last submission to HEFCE and we don't use web filtering or web monitoring. Do you want me to go into the reasoning why?

**LS:** We will go into it more a bit later when we discuss Prevent and cyberspace.

**MA:** Yes, but that is the position that the university has taken at the moment. Another requirement of the duty is to ensure that we work with our Students' Union so that they abide with our policies because the duty doesn't actually cover them but they are with us effectively so it is a dynamic we have. I mentioned before that the external speaker forms were written in conjunction with them and you could see how this could be difficult if they signed up to the NUS approach to Prevent and our Students' Union has chosen to leave NUS and that has made it a bit easier for us compared to some other colleagues at other institutions. So let me think if there are other bits ... there is the risk assessment and action plan around our activities which are quite a lot of work and there is the broader strand of engaging with our external partners so whether that is our Police professionals, and having an action plan around Prevent stuff and having input from external agencies.

**LS:** You have hit most of the categories there. How did staff react to the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 when Prevent became compulsory and they had to start doing things?

**MA:** It depends on who you're talking about I think. So ... I think those staff who are used to working in a welfare or support service context so student services for example I think we are pretty quickly seeing it as an extension of safeguarding and supportive work we try to do... so I think that was met with a reasonable degree of acceptance. I think academic community is a real mixed. To give you a bit of context, it's not meant to sound complacent at all but \*institution\* is relatively low risk in these terms and we don't have a hugely politicised student group or Students' Union either and we have a good relationship with the various different university faith groups on campus so I think there is some reaction to the Prevent stuff was on the one hand ... umm maybe difference or kind of a lack of seeing how it would relate to them because it is not something like...if you go and talk to staff about mental health it is something that they will deal with but if you talk to staff about counter terrorism it isn't something that comes up very often so there would be that end of it. You have other colleagues like our politics department and we have had lots of really good interesting debates and discussions with them around that and I think again actually be fair to them, once you present it in a safeguarding context they have bought in and they see it. They have some views on the ideology behind it and the government aspect of it but I think that's

less to do with application of Prevent and more to do with the philosophical presumptions behind it. There is a real mix of different responses across the institution.

**LS:** What about students? What do they have to say about it?

**MA:** So actually the student response isn't very different to the staff response because we haven't got a very politicised group of students or Students' Union and I think lots of students wouldn't see it as an issue that affects them or \*institution\* particularly and then others have strong views on it. Last November we had Simon Cole who is the Chief Constable for Leicestershire Police and is also the national lead on Prevent and umm ... he talked together with Home Office colleagues and we invited staff and students along and we didn't have big numbers come along but the students who were there were not suppressing views but were talking about the position in the media and how we may use it a bit more effectively and those sorts of things. In the student body I haven't felt any hostility either, it has been relatively accepted ... now you may look at those people who are opposed to it keep their own council and get on with it so there is that feeling out there but it's not something that has surfaced a great deal. We have had a couple of conversations with the staff sabbatical officers who have been more challenging in some respects and some of the union staff perhaps as well but in comparison across the country not a great deal.

**LS:** If the Students' Union weren't on board, how much more difficult would that be for you as the Prevent lead?

**MA:** Much more difficult ... it's like anything we are trying to do, it has an impact on students so we need some kind of SU guide and if they aren't on board we start at a disadvantage already so I think umm ... having them on board means that there is a certain amount of buy in because the SU are helping support it so there is a task assumption that if the SU are on board it is probably OK... they get the feeling that there is nothing here that is particularly malicious or anything to be suspicious of and I think because historically, over the last 10 years the SU and the university have had a good working relationship on a number of different issues and there is an implicit level of trust there at the moment and the short answer is if the SU were opposed to it we would have a great deal of difficulty delivering it. Think about the external speaker policy and imagine, the SU has a significant number of external talk to societies and if they weren't bought into the process or the protocols in place that would be really challenging and it would create a difficult level of risk to manage and we would have to have numerous conversations to have about how we comply with them as an organisation linked to, but separate to the university.

**LS:** Do you think that there are any bigger barriers that the potential non-compliance of the Students' Union towards Prevent?

**MA:** Umm ... well ... I don't know whether you consider this a barrier but the extent to which realistically speaking the university might or might not become aware of a student we ought to be concerned about. It is a reasonably large organisation and

contact with students, some have close contact with staff and others it is possible to get through your degree having little contact with staff and it isn't always realistic that we would know, if I'm honest about it. We have somethings in place which would help us but you couldn't say with any degree of certainty that we would have a hand on all students to be seeing concerns we need to pick up on. We have concerns in other areas such as mental health issues where things have gone on for a while but kept it well hidden. I'm not sure if you consider that a barrier but that is certainly perhaps comes to your question about efficiency of the duty as well. Other barriers, well NUS ... the SU could be an issue but the NUS don't help the matter. To broaden it out, some portions of the media representation of the Prevent duty do put up barriers and then actually really quite a one sided view and inaccurate view of what the Prevent duty is and in that conversation about, with the Chief Constable that I mentioned, a lot of the conversation is about what Prevent isn't as well as about what it is.

**LS:** What would you say has been the most challenging thing about implementing Prevent?

**MA:** Umm ... presenting it in a way which counters the narrative of it is basically spying or getting us to do police work somehow. Conditioning it in a way that brings it out as a safeguarding issue ... we have a duty of care to our students and we want to stop or students getting involved in things across a range of different issues and this is one of those. I think that is quite challenging to get that out from the centre where a lot of the narrative that exists externally is that we are targeting particular groups of the community or the security services to railroad and that is quite challenging. There are technical bits and bobs like conversations with academic colleagues saying is it ok if I teach this material? Is this going to be provocative, we are going to be talking about Hamas, is that OK? Not being asked that in a provocative way, genuinely asking if the university is ok with us having a controversial conversation or debate and it is time consuming to have those conversations... and of course the usual challenge is delivering this without additional resource.

**LS:** Do you see the premise of Prevent as safeguarding or targeting?

**MA:** I see it very firmly as safeguarding umm ... because the Prevent related case we have had at the university, none of them have involved Muslim students, I suppose we would call Christian students loosely perhaps so ... I certainly don't see we have approach things in a particular targeting an area of our students. I do see it as safeguarding and that follows the line that it could be anyone. An interesting view if you look at the specific geographical local context up here, the risk of the area, which is where the university is, isn't Islamic extremism, its far right extremism actually and we don't see it on campus but that is what it is in the local area so I don't think it is the targeted approach and that's certainly the way we have chosen to interpret it.

**LS:** That's the way every other institution that I have spoken to approach it as well. I haven't come across anyone who chooses to use the targeting approach, which is good.

**MA:** That is reassuring.

**LS:** Would you be able to talk about any specific cases of referrals you have had, obviously not giving names?

**MA:** There is only one referral I would talk about and that was a referral we made to ... to our Prevent officer and it didn't get as far as channel and we spoke to the Prevent officer about a student we received some complaints from a third party about comments on social media... there were some views you would definitely say were strongly homophobic and kind of homophobic but tinged with a religious ideology to them as well and almost kind of the edge of violence so again in that situation we took some time to check out what other information we had and had a conversation with the individual as well and we decided it was appropriate to refer it out. As it happened the student left the university but I feel like it was an instructive process because we felt we took the time we needed to establish all of the factors without knee jerk referring, we had a look at it and had a conversation with the individual before making a referral to the Prevent team. Although nothing further came of that we followed the appropriate process.

**LS:** Seeing the process from finding a student that is in danger of being radicalised through to referrals and subsequently the channel process, do you see Prevent as efficient, does it work?

**MA:** ... You know what, it is really hard to comment on the last part of that because we haven't had anyone who has got as far as Channel actually. Umm so it is difficult for me to comment on that but. The early part of it, do I see it as effective? Umm ... I mean if you take out the channel bit it is not, I mean Prevent isn't different from lots of other safeguarding issues, if you take that bit out it is almost a bit like having a mental health issue you are dealing with and you choose when you refer it out to the mental health team and that side of it works fine providing that umm ... the university has a reasonable robust method to decide to refer something out and at which point we do something internally. Because I haven't worked in the channel process I can't comment on whether it is effective on whether it brings people back from being radicalised but the bit before is what I see as working and also from my conversations with external agencies. In the limited experience we have had here, it is effective and we had a process to go through, we had an outcome which was no further action needed but we felt we had explored it fully. In the limited portion of the process I have been through I would say so but I can't talk about the Channel process but the intervention works.

**LS:** You've mentioned you aren't really in an area where there is a hotbed of terrorist activity or extremism. Is education for an institution like yours the right setting for Prevent?

**MA:** Umm ... I think our role as educational institution is to promote novel thinking, new thinking and what you may call radical thinking which is why I get concerned about the term radicalising and the way it is thrown around. I sometimes say of as an institution we aren't in the game of thinking differently we may as well pack up and go home because that is the purpose of a university. Whether I think there is a place for, maybe it's not the Prevent duty, but whether I think there is a place for the premises of Prevent is that it is fair enough to have the radical thought and it is fair enough to have different views and challenging people but we shouldn't be able to do it in a way that is respectful of each other. That part means that education is the right setting for that message but whether that is a Prevent message or not I don't know, and you can choose to interpret that message but I don't ever remember Prevent saying any topic is off the table for discussion, what I see it as saying is you can discuss any topic but there are legal boundaries to that but we have a duty to enable that discussion to happen in a way that is balanced and robust and respect peoples points of view ... and I think to be honest with you if education institutions are able to create an environment where people can debate in that way I think that is for the good and I have no idea if that has answered your question but I think the premises or the concepts behind Prevent are to do with the way in which we enable free speech to happen appropriately, education is the right setting for that. Whether Prevent as it is now is the right vehicle for that I don't know.

**LS:** That's quite interesting and it does answer the question, it does help in a lot of respects actually. Let's start thinking about Prevent and cyberspace. In 1992, Sterling defined cyberspace as the place between two electronically connected communication devices where people meet and communicate. Based on this definition do you believe that it is possible to stop radicalisation in cyberspace?

**MA:** Umm ... this is where I start to feel technologically inept. I give you a little bit of a lay man's view in this respect. One premise behind that potentially is that I think is problematic is the idea that radicalisation happens outside of cyberspace, I would say cyberspace provides a platform or space where radicalisation can take place but I think there have to be other factors that are going on, or other drivers which may cause someone to kind of move in that direction so it would be a little bit like saying ... I guess do we think that the town square at the appropriate space challenges radicalisation but if that's where it can happen or manifest or where those ideas can exchange but is not the sole place or driver for that. I think on balance there is probably what it might be possible to do is curtail the opportunities for radicalisation to happen in cyberspace, like closing down the spaces where those discussions can happen but I don't think that will get rid of the problem of radicalisation, it just closes down avenues. I think cyberspace misses the drivers to create the situation where a person feels like their particular ideology or view is justifiable and justifies harming other people so again a

longwinded answer to the question and I'm not sure it gives you a great deal but I think I see it as shutting down opportunities in a space but I don't see it as combating radicalisation because I think radicalisation happens elsewhere, or the drivers for it happen elsewhere and those are the places we need to tackle.

**LS:** We have discussed a lot about vulnerable people being radicalised and cyberspace creates the forum for vulnerable people to find the opportunities to get involved in these groups, so these other drivers may not be present if they don't have the avenue of cyberspace to find out about these groups. Thinking about that, how important is social media and especially thinking about thinking about students in Higher Education, how important is social media for the terrorist organisations?

**MA:** When you talk about it in those terms I see where you're coming from but there is a driver that makes someone vulnerable in the first place so there is always that as well but I take your point that ... cyberspace gives you an easy place to exploit that. The point of view of social media, of course it is important. I'm sure students digest a good amount of information about the world from social media, in a way that things have changed over time and we don't get our information from books anymore. I think the particularly important think in an educational sense though, is ... the way in which you teach people or instil in people the ability to evaluate thinking critically because I think social media gives a really good opportunity if you use that information in a critical way and not assume that everything you see is 100% true and valid and if you don't apply filters to that it's easy to see how you could be lead in a particular direction. It is very important and I could see how it could be potentially dangerous or used to create a particular ideological position but we need to show people critical thinking so when they are presented with the information in that way it is not always true fact.

**LS:** We discussed earlier a little bit about monitoring and filtering, you said you don't monitor or filter. Why is that?

**MA:** I think the view was taken that we are not clear technologically is it viable first of all ... there is a question about what you filter and who decides what to filter and on the one hand you could use the internet watch foundation list but that won't catch everything so is it effective or not, if you don't use it who decides the list you filter? The concern is the academic colleagues and it has a potential to go against the idea of academic freedom or to be able to find information and look at stuff. If you filter you prevent people from exploring things online and those are the two main drivers, how effective would it be and secondly the question of who decides what should and shouldn't be filtered. I think the university has committed to saying we haven't fixed on that position forever and we say we review it on an annual basis on the run up to the submission to HEFCE.

**LS:** Do you see these methods as a means of stopping radicalisation or are they just a method to look like you are doing something?

**MA:** Umm ... I think the way we would deploy it at the moment it is a method to make it look like we are doing something in the area because we don't have enough clarity about taking that kind of action. Coming back to what you said before about whether there are spaces out there where vulnerable people could be exploited in, you could make a case to say if you know what vulnerable spaces are you could shut them down, that would help. I tend to feel like people who really want to get access to those spaces are going to be able to do so, you have to shut down a source rather than filter at this end. I know it's not difficult to circumvent things if you really wanted to so I am sceptical again about whether they really prevent radicalisation but I'm not dismissing the fact that if I make it more difficult to get access to this information, it may reduce it.

**LS:** Is there any one thing that you think could make a big impact to stopping radicalisation in cyberspace?

**MA:** Umm ... I just don't think I know enough about what is out there to be able to answer that. I think the only good thing I could say is shutting down the sites at source, seeing there is a lot of chat about the responsibility of the tech giants but I don't really know how viable that is necessary to do. I think it is difficult to deal with at this end, once the content is already out there, to stop people getting access it is difficult but by shutting down the source that seems logical to me, but I do think from what I am given to understand it is not as straight forward as it might sound and is just a question of proliferation, you know, shot one down and the next one pops up again. It is a bit like an unpleasant game of whack a mole.

**LS:** Finally I am going to ask you about any future directions for Prevent, so is there anything that you would like to see added to Prevent as a compulsory element or anything that is currently within the duty that you would like to see taken away from it?

**MA:** ... Umm ... I'm a bit wary of saying anything should be added as another compulsory element because I think there needs to be enough scope for institutions to apply their own judgement in these areas and at the moment it is possible to do that. If you take one of the fundamental actions such as put together an action plan or put together a specific risk assessment for a certain scenario, then that gives you the opportunity to apply your local knowledge and local filters to what you choose to do. As far as taking stuff away, I think if the duty to introduce filtering and monitoring were compulsory I would say it is not a sensible position and maybe we should take that away. I'm not sure I would take away but something that may be interesting to add would be why isn't there a duty on Students' Unions to do stuff in this area? Umm you know the same way, why is the duty on the institution to work with the SU to deliver this? That to me seems nonsensical because they are a charity organisation and comes under the charity commission but that's not quite the same I don't think. For me it would be sensible to say that given that all Students' Unions are attached to a university and given the 1994 Education Act places responsibility on universities to have good governance of Students' Unions, it makes sense to include Students' Unions or wouldn't it make sense to give them responsibilities under the duties as well.

Certainly we are in a situation where we have a good relationship with the Students' Union but that may not always be the case and could become very difficult to deliver our responsibilities if that wasn't the case. There would have been some political considerations as to why Students' Unions don't have to comply but that is the only thing I can think of to be added to it, I can't think of anything else.

**LS:** Thanks very much, M.